

Communiqué

Meetings of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia April to July 2013 Update

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Board meets face to face each month to consider and decide on any issues in relation to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

Communication activity

During April – July 2013 the Board has been actively engaging and communicating with practitioners in a variety of ways, including the following:

Practitioner breakfast forums – Perth (May) and Adelaide (July)

These breakfast forums provide a valuable opportunity for the Board to meet practitioners, discuss regulation and to encourage the integration of registration standards, codes and guidelines into daily practice.

News and invitation details to these events have been published at the Board's website (see www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/News.aspx) as well as via email to practitioners in the relevant states:

- the Perth breakfast forum was well attended, attracting over 150 RSVPs, with seven sites included in free videoconferencing on the day (Kalgoorlie, Northam, North Metro, West Perth, Geraldton, Mandurah, Clarkson)
- the Adelaide breakfast forum for the Board preceded the Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA) 2013 conference and was also a full house.

Media releases

A number of media releases have been published during this time, providing information on:

- AHPRA and the National Boards submission to the Victorian parliamentary inquiry into the performance of AHPRA
- a draft social media policy and revised guidelines on advertising and mandatory reporting
- announcement of the Community Reference Group; and
- the release of the national quarterly registration data for occupational therapists.

Newsletters

The Board published its first newsletter in March. The Newsletters contain important information affecting occupational therapists and practitioners are encouraged to read each issue.

Copies are emailed to all registered practitioners via AHPRA and also published on the Board's website. The Board's second issue is scheduled in September 2013.

Fees for Occupational Therapy have been reduced – effective from 1 August 2013

The Board has announced that the fees for occupational therapists have been reduced.

The Board has reduced fees by \$50 for registration and renewals with fees across other registration types also reduced. A fee schedule has been published at the Board's website.

The fee reduction applies from 1 August and covers the registration period for most practitioners from 1 December 2013 to 30 November 2014.

The Board was able to reduce the fees as a result of:

- more accurate forecasts for the cost of national regulation, coupled with the experience and efficiencies gained over the past 12 months
- more reliable data – and more occupational therapists in the previously unregistered jurisdictions than previously thought

The Board has been able to reduce fees while ensuring that it still retains adequate financial reserves that will allow it to fulfill its regulatory function.

The Board will continue to keep fees under close review.

Scope of practice July 2013

The Board Chair (Dr Mary Russell) was pleased to join the CEO of Occupational Therapy Australia (Ms Rachel Norris) and conference participants to discuss scope of practice at a recent breakfast meeting, held during the OTA 2013 conference.

The breakfast meeting explored the Association's work on this front and the Board's perspective on the regulatory aspects of any approach.

Co-Boards meeting June 2013

Members held their first co-Board meeting with our New Zealand counterparts in June, Sydney.

A number of topics were discussed included competencies, overseas trained practitioners, assessment tools, supervisor training, accreditation, the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement (TTMR) and the different regulatory frameworks.

Future co-Board meetings will be undertaken to progress issues and topics of mutual interest.

ANZCOTE annual meeting May 2013

The Board Chair attended the annual meeting in May 2013 of the Australian and New Zealand Council of Occupational Therapy Educators (ANZCOTE). The meeting was a good opportunity to discuss registration matters and to help answer queries from course providers and educators.

Accreditation – Standards and Programs of study

The Board approved revised Accreditation standards for Australian entry-level occupational therapy education programs at its June 2013 meeting. The standards will come into effect in December 2013.

The interim standards (November 2012) approved by the Board have since been used to approve accreditation of the following programs of study:

Southern Cross University (NSW):

- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy

The following programs as the University of Sydney (NSW):

- Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy)
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy) (Honours)
- Master of Occupational Therapy.

Curtin University (WA):

- Bachelor of Science (Occupational Therapy)
- Bachelor of Science (Occupational Therapy) (Honours)
- Master of Occupational Therapy.

University of Canberra (ACT):

- Masters of Occupational Therapy entry-level degree program

Chairperson



Dr Mary Russell
Occupational Therapy Board of Australia