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Physiotherapy Board of Australia

Communique

Fifth meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia 26 February 2010

The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. At its fifth meeting, held in Melbourne, the Board focused on its priorities in preparing for the introduction of the national registration and accreditation scheme and on preparatory work to enable it to fulfil its statutory functions from 1 July 2010.

Proposed registration standards

The Board's proposed registration standards will soon be considered for approval by Health Ministers at Ministerial Council. The standards specify the Board's requirements for:

- English language skills, specifying the English language skills that are required for initial registration (these are common across the 10 registered health professions)
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

The final standards and information about specialist registration will be published on the Board's website at www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au soon after Ministers' consideration.

Codes and guidelines

In March 2010, the Board will consult on a range of codes and guidelines that will provide additional advice for physiotherapists about professional conduct and requirements under the National Law. The Board will release a consultation paper that sets out all its proposed codes and guidelines early in March and welcomes feedback.

Issues for consultation:

- A code of conduct for the physiotherapy profession, addressing issues like providing good care, working with patients, effective communication, confidentiality and privacy, informed consent, patients with additional

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needs, adverse events and open disclosure, delegation referral and handover, teamwork, minimising risk, maintaining professional boundaries, health records, conflicts of interest, financial and commercial dealings

- Guidelines on mandatory reporting, explaining the situations when a health practitioner or their employer must notify the Board through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency about a registered health practitioner's misconduct. There are four types of misconduct: intoxication, sexual misconduct, impairment and significantly departing from accepted professional standards. These guidelines are expected to be common across all National Boards

- Guidelines on Advertising, including what is acceptable advertising, such as factual statements about the services a physiotherapist provides. The Guidelines also define what is unacceptable, such as not disclosing risks associated with a treatment. The Guidelines clarify the acceptable use in advertising of titles, warning statements, advertising of price and how to complain about a breach of the Guidelines. These guidelines are likely to be common across all National Boards

- Guidelines on CPD, which explain what activities count as CPD, how to establish a learning plan, how to keep records of your CPD and contains tools to help physiotherapists develop and record a CPD portfolio

- Guidelines for physiotherapists in a supervisory role in relation to students, other physiotherapists (e.g. with conditions on their registration), therapy assistants, or other practitioners

- Guidelines on use of medicines, to explain the scheduled medicines a physiotherapist can use or supply lawfully, and to provide advice about the knowledge and skills that physiotherapists need to recommend medicines safely to their patients, clients or consumers

The Board's registration standards, codes and guidelines are intended to set clear requirements for the profession. They can also be admissible as evidence of appropriate professional conduct or practice for the physiotherapy profession. The Board encourages all interested physiotherapists to provide feedback on the proposed codes and guidelines which will be published on the Board's website in March 2010.

Registration Fees

The Board will be setting the 2010-2011 registration fees at its meeting in March and this will be communicated to the profession in April.

Registration Transition Arrangements

The Board considered its communication needs in the lead up to commencement of the national scheme. It will be working very closely with State and Territory Boards during this period. Every registrant will receive a letter from AHPRA (the Agency supporting the Board) towards the end of April, detailing the transition process, advising them of their personal registration status and outlining what is required of them to ensure a safe transition to the National Scheme. Individual registrants are also encouraged to make sure that their contact details are up to date with their existing registration board, as this information will be transferred to the national scheme.

Regular updates and FAQs will be published on the National Board website (www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au).