

Authority

This standard has been approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 31 March 2010 pursuant to the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (2009)* (the National Law) with approval taking effect from 1 July 2010.

Summary

The Medical Board of Australia has established this standard under section 67 of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (Qld) ('the National Law'), and in accordance with section 38(2) of that Act. It applies to international medical graduates (IMGs) who do not qualify for general or specialist registration.

The Minister for Health in each relevant jurisdiction is responsible under section 67(5) of the National Law for determining whether there is an area of need for health services in the jurisdiction or part of the jurisdiction.

The Board is responsible for deciding whether an individual applicant is eligible, qualified and suitable for limited registration for area of need, to practise in a particular position. On the basis of the application and any additional information requested, the Board will decide whether the applicant has the necessary skills, training and experience to safely meet the particular need for health services.

All medical practitioners granted limited registration for area of need must comply with the requirements of registration set out in this standard, including:

- compliance with a supervision plan
- compliance with a professional development plan
- authorising and facilitating the provision of regular reports from their supervisors to the Board regarding their safety and competence to practise
- satisfactory performance in the area of need
- if intending to practise medicine in Australia longer term, providing evidence to confirm the satisfactory progress towards meeting the qualifications required for general registration or specialist registration.

These requirements are established under this standard to ensure safe and competent practice for the period of limited registration.

The Board will be including the requirements of limited registration on the National Register pursuant to section 225(p) of the National Law.

Scope of application

This standard applies to IMGs who do not qualify for general registration under section 52 or specialist registration under section 57 of the National Law, who apply for limited registration in an area of need under section 67 of the National Law, or for renewal of limited registration for area of need under Part 7 Division 9 of the National Law.

Requirements

For initial registration

General requirements:

1. Presentation in person to a Board office or authorised delegate with proof of identity (100 points of identity) – a list of permitted documents is available on the Board's website at the following address: www.medicalboard.gov.au.

Applicants are required to provide certified documentation identifying changes of name when the name of the applicant is different to the name on the primary degree in medicine and surgery and/or the name used with previous registration authorities.

2. Evidence of having been awarded a primary degree in medicine and surgery, after completing an approved course of study at a medical school listed in the current International Medical Education Directory (IMED) (online only) of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research, or other publications approved by the Australian Medical Council. An approved course of study means that the applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have completed a medical curriculum of at least four academic years, leading to an entitlement to registration in the country issuing the degree to practise clinical medicine.
3. Evidence of application for primary source verification of medical qualifications from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates International Credentials Service (EICS). The Board may take action under Part 8 of the National Law if the practitioner's medical qualifications are not verified. The New South Wales Medical Council may take action under the relevant law in that jurisdiction.
4. Evidence of successful completion of a medical internship or comparable in accordance with guidelines issued from time to time by the Board.
5. Evidence of English language skills that meet the Board's English language registration standard.

6. Evidence of work practice history that meets the Board's recency of practice registration standard. This must include a resume that describes the applicant's full practice history and any specific clinical training undertaken. Any gaps and/or overlaps in practice history from date of qualification to the present must be included and explained.
7. Details of registration history including certificates of good standing or registration status from each registration authority with which the applicant has been registered in the previous ten years (supplied where possible directly to the Board from the relevant registration authority).
8. Sponsoring employer's written confirmation of offer of employment.
9. Statement from the sponsoring employer including:
 - a) employer contact details
 - b) position description including key selection criteria addressing clinical responsibilities and qualifications and experience required
 - c) name, qualifications and contact details of the proposed clinical supervisor/s
 - d) details of a supervision plan, prepared in accordance with any Supervised Practice Guidelines issued from time to time by the Board, providing details of proposed supervisor/s and how supervision will be provided to ensure the medical practitioner's ongoing development and safe practice.
10. Written confirmation from the proposed supervisor that they agree to provide supervision and to comply with supervision obligations as required by the Board.
11. Evidence of an area of need declaration for the geographical area and/or type of health service, for which there is a need, from the responsible Minister for Health or delegate in the jurisdiction in which the designated area of need position is located.
12. Satisfactory completion of a criminal history check undertaken by the Board that meets the Board's criminal history registration standard.
13. Any other information the Board requires under section 70 in order to determine whether the applicant is a suitable person to hold limited registration.
14. Board assessment of training, skills and experience of the applicant against the position description for the designated area of need position.

