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## From the Chair

### National Scheme transition ends

1 July 2013 marked the end of the first three years of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) for the psychology profession. The National Scheme was announced by the Coalition of Australian Governments in 2008, the Psychology Board of Australia was appointed in 2009 by all health

ministers, and the scheme began on 1 July 2010. On that date, psychologists who had previously been registered with their home state or territory had their registration transferred into the National Scheme.

Before 2010, eight separate Acts of Parliament in each of the states and territories regulated psychology, meaning there was considerable variation in the standards and rules to become a psychologist across the country, and a variety of different registration fees and cross-subsidies from governments. In 2010 these Acts were repealed and replaced with a single national law (the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory). This means that all psychologists in Australia are now regulated by a single set of standards.

To facilitate the transition from the state-based schemes into the new National Scheme, a three-year transition period has applied from 2010-13. Therefore, transition provisions have been in place for finishing old 4+2 internships, finishing old college and other recognised supervised programs to be eligible for area of practice endorsement, having prior supervisor status recognised, and allowing a period to adjust to the beginning of the National Psychology Examination.

Most of these transition arrangements have now ceased, meaning psychologists must now comply with the national standards for provisional registration, general registration and area of practice endorsement. Similarly, there is a national register of psychologists and a register of Board-approved psychology supervisors. The Board appreciates the overwhelming support of the profession in implementing this significant national reform. The National Scheme now provides certainty to practitioners, better data to inform workforce planning and more robust public protection.

In recognition that psychology as a discipline and profession is constantly evolving, the Board seeks input into revisions to standards and guidelines, to ensure that they remain fair and reasonable and in line with public expectations and international standards.

### Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair, Psychology Board of Australia



## Supervisor training providers invited to apply for Board approval

The Board is now inviting applications from suitably qualified and experienced individuals and organisations to deliver supervisor training programs across Australia.

The Board has introduced a competency-based training framework for supervisors to ensure provisional psychologists and psychologists receive quality supervision consistent with the Board's standards. The framework and its requirements are explained in the *Guidelines for supervisors and supervisor training providers* under the [Codes, guidelines and policies](#) tab on the Board's website.

The guidelines take effect from 1 July this year and require psychologists to have completed a Board-approved supervisor training program before they can become Board-approved supervisors (from 1 July, only Board-approved supervisors are able to provide supervision).

The guidelines also require Board-approved supervisors to undertake a 'master class' every five years, to keep their supervision skills up to date and remain Board approved.

Supervision training providers will also need to become Board approved for that training to meet the Board's new guidelines. The Board has released an [application pack](#) for individuals and businesses interested in becoming providers of supervisor training.

The Board will assess and approve applicants based on:

- their ability to meet Board standards and the requirements of the guidelines, and
- the selection criteria in the application pack.

Multiple training providers may be selected to facilitate delivery of supervisor training nationally (in both urban and regional areas) and ensure a complete range of training components.

Applicants were given the opportunity to submit requests for additional information or clarification up to 20 days after the release of the application. The Board prepared a response to individual questions and the answers are published on the Board's website on the [Supervisor training](#) page.

Applications close on 16 August 2013.

For more information on supervisor training, see [page 5](#).

## End of transition provisions for WA specialist title

West Australian psychologists who have been permitted to use the title 'specialist' during the transition period are reminded that the transition period is nearly over. From 18 October 2013 the exemption under the National Law

that allowed you to use the title 'specialist' expires, so you can no longer use any title that implies you have specialist registration.

Section 118 of the National Law specifies that any person who is not registered as a specialist health practitioner cannot use the title 'specialist health practitioner'. Nor can you use other titles that could be taken to mean you are a specialist health practitioner, such as 'specialist psychologist' or 'specialist counseling psychologist'.

Descriptors that could imply specialist registration are also not permitted, such as 'specialty child psychology services' or 'specialises in organisational psychology'.

There are significant penalties for breaches – up to \$30,000 for an individual and up to \$60,000 for a body corporate – so make sure you are prepared and update anything that still says 'specialist' now, because these penalties apply from 18 October 2013.

