

Communiqué

Eighth meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

20 March 2012

At its second meeting for 2012, the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) discussed a wide range of matters that will impact on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the progress in the work of the national board.

National Registration for Occupational Therapists

The Board continues to recommend that practitioners submit their application for registration as soon as possible to minimise the risk of disruptions to their practise on 1 July.

English language standard

The Board will soon be publishing further advice for overseas qualified practitioners who need to demonstrate they meet the English language standard. Details will be made available on the Board's website shortly.

Who needs to register – profession specific guidance

The National Boards have defined “practice” in a number of their registration standards. The definition was intended to be broad and inclusive. It allows individuals with qualifications as a health practitioner to be registered if they are using their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner, regardless of whether or not they are treating persons.

Registered health practitioners can use the protected title related to their profession and must comply with their National Board's approved registration standards.

To provide profession specific guidance on who needs to register the Board will soon be releasing further information to its website. Practitioners are encouraged to register for email updates which will alert them to news when it is released.

Qualifications for general registration

The published list of approved qualifications on the Board's website was compiled from all accredited awards recognised by existing registration boards in Australia and verified with the peak organisations throughout Australia. A number of practitioners have raised questions about older qualifications that did not appear on the list. In preparing this list, the Board acknowledges that any programs or courses not listed will be individually assessed. If the assessment indicates the program / course meets the requirements, it will be added to the list.

Stakeholder information sessions

The Board was pleased to note that stakeholder meetings had now been held throughout NSW, VIC, TAS and ACT to inform practitioners of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and obligations therein. Over 25 major sites in metro and regional areas had been visited by Board members and representatives with additional videoconferencing to connecting locations enabled to include as many practitioners as possible.

The stakeholder meetings provided a valuable opportunity to discuss the registration process for practitioners in the currently unregistered jurisdictions. Presentations are now being scheduled for the currently registered jurisdictions (SA, WA, QLD and the NT). Practitioners will be advised via their local registration Board of event details.

Supervision guidelines

The Board is developing its guidelines for supervised practice including production of a supervised practice plan. Public consultation will be undertaken before these guidelines are finalised. Details will be placed on the Board's website.

General matters

The Board's website has received an increase in traffic over the past three months indicating that there is a high demand for accurate information. Further information on the work of the Board can be found at www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au.

Chairperson

Dr Mary Russell

20 March 2012