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## From the Chair

### Work-life balance and taking time out

Psychologists generally love being psychologists. Indeed, data suggest that about 87% of psychologists are currently working in psychology – a very high participation rate in the profession. To sustain a lifelong career in psychology takes planning, and there are a number of issues that need to be considered to maintain a work-life balance.

For example, it is common to take between one to four years out for parental leave to raise a young family or other leave to care for elders. It is also common to take time out to study, do something different, or travel overseas.

The Psychology Board of Australia, (the Board), encourages this kind of 'time out'. In 2010, as part of the move to national registration, the category of 'non-practising registration' was introduced; this was new. Any psychologist can apply to move their registration status from general to non-practising. This is the best way to stay registered, and therefore keep the use of the title 'psychologist' during these periods of leave. Non-practising registration has a reduced annual registration fee, and no annual continuing professional development (CPD) or indemnity insurance requirements, yet Board newsletters and other updates continue to be delivered. It is also a good option for those who are retired.

If you move to non-practising registration there are several issues to keep in mind. If you intend to return to psychology practice, think about how you are going to update your knowledge and skills. It is a good idea to keep connected with the profession by attending events and reading journals. Check the Board's [recency of practice policy](#), because if you have not practised for five continuous years you may need to do some further training or practise under supervision for a specified time.

You are also not allowed to practise psychology in Australia while registered as non-practising. 'Practising' means any paid or unpaid role using your skills and knowledge as a psychologist. This can be clinical or non-clinical, including working in management, administration, education, research, advisory or other roles that affect safe, effective delivery of psychology services. If this relates to you then you need to maintain general registration.

Taking a break from the profession is often necessary and a good idea. There are options to help you take parental and other leave while maintaining your registration. In addition, daily professional self-care activities can also help you to maintain a safe work-life balance over the long term.

### Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair, Psychology Board of Australia



## Record-keeping and destruction of files

### Digitising and destroying original records

The Board does not consider it unethical for psychologists to destroy original client records, including their handwritten case notes, which have been scanned and stored in a digital format (such as a PDF), provided that all relevant legal and ethical requirements have been followed.

If you copy and destroy records you must ensure that the confidentiality of client records is protected; this also applies even if the task is delegated to someone else.

When client records are copied and destroyed, the steps below must be followed.

- Copy all of the original documents (both sides of the page and all file content, such as file notes and post-it notes).
- Do not compromise data quality (copies must be legible and reflect the original colours).
- The digital information must be backed up; store both the original and backed up files in secure settings.
- Ensure unauthorised access to stored files is restricted, and minimise the risk that somebody could tamper with them.

You should ensure that you – and/or other legally authorised people – can access the data easily when you require the data in order to provide further services to clients, especially in emergency situations.

You must not destroy original records if you believe, or should reasonably suspect, that relevant documents may be required for legal reasons (for example, for freedom of information or Privacy Act requests, or when you expect that the documents may be subpoenaed).

You must also consider your own legal position, as you may be subject to legislation or contracts with funding bodies like Medicare Australia or the Department of Veterans' Affairs. These types of organisations have specific rules about the storing and destruction of client records. If you work for an organisation, especially a government department, or one that provides services to governments, you should also determine whether these bodies have rules that may regulate when, how and what records may be copied and destroyed.

## National Psychology Examination – 2015 schedule now available

The Board has published the 2015 schedule of exams.

Registration Open:	Exams
Mon 22 Dec 2014 – Fri 23 Jan 2015	Fri 6 Feb 2015 – Fri 27 Feb 2015
Mon 9 Mar 2015 – Fri 24 Apr 2015	Fri 8 May 2015 – Fri 29 May 2015
Mon 8 Jun 2015 – Fri 24 Jul 2015	Fri 7 Aug 2015 – Fri 28 Aug 2015
Mon 7 Sep 2015 – Fri 23 Oct 2015	Fri 6 Nov 2015 – Fri 27 Nov 2015

Registrations for the examination period starting Monday 1 Dec 2014 – Friday 12 Dec 2014 are now open.

To schedule your exam, create an account in the [examination portal](#). Once you receive notice that your account has been activated (within five working days), you can book in your examination day and time and attempt the practice examination.

The [examination portal](#) webpage includes important examination resources – the examination guidelines, curriculum, reading list, and other relevant information in the frequently asked questions (FAQ).

If you have a question that is not answered in the FAQ, please contact the National Examination Coordinator at [nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:nationalpsychologyexam@ahpra.gov.au) for assistance.

