



PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2007

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms Jeannette Stott	Chair, Psychologist
Ms Margaret Johnson	Psychologist
Ms Vidula Garde	Psychologist
Ms Margaret Seccafien	Public Member
Beth Walker	Public Member

BOARD SUPPORT

Ms Jill Huck	Registrar
Ms Colette Pethick	Policy/Research
Ms Sally Forsstrom	Complaints
Ms Julie Burrows	Registrations

BOARD ADVISERS

Mr Ted Milliken
Ms Christine Martins

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first Newsletter for 2007. The Board anticipates an exciting and challenging year with continued increases in the number of conditional registrants undertaking supervised practice and ongoing progress towards national registration and accreditation.

This and future Newsletters will provide ongoing feedback in relation to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), National Registration and Accreditation model.

COAG plans to commence the new arrangements for regulation and accreditation of 9 professional groups in July 2008. These health professions are as follows:

Medical Practitioners; Chiropractors; Dental (Dentists, Dental Specialists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Therapists, Prosthetists); Nurses & Midwives; Optometrists; Osteopaths; Pharmacists; Physiotherapists, and Psychologists.

Occupational Therapists, Aboriginal Health Workers and Radiographers will continue to be regulated under current Northern Territory legislation.

The Chairs of the Northern Territory Boards listed above have forwarded a submission to the COAG health Working Group and the Northern Territory Government. The Australian Council of Psychologists Registration Boards and the Australian Psychological Society have all forwarded submissions in relation to the National Registration and National Accreditation model proposed by COAG.

The Board encourages all psychologists to maintain interest in the COAG decision. From July 2008, registration will be based on legislation that applies nationally. Keeping your registration current will affect your practice across all States and Territories.

Every year the Board identifies practitioners that have not taken account of the detail provided on their annual practising certificates (APC). As a result they may have practised unlicensed or had difficulties with seeking registration in another jurisdiction. Please ensure you:

- Note the date on which your APC expires;
- Check the accuracy of information on your APC; and
- Ensure you keep your APC in a safe place.

The Board strongly encourages all psychologists to develop an understanding of the *Health Practitioners Act 2004* and hopes these Newsletters provide assistance in this area. Please contact the Board if you have items of interest you would like the Board to address in Newsletters.

Best Wishes

Ms Jeannette Stott (Chair)

BOARD MEMBER VACANCIES

On 11 May 2007 there will be two psychologists vacancies and one public member vacancy on the Board. Board membership is a rewarding experience and remuneration is available for non-government employees. Please refer to the attached notice calling for Expressions of Interest. Advertisement of the vacancies will also be posted in the NT News and the Centralian Advocate the week commencing 19 February 2007. Expressions of interest will be accepted until 12 March 2007. For further detail contact the Board at the address on this Newsletter.

BOARD ADVISER EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Board currently has two advisers who provide an essential service to the Board in assessing all supervision related documents. The advisers assess conditional registrants' compliance with the Board's Supervised Practice Policy and their capacity to demonstrate competence in psychological practice.

Advisers are appointed by the Board and remunerated for work done on its behalf. Please contact the Board's Research and Policy Officer at the address on this Newsletter for further details.

PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2007

POLICY NEWS

Registrants are advised to refer to new and revised policies, which are available on the Board's website.

Revised Policies and Documents

- 'Use of Title Policy'
- 'Entitlement to Registration Policy' to provide guidance in relation to Incomplete D. Psychology and Registration, and
- 'Supervised Practice Policy and Forms' refer to this Newsletter for a summary of the changes.

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING DATES

Please note supervision reports and other information to be addressed at a Board meeting must be forwarded to the Board no less than four weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. There may be some delay in the Board addressing documents received after this time.

Meeting dates currently scheduled for 2007:
19 Feb. 4 May 13 Aug. 29 Oct. 17 Dec.

WRITTEN CONSENT

The Board recommends psychologists actively seek the clients' written consent in relation to all psychological services. If consent is refused the Board advises practitioners to address this issue with their employer prior to services being made available.

ADVERTISING

The *Health Practitioners Act* does not require the Board to monitor the ethical nature of practitioners advertising. However, the Board advises practitioners to ensure they do not mislead the public in advertisements and to seek guidance from their professional association, and the Fair Trading legislation: <http://www.ncc.gov.au>

INFORMATION FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS AND EMPLOYERS RE PRACTISING UNLICENSED

To hold a current registration in the Northern Territory is a legal requirement and the responsibility of the practitioner. Practising unlicensed is a breach of Section 101 (1)(b) of the *Health Practitioners Act*.