### Checklist

- Advertising
- Signage
- Business cards
- Stationery
- Email signature
- Website
- Media interviews
- Conference and lecture programs and materials
- Journal articles and books
- Social media

This list is a guide but it is not exhaustive – you need to consider your individual practice and identify anything else that could breach section 118.

You can still use any protected title for an area of practice endorsement that you hold such as 'counselling psychologist', 'clinical psychologist', and so on.

For more information on the use of titles, refer to the [Guidelines for advertising](#) on the Board's website, under [Codes, guidelines and policies](#).

## Specialist criteria

In a statement published on 8 February 2010, the Chair of the Board advised the profession and the public that the Board proposed to review the issue of specialist registration within three years, with a view to making further submissions to Ministerial Council on specialist registration for psychology.

In 2012 the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council requested the development of national criteria for assessing submissions from professions seeking specialist recognition under the National Law. This project is being

undertaken by a combined government committee and the national criteria are expected to be available later this year. In light of this work, the Board has agreed to await the decision of the Ministerial Council on the proposed national criteria and their application, as this will inform any future submission that the Board may make in consultation with the profession.

For more information read the statement *Information regarding psychology endorsement arrangements*, under [Endorsement>Further information](#).

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## Accreditation

On 5 February 2013, the Board received a submission from the Australian Psychological Society (APS) to address the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council's (APAC) governance and independence issues raised by stakeholders as part of the Board's review of its accreditation arrangements (see Consultation Paper 15, in the [News>Past consultations](#) section of the Board's website).

The Board has been considering these issues and would like to acknowledge the significant work the APS has undertaken towards resolving this matter.

The Board needs to ensure that accreditation arrangements for psychology meet the requirements of the National Law and good governance, particularly the independence of accreditation decision-making.

The Board is committed to resolving this matter and continues discussions with the APS.

We understand the keen interest many stakeholders have in this issue and will continue to provide updates in our communiqués and newsletters.

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## 2013-14 work plan

The Board has approved its work plan for 2013-14. In addition to its functions as a National Board under the National Law, the Board has identified a number of priority projects:

- review the Board's regional governance structure
- roll out the National Psychology Exam
- prepare for transition to Board assessment of overseas qualifications
- finalise the 5+1 internship guidelines, and
- review the 4+2 internship guidelines.

Elements of the work plan will be published on the website as part of the next Health Profession Agreement between AHPRA and the National Board.

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## Consultation update

Consultation is an important part of the Board's engagement with psychologists, members of the public and other stakeholders. The feedback provided is greatly valued, and informs the Board's development of important documents. Public consultations are widely communicated in the Board's communiqués and website, and are open to everyone.

## Review of registration standards, guidelines and codes

The first 10 National Boards to enter the National Scheme developed standards, guidelines and codes for its commencement on 1 July 2010. These standards, guidelines and codes are currently under review.

All National Boards have registration standards which define the requirements that applicants, registrants or students need to meet to be registered. There are two registration standards that are common, or largely common, to all National Boards:

- *English language skills registration standard* (largely common), and
- *Criminal history registration standard* (common).

The review of these two standards is being coordinated across all National Boards. Preliminary consultation has closed and the consultation paper is being finalised before public consultation.

There are also registration standards which are specific to the psychology profession. The Psychology Board has started its review of registration standards for continuing professional development, recency of practice and general registration. The Board will consult on these registration standards later in 2013.

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## Farewell to Tasmanian practitioner member

In June, **Ann Stark** retired from the Psychology Board of Australia in order to take up a five-year contract position overseas. Ann has been a practising psychologist in Australia for almost 40 years, and has been very active in the profession, with an extensive period in private practice and many professional and community roles, including with the University of Tasmania, the Family Court of Australia, the Australian Psychological Society, the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, the Tasmanian Health Complaints Commission and the Classification Review Board of the Office of Film and Literature Classification.

She has been involved in the regulation of psychology for the past 25 years, beginning in 1988 with an appointment

to the Tasmanian Psychologists Registration Board. Since then, she has also held appointments on the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards (2004-10), the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (2008-10), and as the practitioner member from Tasmania on the Psychology Board of Australia (2010-13), where she also held the position of Deputy Chair.

