



ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2009

MEET THE BOARD

Mr Peter Pangquee	Chair
Mr Shaun Tatipata	Member
Ms Sharon Mununggurr	Member
Ms Karina Demasi	Public Member
Mr Darren Rogers	Public Member

BOARD SUPPORT

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

MAIN ITEMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

**** RENEWAL of your REGISTRATION –**
*The process you need to do ***

**** The new Entitlement to Registration &
Current Competence Policies ****

**** The latest on National Registration ****

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR REGISTRATION!!

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

***Renewal forms were posted to you in
August***

**IF YOU SEND IN YOUR RENEWAL
FORM AND PAYMENT BY THE END OF
SEPTEMBER IT WILL ONLY COST YOU
\$10.00**

**But if you are late you will need to
restore your registration by paying
\$35.00.**

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

Checklist for you when completing your renewal form:

- Make sure you answer every question
- You must sign the form
- Payment is included

DO NOT send cash in the mail

**If you are not sure about something on
the form ring the Health Professions
Licensing Office on 08 8999 4157**

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hi All,
Well it's that time of the year again for us to get our registration renewals done. It is easier to get it done in time than it is to re-register after you have been taken off the register.

Did you know we have almost 300 registered AHWs in the NT however this number is getting less and less every year?

I would like to encourage you all to continue working as AHWs, and if you know of any AHW who may want to return to work to contact their local health service. The Board can also assist with enquiries if they are not currently registered.

I would also like to encourage you all to attend courses regarding any new laws that affect health professional, an example of this is the new laws around reporting underage children involved in any sexual activities. It is important we know how the new laws relate to AHWs.

As an AHW we have a professional responsibility to participate in ongoing skill and knowledge development that allow us to do our jobs as skilfully and safe as possible.

Peter Pangquee

Please contact the Board immediately if

...

1. You do not receive your renewal form by the end of August
2. The details on your Registration card are incorrect
3. You have changed your address
4. You have changed your name
5. You have practised unlicensed

NATIONAL REGISTRATION & ACCREDITATION SCHEME

The Australian Health Ministers meeting announced on 5 May that **Aboriginal Health Worker practitioners will be regulated under the new National Scheme, as of 1 July 2012.**

Although we will not be starting the same time as the other health professions, due to start 1 July 2010, there will be a lot of planning ahead of us.

It is exciting to be included in this National Scheme as it will certainly raise the profile of the Aboriginal Health Worker profession in Australia.

The Board will keep you informed as we receive more information. At this point in time your Board will remain in place over the next two years.

There is a new Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency that is implementing the Scheme. They will be based in Melbourne. You can visit this Agency on website www.ahpra.gov.au

More information about how the new Legislation (in draft at the moment) is on the website www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp.

Aboriginal Health Workers Understanding Registration Requirements

The Board updated its '*Entitlement to Registration as an Aboriginal Health Worker Policy*' in 2008.

The change was prompted as a result of the qualification providing entitlement to registration as an Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) being upgraded to the new national *Certificate IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice)*.

Under the new Entitlement to Registration Policy, Aboriginal Health Workers will need to provide evidence of any of the following:

- Cert IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice);
- Cert III Aboriginal Health Work (Clinical), or another qualification, gained in the Northern Territory (NT), which has provided entitlement to registration in the past. Evidence of having held AHW registration in the NT and practised as an AHW at some time within three years of their application date;
- Relevant clinical experience in the preceding three years and a qualification recognised by the Board to be at least equivalent to the Cert IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice).

The Board has NO requirement for those AHWs who are currently registered to upgrade their qualifications, in order to continue to be entitled to hold registration, as long as they do not have a lapse of more than three years in registration and practice as an AHW.

The Board does not have any authority over AHW career structures and levels of employment, but it does have a duty of care to the public to ensure AHWs do not practice beyond their level of experience, skills and knowledge.

Further information can be found in the *Entitlement to Registration Policy* and the *Current Competence Policy and Guidelines*, these are on our website

www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards,

or you can phone the Board (*contact details on the last page of this newsletter*), and have a copy posted to you.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The following policies have been reviewed and updated in the first part of 2009:

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Good Character Policy

The Board encourages you to read these updated policies available on the website. At address:

www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards

If you are **unable to access the internet**, please phone our Research and Policy Officer, Kiara Garrard on 08 89994207, to have a copy sent to you.

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING DATES

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

Should your matter be urgent please contact the Board as soon as possible.

Dates for the remainder of 2009 are:

15 September

1 December

KNOW YOUR ACT

Aboriginal Health Workers and nine (9) other health profession groups are regulated under the *Health Practitioners Act* (the Act) in the Northern Territory.

The purpose of the Act is to ensure public protection. You can get your own copy on the Aboriginal Health Workers website.

www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards

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.

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 note - it is the Aboriginal Health Worker's responsibility to ensure that they hold current registration.

KNOW YOUR ACT

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.

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

REGISTRATION STATISTICS

As at **1 July 2009** the total number of Aboriginal Health Workers was **298** in the Northern Territory:

Contact Details

Aboriginal Health Workers 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: www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards