

This is the first edition of the Osteopathy Board newsletter. For this edition a hardcopy version has been sent to all registered osteopaths. Subsequent issues will

be sent via email. To keep in touch with the latest Board news in future, please ensure that AHPRA has your email address.

Renew on time, online!

30 November registration renewal

It is important that osteopaths realise that it is renewal time for **all** osteopaths, as some will have renewed in the past five months (NSW, WA and Tasmania). From now on there is a common renewal date wherever you live in Australia. It is also best to renew early as any unforeseen delay may affect your ability to practice as set out below.

You will receive at least three renewal reminder emails (where AHPRA has email addresses), and hard-copy letters have been sent to all osteopaths who did not renew after their first email prompt.

When you renew your registration, please make sure to update your contact details, including your current email address. To renew on-line go to www.ahpra.gov.au/login.aspx.

What happens if you miss the date?	Fee(s)
<p>At or before 30 November <i>Renewing on time:</i></p> <p>You can keep practising as long as AHPRA has received your application by 30 November. You can check your application has been received at www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Renewal-Received-Confirmation.aspx.</p>	You pay the renewal fee only.
<p>1 to 31 December <i>Renewing during the late period:</i></p> <p>You can renew your registration during the late period but late fee applies. You can keep practising as long as AHPRA has received your application by 31 December 2011. Please note that all State and Territory offices will be closed on Monday 26 December, Tuesday 27 December 2011 and Monday 2 January 2012 for public holidays.</p>	You pay the renewal fee + the late fee.
<p>1 to 31 January <i>Lapsed registration (failure to renew on time or during the late period):</i></p> <p>Once the late period has expired (that is, one month from the registration expiry date), your name will be removed from the register and you will no longer be able to practise. To keep practising, you must lodge a new application for registration. A Fast Track application process is available for four weeks after expiry of the late period, but additional fees apply. The fast-track process is available for practitioners who have previously held registration in the National Scheme, and is a streamlined process of re-registration, which takes approximately two weeks. You will not be able to practise until your registration has been successfully processed.</p>	You pay the registration fee + the Fast Track processing fee.
<p>1 February onwards <i>Registering from scratch:</i></p> <p>From 1 February onwards you will need to lodge a new application for registration. Processing times for new applications depends on many factors, including whether the documentation submitted by the applicant is complete and whether the applicant makes disclosures relating to health or criminal history. You may not practise in Australia until your registration has been successfully processed, and your name has been published on the National Register of Practitioners at www.ahpra.gov.au.</p>	You pay the application fee + registration fee.

For more information, please refer to the [Registration Renewal FAQ](#), which is published on the Osteopathy Board's website under the Registration Standards tab.

Continuing Professional Development

Osteopaths are required to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) and the Board is phasing in its CPD requirements. The Board's requirements are set out in its [CPD Registration Standard](#), [Guidelines for CPD](#) and [CPD Fact Sheet](#), which are published on the website.

Practitioners who apply for registration or apply to renew their registration after 1 July 2012, will have to sign a declaration that they have met the CPD requirements in the previous 12 months. For most osteopaths, this declaration will be signed in their November 2012 registration or renewal, declaring that they have completed the Board's annual CPD requirements between 1 December 2011 and 30 November 2012. Osteopaths should start recording their CPD activity from 1 December 2011.

The Osteopathy Board's CPD requirements are:

- 25 hours CPD, including four hours undertaking mandatory topics approved by the Board, and
- a current senior first aid certificate, which is updated every three years, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months. First aid courses are over and above the total of 25 hours of CPD learning.

In each CPD cycle of 12 months, osteopaths will be required to complete a minimum of four hours of professional development relating to one or more of the following mandatory topics:

- Osteopathy Board of Australia registration standards, codes and guidelines and overview of the National Law
- risk management
- record keeping
- informed consent

- effective communication
- professional boundaries and/or
- confidentiality and privacy.

Osteopaths may continue to undertake CPD provided and recorded by their professional association. However, the Board's requirements must be factored in to the CPD undertaken. Osteopaths must also maintain an up-to-date portfolio of CPD activities, which must be retained for three years.

The Board may refuse to renew registration if an osteopath has not met the Board's CPD requirements. The Board will also conduct a random annual audit of CPD compliance on a sample of registered osteopaths from 2012. If the audit reveals that an osteopath has not complied with the Board's CPD requirements, the Board can further investigate the matter.

Who is who: the Board, AHPRA, ANZOC, AOA/COCA

On 1 July 2010, Australia introduced the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme to regulate practitioners of ten health professions, including: chiropractic, dental, medicine, nursing and midwifery, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology. The Osteopathy Board of Australia has been set up under the National Law and replaces all the former state and territory boards.

The members of the Osteopathy Board are from each state and territory and include six osteopaths and three community members.



From left to right, sitting: Dr Natalie Rutsche, Dr Melissa Coulter, Ms Belinda Webster, Ms Karen Stott, Dr Amanda Heyes, Ms Helen Egan. From left to right, standing: Dr Luke Rickards, Dr Robert Fendall, Adjunct Professor Philip Tehan.

The Board: The Osteopathy Board of Australia is responsible for protecting the public by creating minimum standards required by osteopaths, and creating guidelines and codes of conduct to assist osteopaths in meeting these standards.