The Board alerts practitioners and employers to the fact that practising unlicensed may: affect indemnity arrangements and cause the practitioner and employer to be in breach of the *Trade Practices Act 1974*. It is in the best interest of your clients, yourself and your employer to ensure you are registered at all times. Annual registration expires on 30 September every year. Your prompt attention to registration renewal in September protects your interests, and that of your clients, work organisation, and the discipline of Psychology.

If you fail to renew your practising certificate by 30 September, and continue to practise, you have committed an offence under the Act. On 2

October 2006, there were two psychologists who practiced without registration. Renewal forms are posted to registrants by the end of August annually, forms will be available from this office or the Board's website. Please note, non-receipt of a renewal notice in August is not an acceptable reason for practising unlicensed. Therefore, it is imperative that you ensure the Board is notified of a change of postal address.

Employers are reminded to ensure they have sound processes in place to ensure all psychologists and other regulated health profession employees hold current registration.

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF PSYCHOLOGISTS REGISTRATION BOARDS CONFERENCE (ACRRB)

Delegates from Boards in each Australian and New Zealand Board attended the October 2006 ACPRB Conference held in Queensland.

Key Items addressed at the conference included:

- National Accreditation issues.
- Potential changes to registration requirement
- Submission to COAG about national registration and accreditation.
- Supervisors' training and accreditation.

KNOW YOUR ACT

Psychologists and 11 other health profession groups are regulated under the *Health Practitioners Act 2004* in the Northern Territory. The purpose of the Act is to ensure public protection.

The following information is provided to emphasise the need to ensure your Annual Practising Certificate is current, correct and secure. In addition information in relation to Offences of dishonesty has been provided.

S40 (2) Practising certificates

A practising certificate issued to a registered health practitioner is evidence until the due date, or the date determined by the relevant Board, that –

- (a) The health practitioner is authorised to practise in the Territory in the category of registration specified in the certificate subject to the conditions, if any, specified in the certificate;
- (b) the health practitioner is authorised to practise in the restricted practice areas, if any, subject to the conditions, if any, specified in the certificate.

S41 Replacement and amendment of certificates

(1) If the relevant Board is satisfied that a certificate issued by it has been lost or destroyed, it may issue a

PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2007

replacement certificate (that is marked accordingly) on the replacement certificate fee being paid.

(2) The relevant Board, by notice, may require a health practitioner to surrender a certificate issued to the health practitioner to enable it to issue a new certificate with amended particulars.

(3) The Registrar of a Board has the same powers in relation to an interim certificate of registration or enrolment as the Board has under this section in relation to certificates issued by it.

(4) A health practitioner who is given a notice under subsection (2) must surrender the certificate to the relevant Board –

(a) within 7 days after receiving the notice; or

(b) within any longer period that the Board allows and specifies in the notice.

(5) A person who is given a notice by a Registrar under subsection (3) must surrender his or her interim certificate to the Registrar –

(a) within 7 days after receiving the notice; or

(b) within any longer period that the Registrar allows and specifies in the notice.

Penalty: 50 penalty units.

42. Offences in relation to certificates

A person who is issued with a certificate of registration must not –

(d) lend or agree to lend that certificate to another person; or

(e) allow that certificate to be used by another person.

Penalty: 500 penalty units.

106. Offences of dishonesty

(1) A person must not make or produce a false or misleading statement, either orally or in writing, in connection with –

(a) an application, assessment or inquiry;

(b) a preliminary investigation into a complaint; or

(c) an investigation carried out by an inspector.

(2) A person must not forge or change –

(a) a certificate of registration or enrolment;

(b) an interim certificate of registration or enrolment; or

(c) a practising certificate.

(3) A person must not forge or change a degree, diploma or other evidence of qualifications for registration or enrolment under this Act.

(4) An offence against this section is a regulatory offence.

Section 46

Notice of change of name or address

A health practitioner must, within 30 days of changing his or her name, personal address or

business address, give the relevant Board notice of the change and the new name or address, as the case may be.

Failing to update the Board with changes of name / address details means that you will not receive any correspondence from the Board. In effect this means you will miss the opportunity:

- To keep up with changes to policy;
- Receive newsletters, and
- Receive the application to renew your registration.

The Board seeks your assistance in ensuring that the name and contact details maintained on the database are current.

SUPERVISORS

The Board wishes to thank all supervisors for their commitment and suggestions throughout the year. Feedback from supervisors indicates that providing professional supervision is in the main a mutually beneficial and rewarding experience.

