

Public Consultation, Registration standard, Recency of Practice

1. The Australian Senior Active Doctors Association (ASADA) is pleased to respond to the Public Consultation concerning Recency of Practice.
2. ASADA notes that it is the public stated policy of all major political parties that Australians continue to participate in the workforce or in a voluntary capacity for as long as is possible and that workplace rules should reflect such policy. Furthermore, senior Australians should be encouraged, not discouraged to continue to contribute.
3. ASADA notes that the Federal Government has indicated that the age of eligibility for the age pension will increase to 70 years by 2035 (having been already increased from 65 years to 67 years commencing in increments in 2017 until 2023). Furthermore, the eligibility for the age pension for men and women is now the same.
4. ASADA notes that the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) has suggested that recency of practice now be defined as follows:
 - *four weeks equivalent full time (minimum 38 hour week) in one registration period, or*
 - *12 weeks equivalent full time (minimum 38 hour week) over three consecutive registration periods.*
5. **ASADA proposes that if the Recency of Practice standard is to be rewritten that it be rewritten as follows:**
 - ***50 hours of professional practise (voluntary or paid) in any one registration period or***
 - ***150 hours of professional practise (voluntary or paid) in any three year period.***
6. ASADA's proposal seeks to ensure that those doctors who are working 1-3 hours per week over a 12 month period are not discriminated against. Many of these doctors may be in their senior years and their contribution although of lesser time than their previous commitment, should none the less be valued and appreciated.
7. Given that there is no step-down category for senior doctors who wish to work in a limited capacity and maintain their ability to prescribe, refer and order tests, ASADA believes that its recommendations are reasonable and non-discriminatory.
8. ASADA is aware that the public protection provisions currently in force are considerable and extensive and include mandatory reporting, the ability for health and performance reviews, and general credentialing procedures. Within this context, ASADA maintains that its recommendations are entirely reasonable and consistent with public policy.
9. ASADA notes that Australia's senior doctors have an excellent record in professional standing and that public policy should reflect the ageing of the Australian population as well as the ageing of the medical profession itself.
10. ASADA believes that senior Australian doctors can be a valuable resource to the growing ranks of junior Australian doctors who will need ongoing training and mentoring to reach their full potential. ASADA maintains that no restriction should be placed in the way of medical practitioners in good standing contributing in a voluntary capacity to their profession and to the benefit of the community.