On the Psychology Board she has been active in many areas, including professional practice ethics and CPD standards, supervisor training, and accreditation. The Board expresses its thanks for the outstanding contribution Ann has made over many years and wishes her well for her new appointment.



## Upcoming renewal period – renew online and on time

Over 26,000 psychologists across Australia with general and non-practising registration are due to renew their registration by **30 November**. We encourage you to check that your contact email address is up to date so that AHPRA can send you an email renewal reminder.

To check your contact details held by AHPRA and make any changes, go online at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au), click *Your account* in the top right hand corner and then use your unique contact number (User ID) and follow the prompts. Your User ID is always included in AHPRA correspondence to practitioners, and is not the same as your registration number.

If you do not have your User ID, complete an online enquiry form (under *Contact us* on the AHPRA website), selecting 'User ID' as the category of enquiry or phone us on 1300 419 495.

Once you receive notice that renewal is open, the quickest, easiest and most secure way to renew is online via *Your account*.

## Online and postal renewal process

Three years into the National Scheme, psychologists have embraced the new online renewal process. Over 92% of generally registered psychologists with a 30 November expiry date renewed online last year, compared with 88% in 2011.

This year AHPRA will be sending email reminders to those psychologists who have previously renewed online, instead of posting hard copy renewal forms.

Last year, hard copy renewal forms were sent to everyone who did not renew in the first few weeks of the renewal period, but of more than 20,000 forms that were posted out, less than 2,000 were used – everyone else renewed online. Therefore, email-only reminders will significantly increase the efficiency of the renewal process.

Renewal forms will still be posted to psychologists who have not previously renewed online, and will be available on request for psychologists who have renewed online previously but wish to renew by post this year.

## New requirements

### National Psychology Exam

#### Am I required to sit the exam?

- The National Psychology Exam came into effect on 1 July 2013 for provisional psychologists. However, not all provisional psychologists will be required to sit the exam.

#### Who will need to sit the exam?

##### From 1 July 2013:

- all applicants for general registration who hold overseas qualifications, except those who are completing either a Board-approved 4+2 internship, 5+1 internships or APAC-accredited higher degree, and
- general psychologists directed to undertake the National Psychology Exam as an outcome of a health, performance or conduct notification.

##### From 1 July 2014:

- all applicants for general registration who are completing a 4+2 internship or a 5+1 internship, and
- all applicants for general registration who have not practised for more than 10 years, as per the *Recency of practice registration standard* (see [Standards and guidelines>Registration standards](#)).

### Who does not need to sit the exam?

#### Until 1 July 2014:

- applicants for general registration who have completed a 4+2 internship or a 5+1 internship are not required to sit the exam if the application is received before 1 July 2014.

#### Until 1 July 2016:

- applicants for general registration who have completed an APAC-accredited masters degree, doctorate or combined masters/PhD are exempt from sitting the exam until 30 June 2016.

### About the exam guidelines

- The Board has recently undertaken public consultation on the draft *Guidelines for the National Psychology Examination* and is now finalising the guidelines for publication. The guidelines specify the examination eligibility requirements, examination rules and specific exam policies. To read the draft guidelines, see [News>Past consultations](#).
- An instruction guide for applicants will be published shortly. This guide will provide details on how to check eligibility and register, how to access the online practice exam, and how to book and pay for an exam.

## Supervisor training

From 1 July 2013, all psychologists applying to become Board-approved supervisors must have successfully completed a Board-approved training program in psychology supervision. Additional Board-approved training must be completed every five years in order to maintain Board-approved status.

### Who needs to be Board approved to provide supervision?

Anyone supervising psychologists (including provisional) undertaking any of these training programs must be Board approved:

- 4+2 internship program
- 5+1 internship program
- higher degree placements
- registrar program, or
- work, in addition to placements, for higher degree students.

