



FIRST MEETING OF THE PSYCHOLOGY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA, 20 SEPTEMBER 2009

The first meeting of the Psychology Board of Australia was held on 20 September 2009 at the Aitken Hill conference and events venue near Melbourne. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council announced appointments under this Act on 31 August 2009.

The twelve members of the Board are Associate Professor Brin Grenyer (Chair), Professor Alfred Allan, Ms Antonia Dunne, Ms Kaye Frankcom, Mr Geoff Gallas, Professor Gina Geffen, Dr Shirley Grace, Mrs Irene Hancock, Ms Fiona McLeod, Mr Christopher O'Brien, Ms Ann Stark and Mr Radomir Stratil.

Ahead of their Sunday meeting, members of the Psychology Board of Australia met with members of the other nine boards for a full-day induction program on Saturday, 19 September. The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP, Minister for Health, Victoria, spoke to the induction program on behalf of all Ministers on the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council.

The Board agreed that a key part of its work program will be consultation with the community, the profession and the existing State and Territory boards on matters on which they or the Ministerial Council must make decisions. The Board agreed that it needed the wisdom and experience of many people outside the Board to do its job effectively, including the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council and government authorities, the Board's accrediting authority the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, the other nine national health boards, health complaints entities in the States and Territories, tribunals in each State and Territory, and key representatives of the profession of psychology such as the Australian Psychological Society and the Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association (HODSPA).

The Board noted that the Chairs of all the national boards had issued a statement on 17 September providing early advice of a consultation process in late October and November around registration and related matters (www.ahpra.gov.au). The main focus of the Board's first meeting was discussion of the proposals that would be the subject of this consultation.

At its first meeting, the Board agreed to prepare three papers for consultation in late October on the following matters. Four weeks will be given for submissions, which will close in late November.

- **Psychology Registration Standards.** The Board approved a process to consult on proposed qualifications and other specific requirements required for registration as a psychologist. These will include five mandatory registration standards required under the new national scheme, namely standards on requirements for professional indemnity insurance, matters about the criminal history of applicants for registration, requirements for continuing professional development, requirements for English language skills, and requirements in relation to previous practice. Provisional as well as full registration standards will be detailed.

- Specialist Psychology Registration Standards. The Board approved a process to consult on proposed qualifications and other specific requirements required for psychologists to have recognition on a specialist register.
- Psychology Endorsements. The Board approved a process to consult on proposed qualifications and other specific requirements required for psychologists to have recognition as a psychology supervisor on the register.

The Board agreed to have a further three meetings before Christmas 2009. Following the consultation period, the Board will finalise its position on the registration, specialist registration, and endorsement proposals. At its December meeting the Board will complete this work in order to provide the proposals to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for decision.

The Board acknowledged the tight timetable for completion of the initial part of its work. The timetable was necessary so that all registrants could have advice ahead of the commencement day on 1 July 2010 on the new registration standards and requirements.

The Board also considered detailed proposals for how individual registrants will transition from their current registration to the new registration categories set out in the proposed National Law. The Board commissioned further work on transition of registration in order to settle those matters that do not require Ministerial Council consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

The Board also approved a process to prepare the following two papers for consultation early in 2010:

- practice restrictions for psychological testing, and
- a code of ethics.

In addition, the Board endorsed the process put in place by the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards to instigate a National Psychology Examination.

The Board agreed that it was desirable for all registrants in a particular profession to be registered on a standard timetable nationally. The Board agreed that the annual renewal date for Psychology practitioners would be 30 November. The Board noted that practitioners whose registration at 1 July 2010 finished on a different date would transition over the next registration cycle to the new date.

In terms of business procedures, the Board agreed to a detailed procedure relating to the requirement in legislation for declarations of Conflict of Interest at the commencement of each meeting, meeting procedures and speaking on behalf of the Board. The Board also agreed to its logo as shown at the head of this statement, and noted that its forthcoming website would have the domain name www.psychologyboard.gov.au. The consultation papers will be posted on this website.

The Board acknowledged the very considerable amount of support that had been given for its first meeting. It acknowledged the work done by the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards, State and Territory psychology boards, the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project team and looked forward to working with these groups in the next stages of its work.

The members of the Psychology Board of Australia acknowledged the responsibility that had been given to them by the Ministerial Council. They committed themselves to doing everything they could to build an internationally-recognised psychology practitioner regulation for the protection of the Australia community and for their profession.

Associate Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair, Psychology Board of Australia

21 September 2009