



## **THIRD MEETING OF THE MEDICAL BOARD OF AUSTRALIA 18 NOVEMBER 2009**

The third meeting of the Medical Board of Australia was held on 18 November 2009 at the Hilton Melbourne Airport. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*.

The Board noted progress with implementation of the new national scheme. With respect to the legislative program the Board is pleased that:

- the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* ('Bill B') has been passed without amendment by the Queensland Parliament and is due to commence on 1 July 2010 (this also covers adoption of the National Law for Queensland)
- in NSW the National Law has passed both houses of Parliament without amendment, and
- in Victoria the National Law has passed the lower house of Parliament and is scheduled to be debated in the upper house.

As in previous meetings, in its third meeting the Board focussed on the matters it had to resolve to enable the scheme to commence on 1 July 2010. The Board gave further consideration to matters of budget in order that the Board's first Health Profession Agreement can be prepared. The Board approved a budget for 2009-10 so that the Agency can commence employing staff and leasing premises for the new State and Territory and national offices. The Board noted that recruitment to senior positions in the national Agency is progressing and remains on track.

The Board also considered its budget for 2010-11 and will give further consideration to this at future meetings, following the outcome of the registration migration process that will confirm final registrant numbers, and due diligence processes that will confirm reserves that will be transferred from existing State and Territory boards.

The Board discussed progress with the consultation on the Board's proposals for registration standards and specialist registration that were posted on the Agency's website ([www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)) on 27 October 2009. The consultation closes on 24 November 2009, and the Board encourages all interested parties to make their submissions so that the Board can consider the broadest possible range of views. At its December meeting, the Board will consider revised draft registration standards, and complete this work in order to submit the registration standards to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for approval.

The Board acknowledges the tight timetable for completion of this work. The timetable is necessary so that all registrants can have advice ahead of commencement day on 1 July 2010 of the new registration standards and requirements.

The Board considered the code of conduct, *Good Medical Practice*, that has been developed by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) with funding from the Commonwealth Government. The Board acknowledged the considerable work that has been done to develop the code, and the extensive consultation already undertaken by the AMC. The Board is required, under the National Law, to ensure there is wide-ranging consultation about the content of any code it proposes to approve to apply to registered medical practitioners. Taking into account the consultation that has already occurred, the Board decided that, in early 2010, it will publish the code on its website as a draft code of the Medical Board of Australia, inform key stakeholders, and invite any final submissions, before considering whether to approve *Good Medical Practice* as a code under the National Law to apply to the medical profession in Australia.

The Board gave consideration to what other codes and guidelines might be needed for the profession on commencement of the national scheme. The Board agreed to work with other boards on the development of guidelines covering mandatory reporting obligations under the National Law, and advertising of practitioner services. The Board expects to give consideration to drafts of these guidelines at its December meeting.

The Board also agreed a timetable for development of additional registration standards, codes and guidelines specific to the Board, with drafts to be considered at its February 2010 meeting. The Board decided as a matter of priority to prepare draft registration standards on limited registration for area of need, under section 67 of the National Law, and limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice, under section 66 of the National Law. The Board agreed that it would release its proposed draft registration standards, codes and guidelines for public consultation on 5 March 2010.

The Board considered progress with the establishment of the Registration and Notification Management Information System, to support the Board's functions, as well as progress with the electronic document and management system, finance, human resources, electronic mail and Microsoft Office, and the web based online services.

The Board gave further consideration to the size of the medical boards in each State and Territory to apply from 1 July 2011. The Board decided to propose for Ministers consideration that the boards in NSW, Victoria and Queensland have 12 members, with nine members each in the ACT, Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

The Board acknowledged the continuing efforts of existing State and Territory boards in preparing for implementation of the national scheme, as well as accrediting bodies, AHPRA and the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project team. The Board looks forward to continued joint effort in coming months.

Dr Joanna Flynn  
Chair, Medical Board of Australia

24 November 2009