In addition to the general requirements above, specific requirements apply depending on the pathway through which the applicant is seeking to qualify for registration. There are three pathways to registration:

- competent authority pathway
- standard pathway
- specialist pathway

Other pathway specific requirements

1. **Competent authority pathway:**
 - a) certificate of Advanced Standing issued by the Australian Medical Council
 - b) satisfactory results of a pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI) required for any non specialist position if the Board determines the PESCI is necessary. The Board will base its decision on the nature of the position and level of risk.
2. **Standard pathway:**
 - c) successful completion of the Australian Medical Council MCQ examination and
 - d) satisfactory results of a pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI) required for any non specialist position, if the Board determines that the PESCI is necessary. The Board will base its decision on the nature of the position and level of risk.
3. **Specialist pathway¹**
 - a) verification from the Australian Medical Council that the applicant has had an assessment of their specialist qualifications by the relevant specialist medical college against the position description for the designated area of need position, and the results of the assessment and
 - b) letter of recommendation from the relevant specialist college and confirmation that the applicant is fit to carry out the tasks necessary for the particular position, including any recommended limitations on the nature and extent of practice.

Requirements on limited registration

The Board establishes requirements on the medical registration of all practitioners with limited registration for area of need. These relate to the requirement for the registrant to:

- comply with the supervision plan approved by the Board

¹ This does not qualify applicants for specialist registration



- comply with the professional development plan approved by the Board
- ensure that clinical supervisors provide regular reports to the Board regarding the registrant's safety and competence to practise
- perform satisfactorily in the area of need position
- provide evidence to confirm the satisfactory progress towards meeting the qualifications required for general registration or specialist registration if the applicant is intending to practise medicine in Australia longer term
- restrict their practice to the approved position in the defined area of need.

If a practitioner with limited registration for area of need does not maintain their employment in the designated area of need position, they are unable to comply with the requirements on their practice and therefore cannot practise medicine. They will need to submit a new application for limited registration if they wish to practise in a new position.

The Board will grant limited registration for area of need for a period of up to 12 months.

The Board will be including the requirements of limited registration on the National Register pursuant to section 225 (p) of the National Law.

Requirements for renewal of registration

1. Renewal of limited registration area of need will be subject to the practitioner meeting the following requirements:
 - a) completion of an annual renewal form in accordance with section 107 of the National Law, including an annual statement in accordance with section 109
 - b) demonstrated compliance with any conditions or requirements on registration
 - c) satisfactory performance in the area of need
 - d) documentary evidence in accordance with any guidelines issued from time to time by the Board, demonstrating satisfactory progress towards general registration or specialist registration if the registrant is intending to practise medicine in Australia longer term
 - e) any additional investigation, information, examination or assessment required by the Board in accordance with section 80 of the National Law.

The Board will not renew limited registration more than three times. However, a new application for limited registration can be made.

2. The Board may **refuse to renew** the practitioner's registration if:

- a) the practitioner's employment in the designated area of need position ceases or is terminated; or
- b) the practitioner fails to comply with supervision requirements; or
- c) during assessment or supervision, deficiencies are identified in the practitioner's practice that the Board considers are significant.

Applications for variation in changed circumstances

If a practitioner is offered another position or there is another substantial change to their circumstances, they must submit a new application for limited registration. However, practitioners can apply to the Board for a variation if there is a minor change to their circumstances, such as a change in their supervision arrangements.

When making an application for a variation, the Board requires the details of the change of circumstances from the sponsoring employer and confirmation from the registrant that they agree to the change in circumstances. Supporting documentation of the change must be submitted.

If the Board considers that the variation is significant, it will require the practitioner to submit a new application.

Definitions

Area of need for health services means a jurisdiction or part of a jurisdiction where the responsible Minister for Health decides under section 67(5) that there are insufficient health practitioners practising in the particular health profession to meet the needs of people living in the jurisdiction or part of the jurisdiction.

Supervision plan means a plan that sets out the arrangements or proposed arrangements for clinical supervision of the medical practice of the applicant for registration or registered practitioner.

Review

This standard will commence on 1 July 2010. The Board will review this standard at least every three years.

