

Message from the Chair

The three-year term of the inaugural Osteopathy Board of Australia is due to end on 30 August 2012.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the inaugural Board members for their hard work, teamwork and dedication during this term. This has been a most exciting, challenging and rewarding experience. The Board is made up of osteopath and community members from every jurisdiction in Australia. Everyone has worked exhaustively to develop national standards, codes and guidelines from scratch. It has also been an exciting three years of partnerships with the other National Boards and Chairs, and the Australian and New Zealand Osteopathic Council; engaging with stakeholders and registrants; and working together with AHPRA staff members in the national, state and territory offices.

Many positive and practical changes have occurred with the move to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. These changes affect each registered health practitioner in Australia. It is the responsibility of each osteopath to ensure he or she is aware of the changes and complies with the requirements for registration. The Board's website www.osteopathyboard.gov.au is the one-stop-shop for staying informed.

In February 2012, an advertisement was placed in national and major metropolitan newspapers and the AHPRA website calling for expressions of interest and nominations for appointment or reappointment to the National Boards.

On 31 July 2012, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council announced appointments for the next term of Board members. The following members have been reappointed/appointed to the Osteopathy Board for the next term from 30 August 2012:

Dr Robert Fendall

Reappointed as Chair and a practitioner member from New South Wales until 30 August 2013

Dr Natalie Rutsche

Reappointed as a practitioner member from Queensland

Dr Amanda Heyes

Reappointed as a practitioner member from Western Australia

Adjunct Professor Philip Tehan

Reappointed as a practitioner member from Victoria

Dr Nikole Grbin

Appointed as a practitioner member from South Australia

Dr Benjamin Field

Appointed as a practitioner member from the Australian Capital Territory

Mrs Liz Benson

Appointed as a community member from Western Australia

Ms Liza Newby

Appointed as a community member from Victoria (rural)

Ms Helen Egan

Reappointed as a community member from Northern Territory

I look forward to welcoming new members at meetings in September 2012.

Robert Fendall, Chair
Osteopathy Board of Australia

Endorsement for acupuncture for osteopaths

The Osteopathy Board of Australia (the Board) has developed a fact sheet to inform osteopaths about their obligations in relation to acupuncture, which is available from its website (www.osteopathyboard.gov.au) in the *Registration Standards* section.

From 1 July 2012, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law), limits the use of the title 'acupuncturist' nationally (it is already a protected title in Victoria). From this date only registered Chinese medicine practitioners, or practitioners whose registration has been endorsed as being qualified to practice acupuncture, may hold themselves out as being acupuncturists. Without such registration or endorsement, it will be an offence for osteopaths in any part of Australia to take or use the title 'acupuncturist'.

There are provisions under the National Law for endorsements and the Board may develop requirements for an acupuncture endorsement for osteopaths. In the meantime, the fact sheet explains how the restrictions on the use of the title 'acupuncturist' apply to osteopaths and the current pathways to an acupuncture endorsement.

New Guidelines on clinical records

The Board has issued new *Guidelines on clinical records* specifically for osteopaths, published in the *Codes and Guidelines* section of the Board website. They are designed to guide practitioners about the general principles of acceptable record keeping and the specific information which should be recorded as part of the clinical records of osteopaths.



The Board conducted a wide-ranging consultation on the guidelines and welcomed the submissions and feedback from the profession. The Board is confident that the new *Guidelines* reflect best current practice and community expectations of osteopaths. The *Guidelines on clinical records* are important reading as a fundamental refresher for all practising osteopaths, as clinical records are often under scrutiny by the Board when examining a notification against an osteopath.

Capabilities for experienced osteopathic practice

Victoria University, School of Biomedical & Health Sciences (Osteopathy), has been awarded a tender to further develop the *Capabilities for Experienced Osteopathic Practice* on behalf of the Osteopathy Board of Australia.

The capabilities framework is used by accreditation councils and others to inform regulatory, accreditation and assessment decisions. It is more broadly used as a reference document by the osteopathy profession. The Board considers that the capabilities for osteopathic practice are owned by the profession, and recognises that endorsement of changes by key stakeholders and the profession is important.

As part of the work to update the capabilities document, Victoria University has been conducting focus groups with practitioners. Participation in the focus groups will greatly assist the osteopathy profession and the development of this important document. Focus group participants should have between 5 and 10 years clinical experience and be in clinical practice at least 2.5 days per week. Participants will be asked to review the draft *Capabilities for Experienced Osteopathic Practice* prior to the focus group and asked for comment on the updated document. Each participant will be provided with light refreshments and also paid \$50 to cover parking and travel time.

At the time of this newsletter's production, there was one focus group still to be conducted:

- Melbourne - Saturday 1 September 2012 (1pm-5pm)

If you are interested in participating in that focus group, please contact Brett Vaughan (brett.vaughan@vu.edu.au or 03 9919 1210) who will also confirm the venue. If you have not been able to attend a focus group but would like to contribute to the consultation process, please contact Dr Vaughan to receive the relevant documents. Feedback can be provided electronically until 7 September 2012.

In brief

Quarterly osteopathy registration statistics

The Board has begun to publish quarterly updates on registration data, including a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants such as state/territory, age

and gender by registration type in the *About* section of its website.

For the first time, it is possible to produce accurate reports on the number of osteopaths registered, as well as all other registered professions, in Australia. The following table is an example of the recent quarterly data:

Table 1: Osteopaths – state and territory by registration type (June 2012)

State	General	Non-practising	Total	% By State
ACT	31	1	32	1.91%
NSW	495	12	507	30.25%
NT	2		2	0.12%
QLD	143	6	149	8.89%
SA	26	3	29	1.73%
TAS	35	2	37	2.21%
VIC	801	36	837	49.94%
WA	51	1	52	3.1%
Not Stated	24	7	31	1.85%
Total	1,608	68	1,676	100%

Single registration number for life

An osteopath's current registration number will now stay with each practitioner for life following a simplification to the registers of health practitioners. The implementation of the lifetime registration number was part of recent changes to streamline the registration system.

Website and email for important information

The best way to stay in touch with news and updates from the Board is to regularly visit our website www.osteopathyboard.gov.au and to make sure AHPRA has each osteopath's up-to-date contact details. Accurate email details are particularly vital to the Board and AHPRA being able to contact practitioners rapidly with important information. Osteopaths are therefore reminded to update their contact details with AHPRA if email addresses change when, for example, they move job or internet service provider. Practitioners are also reminded to ensure that the email address they provide will not reject Board correspondence as spam.

Social media and osteopathy

Many osteopaths use electronic media on a daily basis in both their private and professional lives. However, engaging with social media such as Facebook and Twitter without careful thought can have potential negative legal and ethical consequences for practitioners. AHPRA and the National Boards are currently developing a social media policy to help guide practitioners on the acceptable engagement in social media, from a registration perspective. This will be published in coming months.