AHPRA: The Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA) is responsible for the renewal of registration and the practitioner register. Enquiries about registration and notifications should be directed to AHPRA.

ANZOC: Under the National Law, an osteopathic accreditation council also was established. The Australian and New Zealand Osteopathic Council (ANZOC) is responsible for

- developing accreditation standards
- accrediting and monitoring osteopathy courses at Australian and New Zealand universities and
- conducting examinations or assessments for general registration for the Osteopathy Board.

AOA/ COCA: The osteopathy professional associations represent and provide services to their members.

Advertising

The National Law includes new obligations in relation to advertising by registered health practitioners. The Osteopathy Board has developed advertising guidelines that clarify its expectations of practitioners in this area. The guidelines are published on the Board's website and osteopaths must ensure that any advertising they undertake complies with the guidelines.

The National Law prohibits the use of testimonials or purported testimonials in advertising – regardless of truth or accuracy. Whilst testimonials about an individual practitioner by a patient are fairly obvious as being testimonials, testimonials about a profession or field of expertise are less obvious. Self-testimonials by an osteopath about their personal experience with osteopathy are also considered testimonials. Osteopaths are advised to carefully review any content on their social networking sites, even if they did not write it, to ensure that material is compliant with their obligations under that National Law.

The Guidelines contain specific information about the advertising of prices. They state that if fees and price information are to be advertised, then price information should be exact and clearly identifiable, and any conditions relating to an advertising price or fee disclosed.

The Guidelines specify that osteopaths must not advertise time-limited or special offers.

Although the National Law does not prohibit the use of gifts or discounts, it requires that the advertisements set out the full terms and conditions of the offer, to enable a reader to make an informed decision about what the offer involves. The Guidelines state that use of gifts and discounts is not appropriate, due to their potential to encourage the unnecessary use of health services.

The coming year will see a more structured approach to addressing concerns about advertising. This will include an escalating series of warnings to osteopaths, initially reminding them of their obligations about advertising and ultimately, possible prosecution for non-compliance with the Board's standards.

The role of the National Board is to protect the public. Anyone with concerns about a health practitioner, or advertising by health practitioners, that does not appear to be in the public interest, should contact AHPRA. The Board relies on the public and members of the profession to bring their concerns to its attention, as advertising, particularly through web-based media, is growing and can be difficult to monitor.

It is important to note that neither Boards nor AHPRA review or vet specific advertising proposed by practitioners for compliance with advertising guidelines.

Online services

The Board's website, www.osteopathyboard.gov.au, is your best information resource on becoming and being a registered osteopath. Sometimes there are changes to policies and guidelines which affect your profession, so check back regularly to make sure you understand your obligations.

The website includes information on:

- applying for registration for the first time
- renewing registration
- meeting the registration requirements:
 - > continuing professional development (CPD)
 - > English language skills
 - > professional indemnity insurance
 - > recency of practice
 - > criminal history
- viewing your entry on the National Register and other online services

First national osteopathy data released

The first ever national data on osteopathy is now available with the release of Osteopathy Board of Australia information in the AHPRA and National Boards' annual report.

Osteopathy has a roughly even distribution of male and female practitioners and is dominated by young practitioners.

Chair of the Osteopathy Board of Australia, Dr Robert Fendall, said the annual report demonstrated transparent and accountable reporting by AHPRA and the national board about their work in regulating the profession and protecting the public.

"The introduction of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010 represents an unparalleled reform of health practitioner regulation. This annual report provides comprehensive data about the first year of operation of the national scheme, across all areas of operation of AHPRA and the national boards," Dr Fendall said.

"There is now clear evidence that the national scheme is sound, robust and a great asset for the Australian community," he said.

Important information about the osteopathy profession published in the report includes:

- There were 1,595 osteopaths registered to practise in Australia on 30 June 2011
- About 44% of osteopaths are based in Victoria and 32% are based in New South Wales
- There are 549 students of osteopathy on the student register
- About 71% of osteopaths are aged between 20 and 44 years
- About 55% of osteopaths are male
- There were 19 notifications lodged about registered osteopaths during the year (not including concerns about advertising), representing notifications for 1.0% of all registered osteopaths
- In NSW, the Osteopathy Council took immediate action on the registration of three practitioners during the year and imposed conditions on their registration

More summaries of annual report data are published on the [AHPRA website](#) under the News tab.

Consultation and communication

The Board undertakes wide-ranging consultation on proposals that affect the osteopathy profession. Both current and past consultations (including submissions made) are published on the website, under the Registration Standards tab.

The Board is currently undertaking public consultation on the definition of 'practice' used by the 10 health professions regulated under the National Law. A consultation paper has been published on the Board's website and the Board is seeking feedback.

If you wish to provide comment please email practice_consultation@ahpra.gov.au or post them to Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne, Vic 3001 by close of business 2 December 2011. Please note that your comments will be published on the Board's website unless you request otherwise.

The Board meets every month and produces a Communiqué from the meeting which includes information about other activities of the Board each month, including consultations. These Communiqués can be found on the [website](#) under the News tab.

Contacting the Board

The Osteopathy Board of Australia and AHPRA may be contacted by telephone on 1300 419 495. More information on the Board is available at www.osteopathyboard.gov.au and more information on AHPRA is available at www.ahpra.gov.au.

An online enquiry form is available on both websites under [Contact Us](#).

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