### Who can apply to become Board approved?

To be eligible to become Board approved, practitioners must have held general registration as a psychologist for **at least**:

- three years before starting as a principal supervisor, and

- two years before starting as a secondary supervisor.

Supervisors providing supervision in the registrar program must have held endorsement in the relevant approved area of practice for **at least** two years before beginning supervision. They must continue holding that endorsement for the whole period of supervision.

Higher degree supervisors providing supervision to provisional psychologists in the 5+1 pathway do not need to hold an area of practice endorsement.

There are no extra formal qualification requirements for Board-approved supervisors over and above those required to obtain general registration and, where applicable, to obtain an area of practice endorsement.

Other types of supervision arrangements and supervisors, such as thesis supervisors, line managers, and private supervision and mentoring arrangements, do not need Board approval.

### For more information

For more information on supervision and supervisor training providers, transition provisions, or to access the *ABAS-76* form, please go to [Supervision](#) on the Board's website.

## Transitional programs for overseas applicants

New requirements for overseas-qualified applicants for psychology registration came into effect on 1 July 2013. In order to become eligible for general registration, all overseas applicants must:

- pass the National Psychology Exam, and
- complete at least three months of supervised practice as a provisional psychologist in the transitional program.

Overseas applicants will usually be required to have provisional registration before they can sit the exam and undertake the transitional program. The transitional program will help to prepare the applicant for the exam, as the exam tests applied psychological knowledge. However, as long as the candidate holds provisional registration, the exam can be taken before, during or after completion of the transitional program – depending on personal preparation for the exam and availability of examination dates.

Implementation of both the exam and the transitional program allows knowledge and competence to be assessed in two different ways. This gives increased assurance that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are granted general registration.

The transitional program includes hands-on experience in a psychological role and regular supervision by a Board-

approved supervisor. The aim of the program is to ensure that all psychologists registered to practise in Australia have sufficient training and experience to be able to demonstrate competence in professional, legal and cultural issues specific to the Australian context.

This includes:

- knowledge and understanding of Australian legislation and legal issues relevant to psychology practice and awareness of when to consult various Acts and Regulations
- good knowledge and understanding of the Australian, Board-approved *Code of ethics*
- understanding of Australian government, legal and corporate structures as relevant to the psychologist's intended scope of practice
- understanding of Australian corporate cultures and work practices as relevant to the psychologist's intended scope of practice
- expectations and requirements about confidentiality and privacy
- expectations about record keeping, rights of client to access files, rights of legal and governments authorities to access records, freedom of information and so on
- boundary and consent issues from an Australian cultural perspective, and
- awareness and knowledge of, and skills to work competently with, people from different cultural groups in Australia.

To act as a supervisor for the transitional program you must be approved by the Board as a supervisor of provisional psychologists – that is, for the 4+2, 5+1 or higher degree pathways. You should also have excellent knowledge of Australian legal, ethical and professional matters and their application to psychological practice, and the ability to teach and assess those skills.

You can apply for approval as a supervisor of provisional psychologists using the *ABAS-76* form, which is available on the website.

### Further reading for overseas applicants, employers and supervisors

[www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Overseas-Applicants.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Overseas-Applicants.aspx)

A revised policy for overseas applicants will be available shortly.

[www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/National-psychology-exam.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/National-psychology-exam.aspx)

[www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Overseas-Applicants/Transitional-program.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Overseas-Applicants/Transitional-program.aspx)

[www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx)

## National Scheme news

### Notifications guides published

In June, AHPRA published new guides for health practitioners and the community about how notifications are managed in the National Scheme. The [guide for practitioners](#) and a series of fact sheets explain to practitioners what happens when AHPRA receives a notification on behalf of a National Board. The information complements the direct correspondence that individuals receive if a notification is made about them.

AHPRA collaborated with the professional associations for practitioners registered in the National Scheme to develop the guide for practitioners. The practitioners' guide clearly explains what happens after a concern has been raised about a health practitioner, who decides what happens, how we work with health complaints entities and what practitioners can expect from our processes.

