



DENTAL BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER JUNE 2009

MEET THE BOARD

Dr Owen Hales	Chair
Dr Mark Leedham	Member
Dr Neil Lanceley	Member
Dr Jean Cohen	Member
Ms Belinda Simons	Member
Ms Diane Walsh	Public Member
Ms Joanna Albert	Public Member

BOARD SUPPORT

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

MAIN ITEMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- ** New policies for NT Dental Practitioners ****
- ** The latest on National Registration ****
- ** Know your Act ****

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Colleagues

After a decade of being Chairperson of the Dental Board, Dr Mark Leedham surprised us all by resigning as chair. Fortunately, he continues on as a member for us to benefit from his experience. So it is with some trepidation that I have taken on the role, particularly during this time of quite significant change.

The National Registration scheme is scheduled to start July 2010. The Board has some serious concerns which are outlined later in the newsletter.

For those that don't know me, I'll give a brief précis of my career. I graduated from Adelaide University in 1989, spent two years in the RAAF before moving to Darwin and working in Private practice for nine years. After a year sabbatical in 2000, I have since worked in a variety of settings: contractor for the military; locums; public service including remote community work; and then back to private practice.

Hopefully my diverse experience will hold me in good stead to represent you in my new role as

chairperson of the NT Dental Board, for the remainder of the time that exists!

I would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank Mark for the tireless work he did as Chairperson for all those years.

Owen Hales (Chair)

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

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.

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.

The remaining date for 2009 is:

NATIONAL REGISTRATION & ACCREDITATION SCHEME

- *Key details due out in mid-June*
- *Where is the National office?*
- *New website with all the details*
- *Concern for National Dental Board composition*

Bill B Exposure Draft detailing the framework of the new legislation was released on June 12 2009. A consultation process will occur 26 June for all NT Health Practitioner Boards.

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Public comment is invited with written submissions to be received by Friday 17 July 2009. Please go to the website www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp, for all the information.

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

The National office will be based in **Melbourne**.

A new website for the **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency** is available at website www.ahpra.gov.au

Your Board has been actively **raising concerns regarding the composition of the new National Dental Board**. It will be the only National Board where a number of professional areas are within the one Board.

The concern is that there will be one member per dental profession (*Dentist, Specialist, Dental education specialist, Therapist, Hygienist, Prosthetist*) other National Boards have up to six practitioners representing one profession.

The National Boards have a total of nine (9) members, three of which must be community members. The NT Board has asked that flexibility in the numbers of practitioners on the National Dental Board be given urgent and priority consideration.

Another concern regarding the National Board composition is the assurance that they will have experienced rural and remote representatives.

The National Board's composition does include rural and regional representatives, however this **does not ensure that remote health will have a voice**. As you would be aware this is of great concern, not only for the NT but other jurisdictions which have dental health workers working in tough and complex conditions in remote areas.

Nominations for the new National Dental Board closed on 12 June 2009.

FREE Sign Language Interpreters for private Dental practice

The National Auslan Interpreter Booking & Payment Service (NABS) is supporting Dentists and staff 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

Email – bookings@nabs.org.au

Phone – 1800 24 69 45

Fax – 1800 24 69 14

KNOW YOUR ACT

Dental 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 Dental Board website.

www.nt.gov.au/health/registrationboards

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR REGISTRATION!!

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

Renewal forms are posted to registrants in
August annually.

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

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

KNOW YOUR ACT

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.*

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 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.

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 June 2009** the total number of registrants:

116 Dentists

24 Dental Specialists

19 Dental Hygienists

42 Dental Therapists

5 Dental Prosthetists

Contact Details

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