Please note that all provisional psychologists and overseas applicants are required to pass the exam before applying for general registration. The current exemption for provisional registrants in APAC-accredited Master's and Doctoral programs expires on 1 July 2016. A public consultation on this exemption will take place in 2015.

## How to add a supervisor type

Psychologists with general registration who are planning to become supervisors, or want to add a supervisor type, can apply using the [ABAS-76 application form](#) and provide the required evidence demonstrating that they meet the necessary requirements.

To check whether you are already a Board-approved supervisor, and what types of supervision you have approval to provide, go to [Search for a supervisor](#) – enter your name or registration number and select your principal place of practice (state or territory).

If you want to add or change supervision types, as soon as you are eligible for the new supervisor type (and not before), simply apply using the [ABAS-76 application form](#).

The Psychology Board of Australia approves supervisors providing supervision in the following pathways:

- 4+2 pathway (principal and secondary supervisors)
- 5+1 pathway (principal and secondary supervisors)
- higher degree students
- working in addition to placements (for higher degree students), and
- the registrar program for area of practice endorsement (principal and secondary supervisors).

For more information on becoming a supervisor or adding a supervisor type, please see the [Board's website](#).

## 2013/14 National Scheme annual report

AHPRA and the National Boards have released their 2013/14 [annual report](#) on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), providing a comprehensive record of the operations of the National Scheme for the 12 months ending 30 June 2014.

This year, for the first time, AHPRA and the National Boards have also [published summaries](#) of our work regulating health practitioners in every state and territory. Profession-specific profiles will be released and progressively published.

The annual report provides a national snapshot of the work and finances of the National Scheme and is tabled in the parliaments of each state and territory and the Commonwealth. The 2014 annual report is an important reporting milestone and covers the lead-up to the scheduled independent three-year review of the National Scheme, now underway.

For more information, please read the [media release](#) on the AHPRA website.

## Renew registration online now

The Board has launched its 2014 renewal of registration campaign for psychologists and AHPRA has sent email reminders to psychologists who have provided an email address.

If your contact information has changed, act now so you don't miss future reminders to renew. To update your contact details, visit the Board's website and use the appropriate link under *Online services for practitioners*. A user ID and secure password are needed. If you have forgotten your user ID you can complete a web enquiry form. Select 'Online services – Practitioner' as the category type.

The registration renewal date for psychologists with general or non-practising registration is 30 November 2014. The quickest and easiest way to renew registration is [online](#).

Renewal applications received during December will incur a late payment fee.

Under the National Law<sup>1</sup>, practitioners who do not renew their registration within one month of their registration expiry date must be removed from the Register of Psychologists. If you don't renew within this time, your registration will lapse and you will not be able to practise psychology in Australia. A fast-track application can be made, but only during January. You cannot practise until the application is processed and the national register is updated.

Please read the Board's registration standards carefully before applying to renew as information in support of declarations made in an application could be requested.

A renewal FAQ is available on the Board's website.

## Health practitioner titles protected under the National Law

A South Australian woman has pleaded guilty in the Adelaide Magistrates Court of claiming to be a registered psychologist and using health practitioner titles protected under the National Law.

Ms Julie Grayston conceded she had used the protected titles 'psychologist' and 'clinical psychologist' between March 2012 and April 2013. She was placed on a good behaviour bond. If Ms Grayston breaches the conditions of the bond, she will be ordered to pay \$8000 and return to court for sentencing.

In a decision handed down on 21 October 2014, the magistrate found a financial penalty was warranted, but did not impose one because of Ms Grayston's financial circumstances.

Ms Grayston admitted in court that she was not a registered psychologist, but had claimed to be authorised and qualified as a psychologist on 20 occasions. Pretending to be a registered health practitioner is an offence under the National Law.

Ms Grayston has never been registered with the Psychology Board of Australia (the Board) and does not possess the academic qualifications necessary to be eligible for registration under the National Law. She had not been registered previously as a psychologist anywhere in Australia before 2010 when the National Law commenced.

The current registration status of all of Australia's 619,000 registered health practitioners is published on the [register of practitioners](#). If a person's name does not appear on the register, they are not registered to practise in a regulated health profession in Australia.

The National Law protects the public by ensuring that only registered health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified can use [protected titles](#) such as psychologist. The law allows for penalties for falsely using protected titles or holding yourself out to be a registered practitioner when you are not.

For more information, please read the [media release](#) on the Board's website.