The demand for supervisors has risen over the past 3 years and many new graduates delay commencement of employment due to inability or delays in making suitable supervision arrangements. The Board is contacted on a regular basis seeking names of persons who are available to provide supervision in accordance with the Supervised Practice Policy. The Board does not provide names of psychologists, however would be pleased to do so with the permission of eligible psychologists.

Therefore, if you have held full registration as a psychologist for two years or more, do not have conditions on your registration or a conduct matter currently before the Board and are interested in providing professional supervision please contact the Board at the address on this Newsletter.

Alternatively forward your name to the APS-NT for inclusion on its list of supervisors in the NT.

The Board encourages supervisors to consider the following in relation to their role as a recognised supervisor:

- Understanding the importance of maintaining their skills in the core competency areas.
- Consideration to the optimum number of supervisees that can be managed given other responsibilities.
- The responsibility of both supervisor and supervisee to ensure the Supervised Practice Policy is adhered to and to notify the Board of changes in supervision arrangements.
- It is the responsibility of supervisors and supervisee to ensure accurate records of supervision and psychological practice.

PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2007

- Supervisors should encourage discussion with supervisees on a regular basis in relation to expectations and levels of satisfaction with supervision arrangements. The Board would like to thank Mr Stephen McGreevy for alerting it to the following document and recommends supervisors and others interested in supervision of psychologists access the American Psychology Association, March 2006, V37 No 3, article titled 'More Effective Supervision'.

SUPERVISED PRACTICE

The Board is obligated to ensure full registration is founded on solid evidence that a conditional registrant has completed all requirements of supervised practice, hence competent and eligible for full registration.

The Board takes this opportunity to highlight some of the requirement of the Supervised Practice Policy, (available on the Board's website or through this office).

Supervisors and conditional registrants are encouraged to contact the Board if there are changes to supervision arrangements; employment of the conditional registrant; or any issues with supervised practice requirements being met within the supervision plan. Changes in supervision arrangements may include, but are not limited to: change in the method of supervision; change of dates in reports; cessation of supervision; and any issue that may impact on registration status.

The Board has recently reviewed the Supervised Practice Policy and strongly recommends that all conditional registrants undertaking supervised practice and their supervisor(s) access the revised policy and forms from the Board website. Alternatively these documents are available from the Board at the address on this Newsletter.

Key Changes:

Supervisors refer to part 8 of the policy. Primary supervisor must supervise no less than 50% of the total supervision hours. Supervisors may supervise up to four conditional registrants at any one time, unless otherwise approved by the Board.

Supervision records have been streamlined with the combining of Forms B(ii) and B (iii) and modification to Form D. You will note the title of the forms has been modified.

The reporting forms have continued to cause concern to a number of conditional registrants and supervisors. Therefore, modifications have attempted to streamline the reporting forms.

The Board advises the revised policy will commence on 1 May 2007 and that all conditional registrants

are required to commence using the new reporting forms following the completion of their current 6-month reporting period. All conditional registrants are expected to be using the new reporting forms by **1 November 2007**. If this causes concern or you would like to comment on the changes please contact the Board as soon as possible.

SUPERVISOR / CONDITIONAL REGISTRANT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Each year the Board provides information sessions on Supervised Practice, for both supervisors, conditional registrants and other interested psychologists. The Board has received strong feedback on the value of these sessions.

Information Sessions 2007

- ALICE SPRINGS – 19 March 2007 4.30pm to 6pm**
- DARWIN** at the address on this Newsletter. **6pm to 8pm 4 May 2007**

RSVP to confirm your attendance no less than one week prior to the scheduled session. ph: 89994157

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT / IMPAIRMENT STATISTICS

As at 30 January 2007 there were two matters concerning professional conduct being investigated by the Board.

The Health Professional Review Tribunal addressed one matter, the outcome of which is that the Tribunal reprimanded the practitioner.

REGISTRATION STATISTICS

As at **31 December 2006** there were **169** psychologists on the Register, of whom: **155** were full registrations, and **32** were conditional registrations.

This compares with the same time in 2005 when there were 147 registered Psychologists of whom 32 were conditional registrants undertaking supervised practice.

STOP PRESS!

Remember the renewal date for registration is 30 September. This year's renewal notices will be posted on or about Monday 8 August 2007.

CONTACT DETAILS

Psychologists Board of the Northern Territory
GPO Box 4221 DARWIN NT 0801
Telephone +61 8 8999 4157
Fax +61 8 8999 4196
Email healthprofessions.ths@nt.gov.au
Web Address:
www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards

**PSYCHOLOGISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
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