AHPRA has also developed a guide for the community about making a notification about a health practitioner. This guide for notifiers, [Do you have a concern about a health practitioner? A guide for people raising a concern](#), will be an early focus for feedback from the newly established Community Reference Group for AHPRA and the National Boards.

Both guides are published online on the AHPRA and National Boards' websites in a wholly revised section on complaints and notifications.

### Community Reference Group established

AHPRA has established a Community Reference Group to work with AHPRA and the National Boards. This is the first time a national group of this kind, with a focus on health practitioner regulation, has been established in Australia. Seven members from the community, who are not health practitioners, have been appointed to the group, which will be chaired by Mr Paul Laris, a community member on two Boards in the National Scheme.

The group will have a number of roles, including providing feedback, information and advice on strategies for building better knowledge in the community about health practitioner regulation, but also advising AHPRA on how to better understand, and most importantly, meet, community needs.

AHPRA and the National Boards believe that the Community Reference Group is an important step to increasing community input into health practitioner regulation.

'Health practitioner regulation affects everyone, because it is about public safety. But not many people are aware of how it works or what it does,' AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher said.

'The Community Reference Group will work with the 14 National Boards and AHPRA and advise us how we can build community awareness, understanding and support for the Australia's regulatory scheme for health practitioners,' he said.

Communiqués from meetings of the Community Reference Group will be published on the AHPRA website. A list of members is published in a [media statement](#).

## Data exchange strengthens health workforce planning

A renewed commitment to timely information-sharing and constructive engagement is the feature of the partnership between AHPRA, Health Workforce Australia (HWA) and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Each organisation has statutory obligations to share information that aims to improve health workforce policy and planning in Australia.

In May 2012, the three parties signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) outlining how national health workforce registration data would be shared, consistent with the National Law. Reviewing the MoU this month, the parties affirmed that it continued to provide a clear and appropriate framework for the agreement between them.

The AIHW and HWA welcomed the establishment of an AHPRA data quality team and were briefed on AHPRA's strategic plan to safeguard data quality.

'The data collected by AHPRA through the National Scheme creates common information across professions and jurisdictions – in effect it ensures we are comparing apples with apples, statistically speaking,' AIHW CEO David Kalisch said.

## Call for expressions of interest

The ACT/TAS/VIC Regional Board of the Psychology Board of Australia has a vacancy for a health practitioner member:

[www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/2013-07-19-board-member-vacancy.aspx](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/2013-07-19-board-member-vacancy.aspx)

## Contact the Board

- Visit our website at [www.psychologyboard.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au) for information on the National Scheme and for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines, policies and fact sheets.
- Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [Enquiries](#) link on the bottom of every page.
- For registration enquiries call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (for overseas callers).
- Address mail correspondence to: Prof. Brin Grenyer, Chair, Psychology Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne VIC 3001.

## Vale Barry Fallon

It is with great sadness that we inform practitioners that our colleague Barry Fallon passed away last month.

In the regulation of psychology, he was most recently member and Chair of the Victorian, Tasmanian and ACT Regional Board of the Psychology Board of Australia (2010-13), and before that sat on the Psychologists Registration Board of Victoria from 2003-10. He was a foundation member of the National Psychology Examination Committee (2011-12).

Professor Fallon was a distinguished member of the psychology profession, with over 40 years' service. He qualified at the University of Queensland and continued to a PhD at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He had a long and outstanding career, including roles as Foundation Professor of Psychology at the Australian Catholic University and academic appointments at the Universities of Melbourne, Deakin and Monash.

In 2007 he was awarded the Australian Catholic University Excellence in Post-Graduate Supervision Award; the 2007 Australian Psychological Society College of Organisational Psychologists Elton Mayo Award for Contribution to Teaching and Research in Organisational Psychology; and in 1991 was elected a Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society. Among many important professional posts and contributions, Barry was President of the Australian Psychological Society from 1994-96. Barry published extensively, with over 100 peer-reviewed books, journals, reports and invited papers to international conferences.

Barry will be remembered by his friends, colleagues, students and clients as a warm and engaging man, full of life, with a great sense of humour. He made an outstanding contribution to the profession and to the regulation of psychology.

