

## MEET THE BOARD

Ms Pippa Tessmann	Chair
Ms Heather Malcolm	Member
Vacant	Member
Mr David Blair	Public Member
Ms Margaret Seccafien	Public Member

## BOARD SUPPORT

Ms Jill Huck	Registrar
Ms Kiara Garrard	Research & Policy Officer
Ms Julie Burrows	Registrations
Ms Eliza Collier	Complaints Manager

### MAIN ITEMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- \*\* New policies for NT Physiotherapists \*\*
- \*\* The latest on National Registration \*\*
- \*\* Concerns about practising unlicensed \*\*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first Newsletter for 2009.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of our new Research & Policy Officer to the NT Physiotherapists Board, Kiara Garrard commenced with us in January as Vicki Skopellos, left to give birth to her daughter. Kiara is enjoying the challenges facing us all at this exciting time.

An exciting time it is as we all prepare for National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. We have been busy with many submissions to Government as the relevant Bills for the Scheme pass through parliament and are pleased to say that we have been consulted with at many levels. I am sure that all our registrants are excited at the prospect of national registration, especially those who regularly cross state borders for work, professional development or to travel with sporting teams.

We have spent some time on our dry needling policy and encourage all physiotherapists to check the details on the website and to ensure that only those who have completed a recognised training course are needling. This prevents your professional liability from being compromised as there are many incidents which have required investigation in other states!!

I urge you all to consider applying for the vacant position on the Board and once again

take this opportunity to thank Michael Kokinos for his contributions to the Board over the last three years, and wish him luck in his exciting ventures.

Congratulations to Margaret Seccafien who was re-appointed to the Board by the Minister for Health. Margaret is a Public Member and will continue for another three year term.

*We, the members of the Board wish to encourage your feedback anytime, if you would like to raise any issues or provide feedback you may do so by emailing the Board's Research and Policy Officer, Kiara Garrard, [kiara.garrard@nt.gov.au](mailto:kiara.garrard@nt.gov.au).*

Best Wishes  
Pippa Tessmann (Chair)

### Farewell from Michael Kokinos....

After an enjoyable 3 year term on the board I am moving on to pursue exciting public health projects in Australia, Nepal and India with a focus on early intervention and health promotion. I also manage a private practice in Katherine, so will continue to be a regular visitor to the NT. My time on the board provided a wonderful opportunity to contribute and participate in a high level forum of governance for our profession.

## BOARD MEMBER VACANCY

**Are you interested in joining the Physiotherapists Board as a practitioner member?**

*National Registration starts in 2010 and it is an exciting time to contribute to the profession through the Board.*

The Board has a vacancy for a practitioner member for a three year term.

*Members are appointed by the Minister for Health. Expressions of interest are called, with the closing date **Friday 12 June 2009**.*

Your expression of interest should outline the reasons you may be suitable for appointment to the Board, include a curriculum vitae and should be forwarded to:

*The Hon Konstantine Vatskalis MLA, Minister for Health,  
GPO Box 3146, DARWIN NT 0801*

# PHYSIOTHERAPIST BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## NEWSLETTER JUNE 2009

### POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Board has been reviewing policies for the first half of this year. The policies and other documents that have been updated are as follows:

- *Entitlement to Registration Policy*
- *Supervisor Report for Conditionally Registered Physiotherapists*
- *Guidelines for Professional Conduct*
- *Information Sheet for Overseas Educated Physiotherapists*

**\*\*Please read the updated policies to ensure that you are abreast of the changes regarding registration in the Northern Territory.**

A new Guideline has been developed regarding the **practise of dry needling and acupuncture**. This Guideline has been written with reference to the Australian Physiotherapy Association's 'Skin Penetration Position Statement', and the 'Australian Society of Acupuncture Physiotherapists Inc Guide'.

The Board has the responsibility of protecting the health and safety of the public. Therefore it is important that Physiotherapists are competent to practise in the disciplines that they are legally engaged.

