



## HEALTH PROFESSIONS LICENSING AUTHORITY

**TITLE:** Permit to Perform Radiographic Procedures Policy

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 19 October 2005

**REVIEWED:** 30 January 2009

**BOARD:** Radiographers Registration Board of the Northern Territory

### **POLICY**

To govern the Issuance and Monitoring of Permits to carry out radiographic procedures

### **OBJECTIVES**

To protect the public by ensuring permit holders abide with current relevant legislation and meet the Board's accepted standard of practice.

### **RATIONALE**

Pursuant to section 20 of the *Radiographers Act* a person other than a registered radiographer may carry out limited radiographic procedures in accordance with a permit granted by the Board.

The Board recognises that:

- Diagnostic radiography is necessary 'tool' in the provision of medical, dental, chiropractic and nursing services;
- Diagnostic radiography, in delivering X-radiation, presents potential genetic and somatic risks to individual patients and the community generally;
- Diagnostic radiography should therefore only be employed where the potential advantages to a patient will outweigh the identifiable radiation risks, and that the X-Ray dose delivered must be a practicable minimum; and
- Qualified registered radiographers are the most desirable providers of radiography but that remote medical services, emergency medical situations and the fields of dentistry and chiropractic may justifiably require competent and suitable persons to undertake limited radiography.

In consequences the Board has a responsibility to determine:

- Who is eligible to deliver limited diagnostic radiography in accordance with section 20 of the *Radiographers Act*;
- Whether such an eligible person is technically competent to do so, has an appreciation of the radiation risks and has sufficient interpretive resources;
- Whether the need for X-ray services to be provided by a 'non-radiographer' is justifiable in the given situation; and
- The conditions of permit to carry out radiographic procedures.

The Board has determined to:

- Ensure effective, equal and consistent discretion in the application of section 20 of the *Radiographers Act*;
- Assist applicants eligible for a permit;
- Inform relevant educational institutions, and
- Inform health authorities and organisations.

## 1. ISSUING OF PERMITS

To be eligible a person must be:

### 1.1 Dental

1.1.1 Dentist registered under the *Health Practitioners Act 2004*; or

1.1.2 Dental specialist registered under *Health Practitioners Act 2004*; or

1.1.3 Dental therapists registered under *Health Practitioners Act 2004*,

Dental therapists seeking a permit to conduct OPGs must provide evidence of completing accredited training in conducting OPGs;

1.1.4 Dental hygienist registered under *Health Practitioners Act 2004*,

Dental hygienists seeking a permit to conduct OPGs must provide evidence of completing accredited training in conducting OPGs; or a

1.1.5 Dental assistants who work under the supervision of a Dentist and have successfully completed a minimum of an accredited Dental Assistant Certificate IV (that includes performing intra-oral X-rays).

### 1.2 Chiropractors:

- registered in the category of chiropractic under the registered under *Health Practitioners Act 2004*; and
- Chiropractors who hold a Bachelor of Applied Science (Chiropractic) from the: Phillip Institute of Technology in Victoria after 1981; graduates of the Sydney College of Chiropractic, New South Wales after 1983; or an accredited degree in Chiropractic (which includes conducting spinal and pelvic radiographs) will not be required to undergo the Board examination; or
- Chiropractors who hold a license to conduct radiographic procedures in another Australian jurisdiction; or
- Have completed a course in conducting radiographic procedures approved by the Australian Institute of Radiographers (AIR); or
- All other chiropractors must also gain at least a 60% pass in each section of an examination prescribed by the Board, which requires knowledge of the *Radiographers Act*, the *Radiation (Safety Control) Act* and training and experience in spinal radiography.

### 1.3 Medical Practitioners

1.3.1 Cardiologist and Radiologist;

Who hold current registration in the Northern Territory under the *Health Practitioners Act 2004*;

1.3.2 Other medical practitioners who are required to perform radiographic procedures, who have justified to the Board a practical need for radiography services, and

- Who hold current registration in the Northern Territory under the *Health Practitioners Act 2004*;
- Who hold or have held (within the last five years) a license to conduct specific radiographic procedures in another Australian jurisdiction; or
- Who have completed at least 40 hours experience working with a registered radiographer with certification of that experience or proof of equivalent experience, and
- Who have completed training recognised by the Board
  - (a) Completed an AIR approved course in conducting radiographic procedures; or
  - (b) With at least a 60% pass in each section of an examination prescribed by the Board based on knowledge of the *Radiographers Act*, the *Radiation (Safety*

*Control) Act* and the Radiographic Procedures Manual (published by the Board).

#### 1.4 Nurses

Registered under the *Health Practitioners Act 2004*; and

- 1.4.1 Who have completed training in performing radiographic procedures recognised by the Board; or
- 1.4.2 With restrictive licensing of Centre for Diseases Control nurses, to perform Chest X-ray CXR's on CDC (TB contact) patients, in an environment where there is no radiographer available and there are restrictions or difficulties in having the patients attend a formal imaging department; or
- 1.4.3 Have a current license or permit to conduct radiographic procedures issued in another Australian jurisdiction.