## Information for supervisors – graduate applications for provisional registration now open online

If a student you have been training has completed, or is about to complete, an accredited fourth-year psychology course they can now apply online for provisional registration as a psychologist. This online function helps smooth the path from undergraduate study to postgraduate training as a provisional psychologist.

Students can apply for provisional registration as soon as they have completed all the requirements of their fourth-year degree, before formally graduating, (i.e. attending the graduation-ceremony), if they have the arrangements for their fifth-year and sixth-year program in place.

<sup>1</sup> Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory

They are eligible to use the online service if they intend to continue their psychology training and require provisional registration to undertake the fifth and sixth years of psychology training through one of the approved pathways leading to general registration as a psychologist.

These are:

- 4+2 internship program
- 5+1 internship program, or
- higher degree program (Master's/Doctorate professional qualification).

They will need to know which one of the provisional registration pathways they will be taking at the time they apply and they must mail the details of their provisional registration pathway – a supervised practice plan or enrolment in an approved postgraduate degree – to AHPRA within 60 days of making the online application. Therefore, if they are going on to further study at university they should wait until they can provide enrolment details for a Doctorate, Master's or Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology, which may not be until early 2015.

If they already have their placement/s and supervisor/s for a 4+2 internship confirmed and are keen to get started they can apply right away. If they are feeling confident they can even apply while still waiting for their final results – just as long as their university or college provides AHPRA with confirmation of their eligibility to graduate within the 60 days. They can also use the 60 days to meet with their supervisor and finalise their supervised practice plan.

To become a registered provisional psychologist, eligible students must also meet the National Board's registration requirements relating to criminal history, English language skills and professional indemnity insurance. Make sure they visit the Board's website and check the requirements for provisional registration before they apply.

### For more information

Go to the [Graduate applications webpage](#) for FAQ and links to more information about how to use the graduate online service.

Go to the [Provisional registration webpage](#).

For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers) or lodge an [online enquiry](#).

## Health profession agreement

The Board and AHPRA have published the 2014/15 [health profession agreement](#) (HPA) that outlines the partnership between the Board and AHPRA, and the services AHPRA will provide to the Board in 2014/15. The HPA also provides information about the Board's financial operations and fees.

## Strengthening international criminal history checks

From early 2015, National Boards and AHPRA will implement a new procedure for checking the criminal history of international applicants for registration. The new approach aims to balance protecting the public without unnecessarily delaying the registration process for applicants.

For more information, please read the [media release](#) on the AHPRA website.

## Audit of registered health practitioners continues

### Why audit?

Audits are an important way the Board and AHPRA can better protect the public. AHPRA, on behalf of the Board, conducts random audits to ensure that practitioners are meeting the mandatory registration standards and provide assurance to the community and the Board.

Audits of random samples of practitioners from all professions will occur periodically throughout the year. Registered health practitioners may be audited at any time on any one of the mandatory registration standards.

### What information is being audited?

Each time you apply to renew your registration as a psychologist, you make a declaration that you have (or have not) met the registration standards for the profession. The audit requires that you provide further information to support your declarations.

### What is the process?

The selection for audit is random. You may be audited at any time. If you are selected for audit you will be required to provide further information to support your registration declarations.

- You will receive an audit notice in the post, and a checklist that outlines what documentation you need to provide to demonstrate that you meet the standard(s) being audited. The notice will identify which standards are being audited – these may be for recency of practice, CPD, professional indemnity insurance and/or criminal history.
- You will have four weeks to provide the requested documentation to AHPRA.
- AHPRA will review your supporting documentation against the declarations you made in your last renewal application.
- AHPRA may request further information and/or refer cases of non-compliance to the National Board or its delegated committee for decision.
- You will be advised by letter of the outcome of the audit.

Further information is available on the Board's website on the [Audit page](#).

## Certificate of registration status now available online

### New process makes it easy

Registered health practitioners can now request a certificate of registration status (CoRS) using the online AHPRA portal. In the past this was a manual process involving a form that was either posted or hand-delivered to an AHPRA office.

Practitioners can now:

- apply online by [logging onto online services](#), or find out more information on our [Practitioner services page](#) of the AHPRA website, or
- apply using the [PDF form](#) (245 KB), which is available for download from our [Common application forms page](#) or the [Practitioner services page](#) of the AHPRA website.

There is a fee of \$50 for each CoRS.

