



**Medical Board of Australia**

# REGISTRATION STANDARD: REGENCY OF PRACTICE

1 October 2016

## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Medical Board of Australia's minimum requirements for recency of practice for medical practitioners.

## Does this standard apply to me?

This registration standard applies to all registered medical practitioners, except those with non-practising registration and recent graduates applying for provisional registration to undertake an accredited intern position. It does not apply to registered students.

## What must I do?

To meet this registration standard, you must practise within your scope of practice at any time for a minimum total of:

- four weeks full-time equivalent in one registration period, which is a total of 152 hours, or
- 12 weeks full-time equivalent over three consecutive registration periods, which is a total of 456 hours.

Full-time equivalent is 38 hours per week. The maximum number of hours that can be counted per week is 38 hours.

Medical practitioners who work part-time must complete the same minimum number of hours of practice – this can be completed part-time.

Meeting the Board's minimum requirements for recency of practice doesn't automatically satisfy your professional and ethical responsibilities to ensure that you recognise and work within the limits of your competence and maintain adequate knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care.

## Are there exemptions to this standard?

There are no exemptions to this standard. The section below, 'What happens if I don't meet this standard?',

explains what you need to do if you don't meet this standard and wish to continue to practise.

## What does this mean for me?

### When you apply for registration

When you apply for registration as a medical practitioner, you must meet this registration standard. This includes practitioners who are applying for new or additional types of registration, such as changing from non-practising to general registration or applying for an endorsement on registration.

You don't need to meet this registration standard if you are a recent graduate applying for registration for the first time.

### At renewal of registration

When you apply to renew your registration, you must declare whether you comply with this registration standard.

### During the registration period

Your compliance with this registration standard may be audited from time to time. It may also be checked if the Board receives a notification about you.

### Evidence

You should retain records as evidence that you meet the requirements of this registration standard for five years for audit purposes.

## What happens if I don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- the Board can impose a condition or conditions on your registration or can refuse your application for registration or renewal of registration if you don't meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82, 83 and 112 of the National Law), and

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- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for health professionals (section 41 of the National Law).

If you want to continue to practise and you don't meet this standard, you will need to provide information to help the Board decide whether you are able to continue to practise.

## Requirements for medical practitioners with non-practising registration or medical practitioners who are not registered and wish to return to practice (includes international medical graduates)

If you have two or more years clinical experience as a registered medical practitioner and are returning to practice, you are required to complete the following requirements:

- if you have had non-practising registration, or have not been registered, for up to and including 12 months:
  - there are no additional requirements that have to be met before re-commencing practice
- if you have had non-practising registration, or have not been registered, for between 12 months and up to and including 36 months:
  - at a minimum, before re-commencing practice, you must complete the equivalent of one year's continuing professional development (CPD) activities, relevant to your intended scope of practice. The CPD activities must be designed to maintain and update your knowledge and clinical judgment, or
- if you have had non-practising registration, or have not been registered, for more than 36 months:

- you are required to provide a plan for professional development and re-entry to practice to the Board for consideration and approval. The Board has issued information to assist medical practitioners who are required to develop and submit a plan for professional development and for re-entry to practice.

If you have less than two years clinical experience as a registered medical practitioner and are returning to practice and have not been registered for more than 12 months, or have not practised for more than 12 months, you are required to commence work under supervision in a training position approved by the Board.

## Requirements for medical practitioners who are changing their scope of practice

If you are changing your field or scope of practice, you may be required to undergo additional training to ensure you are competent in the new field or scope of practice.

The requirements are:

- if the change is to a subset of your current practice (that is, you are narrowing your scope of practice), there are no additional requirements
- if the change is an extension of your practice that your peers might reasonably expect from a practitioner in that field, you are required to undertake any training that peers would expect before taking up the new area of practice, or
- if the change is to a different field of practice, you will be required to consult with the relevant specialist college and develop a professional development plan for entering the new field of practice for the consideration and approval of the Board.

## More information

1. A medical practitioner is considered to meet this registration standard if they are practising and do not change the scope of their practice. As the definition of 'practice' is broad, practitioners engaging in non-clinical practice can be registered and will

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continue to meet this standard as long as they do not change the scope of their practice. However, if they wish to change the scope of their practice, for example to resume clinical activities, they will need to meet the requirements in this standard.

2. The Board's guidance '*Medical Registration – What does it mean? Who should be registered?*' provides further information for practitioners and is available on the Board's website.
3. The Board accepts practice outside Australia for the purposes of meeting the recency of practice registration standard.
4. A graduate who applies for registration for the first time more than two years after their qualification was awarded must comply with any requirements specified in guidelines issued from time to time by the Board.
5. All registered medical practitioners must meet the Board's CPD registration standard. That is, all medical practitioners who are registered must undertake CPD as specified in the CPD registration standard.

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 27 August 2015.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide-ranging consultation.

## Definitions

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management,

administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

**Recency of practice** means that a health practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in the profession since qualifying for, or obtaining registration.

**Recent graduate** means a person applying for registration for the first time whose qualification for registration was awarded not more than two years prior to the date of their application.

**Registration period** means from 1 October to the following 30 September.

**Scope of practice** means the professional role and services that an individual health practitioner is trained, qualified and competent to perform.

## Review

This registration standard will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every five years.

**Last reviewed:** 1 October 2016

This standard replaces the previous registration standard dated 1 July 2010.