#### 1.5 Professional Development Year 1 – Radiographers (PDY1-Radiographers)

- 1.5.1 Who has completed training as a radiographer recognised by the Board; and
- 1.5.2 Who have commenced the PDY1 (48 week work placement) under supervision of a registered radiographer within the last 3 months.

PDY1 radiographers must forfeit the permit to conduct radiographic procedures and apply for registration as a radiographer immediately following receipt of their Australian Institute of Radiographers full accreditation.

#### 1.6 Other Persons (who may be one of the professions referred to above)

- 1.6.1 Who have successfully completed a course, which entitles that person to be licensed to conduct specific radiographic procedures in another Australian jurisdiction.

## 2. CONDITIONS ON PERMITS

The radiographic procedures must be specified in the conditions of the permit, which must accompany each permit issued and include only those within the professional field of the applicant. These will be confined to the applicant's radiographic training, skills and knowledge and his/her interpretive experience, ie:

- 2.1 Dentists To perform dental X-rays.
- 2.2 Dental Specialists To perform dental X-rays.
- 2.3 Dental Therapists To perform dental X-rays (Within their scope of practice) and OPGs under the supervision of a Dentist registered in the Northern Territory.
- 2.4 Dental Hygienists To perform dental X-rays (Within their scope of practice) and OPGs under the supervision of a Dentist registered in the Northern Territory.
- 2.5 Dental Assistants To perform dental X-rays (Within their scope of practice) and OPGs under the supervision of a Dentist registered in the Northern Territory.
- 2.6 Chiropractors To perform spinal and pelvic X-rays only.
- 2.7 Radiologists To perform radiographic procedures in the Northern Territory.
- 2.8 Cardiologists To perform radiographic procedures relevant to the practice of cardiology.
- 2.9 Medical Practitioners To perform chest and extremity X-rays.

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| 2.10 | Medical Practitioners | To perform specified radiographic procedures. (This applies only when there is a justifiable need and the applicant provides evidence of relevant training and current competence in performing the specific radiographic procedures must be listed on the application form). |
| 2.11 | Registered Nurses     | Centre for Diseases Control nurses; To perform Chest X-ray CXR's on CDC (TB contact) patients.  |
| 2.12 | Registered Nurses     | Remote Area Nurse – To perform chest and extremity X-rays under the supervision of a radiographer and the direction of a medical practitioner.  |
| 2.13 | PDY1-Radiographers    | To perform radiographic procedures under the supervision of a registered radiographer.  |
| 2.14 | Other Persons         | To perform specific Board approved specified radiographic procedures under supervision of either a registered radiographer or radiologist and to conduct .  |

### **3. PERMIT REVIEW / RENEWAL**

Permits are reviewed annually. If the applicant is able to provide evidence of the following the permit may be renewed.

- 3.1 The number of radiographic procedures conducted by them in the preceding 12 months or
- 3.2 term of their current permit.
- 3.3 A completed statutory declaration identifying that they have conducted radiographic procedures in accordance with the limitations identified on their permit.
- 3.4 The location of the equipment they use.

Applications that do not meet all requirements for renewal will be reviewed by the Board.

### **4. BOARD APPROVED NORTHERN TERRITORY TRAINING PROGRAM**

4.1 The course and work experience may be conducted at either Royal Darwin Hospital or Alice Springs Hospital under the supervision of the Manager Radiology Department and consist of:

- at least 40 hours training and work experience with a registered radiographer with certification of that experience or proof of equivalent experience, and
- at least a 60% pass in each section of an examination prescribed by the Board based on knowledge of the *Radiographers Act*, the *Radiation (Safety Control) Act* and the *Radiographic Procedures Manual* (published by the Board).

4.2 The minimum period of time between Board General Practitioner examinations:

- The first and second permit examination attempts shall be four (4) weeks;
- The second and third permit examination attempts shall be eight (8) weeks, and
- The third and fourth permit examination attempts shall be twelve (12) weeks.

**Or**

4.3 A course with Board approval that is conducted by a recognised training provider.

### **BREACH OF POLICY**

In the event a practitioner breaches the Act the Board will need to address the breach. Section 14 and 16 of the Act apply to the Board's decision to refuse to grant a permit under this section or to suspend or cancel a permit.

1. The Board may seek a response from the practitioner showing good cause for being in breach of the Act;
2. Issue a warning to the practitioner;
3. Require that the practitioner not perform radiographic procedures until such time as they hold a permit;
4. If the Board is satisfied that the holder of a permit granted under s19 and 20 becomes unfit to continue as the holder of a permit or commits a breach of this Act, it may suspend or cancel the permit.
5. If the person has represented himself or herself as a radiographer, without the authority to do so, the Board may address such a matter pursuant to S18 of the Act.

\*Competence may be supported by an Inspector's assessment; reference or assessment conducted by a registered radiographer.

\*\* A registered radiographer refers to a radiographer who holds current registration in the Northern Territory.