### What is a CoRS?

When practitioners are seeking registration or employment that requires them to be registered outside Australia, the regulatory authority in that jurisdiction may require a [certificate of registration status \(CoRS\)](#). This document is also referred to as a certificate of good standing or certificate of current professional status by some regulators.

The certificate provided by AHPRA:

- identifies the National Board and the recipient organisation
- lists practitioner-specific information including key registration dates, details of any current proceedings, suspensions, cancellations and/or any other relevant information, such as active conditions, undertakings, cautions and reprimands, and
- includes the date of issue of the certificate.

AHPRA offers a service to practitioners to provide a CoRS to regulatory authorities in other countries and some other approved organisations, including a number of specialist colleges. Approved organisations can be found on AHPRA's website under [Practitioner services](#).

The certificate is never provided to the requesting practitioner or to an employer, and can only be sent to an AHPRA-approved regulatory body or organisation.

These changes are part of our ongoing work with AHPRA to improve and streamline services for registered medical practitioners.

## National Scheme news

### Three-year review of the National Scheme

The independent review of the National Scheme is underway and a consultation paper is now [published](#).

The terms of reference for the review are published at the [Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council website](#) under 'media releases' on the right-hand tab. The review – led by independent reviewer, Mr Kim Snowball – was built into the intergovernmental agreement that set up the framework and governance arrangements for the National Scheme. The agreement stated that the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) would initiate an independent review after three years of the National Scheme's operation.

The National Boards and AHPRA are actively participating in the review process.

### Four-year anniversary of the National Scheme

July marked the four-year anniversary of the National Scheme (with Western Australia joining in October 2010). Reflecting on the past four years, AHPRA Chair, Mr Michael Gorton AM, said the National Scheme had delivered important benefits for the quality and safety of the health system in each state and territory and for health practitioners and the community.

The National Scheme was the product of an important national health workforce reform, which was internationally significant in its scale and ambition.

Headline achievements in the last four years include:

- registering more than 619,000 health practitioners with national mobility of registration
- establishing and maintaining a searchable national online register that makes it easier for the Australian community to find out about the registration status of all registered practitioners
- increasing online renewal rates dramatically (95 per cent average), making it easier for practitioners to renew on time
- establishing data exchange with partners such as the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Medicare Australia to greatly improve workforce data for policy and planning, and
- developing a comprehensive set of regulatory policies and standards, across and within professions, to ensure appropriate protection of the public.

### New homepages for AHPRA and National Boards' websites

We have changed the homepages of the AHPRA and National Boards' websites, to make them easier to use and make it easier for users to find what they need.

The designs aim to make searches easier and more accurate and promote consultations and AHPRA's social media channels to make it easier for users to find the information they are looking for. The new designs are based on analytics data on how people use the sites as well as feedback from staff, (including our customer service teams who receive calls from our stakeholders on where to find information on the sites), and from members from our community reference group.

With the new homepages, users can:

- search the register with one click straight from the homepage
- go to the 'employer' or 'practitioner' tabs, which include links specific to these groups
- browse more news items without clicking through to a specific story, and
- know which website they are on at all times, even if they click between AHPRA and Board pages.

While the new homepages make an immediate improvement to the usability of the sites, there is still more work to follow. Work on the rest of the sites will begin later this year, which will include extensive consultation with a range of user groups, including practitioners, employers and members of the community.

### Queensland – new arrangements for handling notifications from 1 July 2014

From 1 July 2014 a new law came in to effect in Queensland, the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*.

From this date, all complaints about Queensland health practitioners will be received by the Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) who will either manage the matters or refer them to the relevant National Board to manage.

Complaints that were made to AHPRA or National Boards before 1 July 2014 will generally continue to be managed by AHPRA on behalf of National Boards. However, under the new law the OHO can request that a matter be referred to them to be managed. If this were to happen, AHPRA will inform both the notifier and the practitioner who is the subject of the notification.

For information about the OHO please go to [www.oho.qld.gov.au](http://www.oho.qld.gov.au) or call 133 646 (133 OHO).

### Invitation to participate in a survey

From time to time the Board advises registrants of research relevant to the Board's objectives, including issues of workforce reform.

You are invited to participate in a survey on the role psychologists play within aged care, including mental health and dementia care. University of Queensland ethics approval has been granted.

For more information please contact Dr Leander Mitchell at [leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.au](mailto:leander.mitchell@uqconnect.edu.au).

To complete the survey, please follow the link: [Working in Residential Aged Care in Australia Survey 2014](#)

### Keep in touch with 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.