All Physiotherapists wishing to carry out dry needling or acupuncture are able to, after completing recognised training. A copy of this new Guideline is **enclosed** for your reference.

You can keep up to date at anytime by going to the Board's webpage at:  
[www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards)

*\*\*Other policies are under review, and the Board encourages you to check the website from time to time.*

### THE BOARD MEETS FOUR TIMES A YEAR

Please note applications for registration and other information that are to be considered at a Board meeting must be received no less than two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date.

The Board cannot guarantee that documents received after this date will be addressed at the next scheduled meeting. Late documents will

be assessed for the level of urgency. Should your matter be urgent please contact the Board as soon as possible.

Remaining meeting dates currently scheduled for 2009:

**5 August 2009**  
**6 November 2009**



### NATIONAL REGISTRATION & ACCREDITATION SCHEME

- *Key details due out in mid-June ....*
- *Where is the National office?*
- *New website with all the details ....*
- *Call for National Board members on now ....*
- *National CEO advertised*

Bill B Exposure Draft detailing the framework of the new legislation is due out mid-June. A consultation process will then occur later in June for all NT Health Practitioner Boards.

The commencement date remains on track, expecting to move to the new model on 1 July 2010.

The National office will be based in Melbourne.

There is a new website for the **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency** which is [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

### REQUIREMENT TO BE REGISTERED

There is a requirement in the Northern Territory for all Physiotherapists travelling with sports teams (ie. Arafura Games) or attending workshops in the Northern Territory to be registered with the Northern Territory Physiotherapists Board.

An applicant may be eligible for waiver of fees in certain circumstances.

Physiotherapists are encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible as it can take up to three weeks to be processed.

*Physiotherapists travelling to other States/Territories should check with the relevant Board about registration requirements in that jurisdiction.*

PHYSIOTHERAPIST BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY  
NEWSLETTER JUNE 2009

## KNOW YOUR ACT

The purpose of the Act is to ensure public protection. You can get your own copy on the Physiotherapists Board website.

[www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards)

### REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR REGISTRATION!!

**Most practising Certificates expire on 30 September each year.**

**\*\*Check your practising certificate for the expiry date**

#### Please contact the Board immediately if:

1. The details on your Registration card are incorrect
2. You have changed your address
3. You have changed your name
4. You have practised unlicensed

## Practising Unlicensed

Practising unlicensed is a breach of **Section 101 (1)(b) of the Health Practitioners Act.**

***The Board has been concerned about the number of Physiotherapists who have practised unlicensed. A total of six Physiotherapists have practised unlicensed in the last 18 months.***

Should you find yourself in this situation:

- **Cease work** and arrange registration immediately
- **Inform your employer immediately**
- **Practising unlicensed may have implications regarding your professional indemnity insurance.** It may be that it is void during the period of practising unlicensed
- **Practising unlicensed may also impact on your access to Medicare rebates**

## Notice of change of name or address

**Section 46 of the Health Practitioners Act**

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

business address, give the relevant Board notice in writing 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:

- keep up with changes to policy;
- receive newsletters;
- receive information regarding National Registration; and
- receive the application to renew your registration.

## REGISTRATION STATISTICS

As at **1 June 2009** there were a total of 178 Physiotherapists with current registration in the Northern Territory.

## FREE Sign Language Interpreters for private physiotherapy practice

The National Auslan Interpreter Booking & Payment Service (NABS) is supporting physiotherapists in practice with patients (with no cost to the patient) who may be deaf or hearing impaired.

### Contact NABS directly to arrange the service:

Website – [www.nabs.org.au](http://www.nabs.org.au)

Email – [bookings@nabs.org.au](mailto:bookings@nabs.org.au)

Phone – 1800 24 69 45

Fax – 1800 24 69 14

*Article submitted by James Kerwin, Communications Officer, NABS*

## Contact Details

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Web: [www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards)