



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2009

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Ms Margaret Petherick	Chair, Practitioner
Ms Terina Saunders	Practitioner Member
Ms Kathy McKay	Practitioner Member
Ms Karen Watson	Public Member
Vacant	Public Member

BOARD SUPPORT

Ms Jill Huck	Registrar
Ms Kiara Garrard	Policy & Research
Ms Julie Burrows	Registrations Manager

MAIN ITEMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

**** Occupational Therapists INTO THE National Registration Scheme ****

**** Renewals are due ****

**** Know your Act ****

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

After deciding that OTs would not be included in the second round of national registration, COAG has reconsidered and we will now be nationally registered from 1st July 2012. This is great news and a big thank you to those who have continued to lobby for our inclusion.

While OT is not part of the first round of national registration the Board has had the opportunity to contribute to the discussions at each stage of the process for this first group.

This year we have welcomed Kathy McKay to the Board. After graduating Kathy worked in hospital and community positions in Queensland before heading overseas. While overseas she worked as an OT and also in the travel industry. She has lived in Darwin since 2002 working in both the public and private sectors.

Renewal of registration has come around again and some of you have been selected for the Professional Development (PD) Audit. When you renew, you will receive the Audit guidelines from the Board. You may like to view the SA OT Registration Board website for additional information about preparing your response. Their website is www.otrb.sboards.com.au Check under "Ongoing PD", then "Getting started". The Accredited OT (Acc OT) website also has useful information. See www.ausot.com.au and click on Acc OT.

With national registration coming up, perhaps we should all get into the habit of regularly reviewing and updating our PD Plan. I find the hardest thing is to

remember to jot down any articles I read or website searches that I do. They all count and for those of us with little access to profession specific PD, they are often the most useful things we can do.

The next couple of years will be busy as we move toward national registration. Please check our website (detailed at the end of this newsletter) and the *OT Australia* website for updates.

Best wishes

Ms Margaret Petherick
Chair

You can keep updated on the progress of the **National Scheme** as it first commences on 1 July 2010, as well as the work to implement a National OT Registration Board in 2012, on the following websites.

<http://www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp>

<http://www.ahpra.gov.au>

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Board encourages you to read its policies available on the website. You can keep up to date at anytime by going to the Board's webpage at:

www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR REGISTRATION!!

**Practising Certificates expire on 30
September each year.**

**Please note non-receipt of a renewal notice is not an
acceptable reason for practising unlicensed.**

PRACTICING UNLICENSED

Section 101 (1)(b) of the Health Practitioners Act

Practising unlicensed is a breach of Section 101 (1)(b) which states – *It is an offence to practise health care if unregistered: A person must not; carry out an act that by or under an Act is required to be carried out by a health practitioner holding a practising certificate, unless he or she is registered or enrolled and holds a practising certificate.*

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This can pose a risk to patients and practitioners; may impact on entitlement to Medicare rebates; and may alter indemnification arrangements.

Should you find yourself in this situation, it is in the best interest of your patients, yourself and your employer to rectify the situation immediately. **Please contact the Board immediately!**

Please note it is the practitioner's responsibility to ensure that he/she holds current registration. The *Health Practitioners Act* does not have the capacity to provide registration retrospectively.

Council of Occupational Therapists Registration Boards (Aust & NZ) Inc (COTRB)

*By Ms Terina Saunders, Board Member
(COTRB member since 2007)*

COTRB was established in 1996 for consideration of matters of joint or common concern amongst the four registration Boards in Australia ie SA, QLD, WA, & NT and the New Zealand registration Board. It also was established at a time when an assessment process for overseas occupational therapists was required with the cessation of previous processes.

The business of COTRB is conducted via email, teleconferences and once a year face to face meeting which was recently held 13-14 August in Napier New Zealand which I attended. At that time COTRB was not aware of the now historic announcement that Occupational therapy **IS TO BE INCLUDED in the National Registration Scheme in 2012**. If we had been aware of this decision at that time, I am sure we would have done our bit supporting the NZ wine industry in celebrating!

COTRB has been heavily involved and is a key driver of the submission for Occupational Therapists to be included in the National Regulation scheme. So it is a significant milestone for the profession, to know National Registration will now be achieved after many years of hard work by many people.

Other points of interest from the NZ meeting:

- **Professional development plans** are now a requirement in all jurisdictions. It is interesting to note that New Zealand OTs complete theirs on line annually and the board audits these from behind the scenes.
- **Numbers of Overseas assessments** have been steadily rising. Stage 1 desktop audit assessments of overseas trained persons have increased since 2001 with 208 in 2007/08 and 187 in 2008/09. A significant

number of people are coming from United Kingdom and South Africa. Stage 2 - Practice Audits applications were 68 in 2007/08 and 72 in 2008/09. (ref: *COTRB Annual Report 30 June 2009*).

- The **Overseas Qualification Assessment Committee (OQAC)** will be meeting in Melbourne late in October. So it is going to be a busy couple of years with the transition to National Registration.

A brief summary of the Council's objectives are:

- Identify matters which impact on, or are relevant to statutory occupational therapist regulation
- To provide a forum for discussion and exchange of information relevant to the purposes of the nominating bodies including consideration of coordinated approaches to legislative and statutory provisions administered by the Australian and New Zealand Registration Boards
- Undertake assessments of overseas qualified occupational therapists consistent with the registration requirements of the Australian and New Zealand Boards
- Foster cooperation, consult with and provide advice to Government bodies, professional and other organisations, and international occupational therapist regulatory authorities; and
- Apply a continuous quality improvement approach to its activities.

Further information on the Council can be found at www.cotrb.com.au

REGISTRATION STATISTICS

As at **30 June 2009** a total number of **143 Occupational Therapists** were registered in the Northern Territory.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Monday 23 November

Contact Details

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