

Response template for the public consultation on the proposed change to the protected title for the podiatry speciality of podiatric surgery

September 2024

This response template is the preferred way to submit your feedback to the public consultation on the Podiatry Board of Australia's proposed change to the protected title for the podiatry speciality of podiatric surgery.

Please provide any feedback in this document, including your responses to the questions in the text boxes on the following pages. The boxes will expand to accommodate your response. You do not need to respond to a question if you have no comment.

Making a submission

Please complete this response template and email to podiatryconsultation@ahpra.gov.au.

Consultation closes on 8 November 2024.

Publication of submissions

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Initial questions

To help us better understand your situation and the context of your feedback please provide us with some details about you. These details will not be published in any summary of the collated feedback from this consultation.

Question A

Are you completing this submission on behalf of an organisation or as an individual ☐

Your answer:

☐ Organisation

Name of organisation ☐ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Contact email ☐ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☒ Myself

☐

☐

Question B

If you are completing this submission as an individual, are you ☐

☐ A registered health practitioner ☐

Profession ☐ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☒ A member of the public ☐

☐ Other ☐ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Question C

Would you like your submission to be published ☐

☐ Yes, publish my submission **with** my name ☐ organisation name

☒ Yes, publish my submission **without** my name ☐ organisation name

☐ No – **do not** publish my submission

Your responses to the consultation questions

1. Do you agree with the proposal to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of podiatric surgery to 'surgical podiatrist' to make it clear that the practitioner is a specialist podiatrist who performs surgery? Why or why not?

NO. The title "Podiatric Surgeon" is descriptive enough. And in my opinion, it does not cause any confusion. As with "Dental Surgeons", which is ubiquitous, with Dentists who had extensive surgical training, so are "Podiatric Surgeons" who underwent a specialist and rigorous surgical training on the foot and ankle. Even reading those two protected titles in juxtaposition, there is an explicit descriptor of the title. Dentists and Podiatrists who underwent surgical training deserve the title "Podiatric/Dental Surgeons".

2. Do you have an alternative suggestion for the protected title? If yes, how would your suggested title achieve the same result as 'surgical podiatrist' in providing greater clarity to consumers?

NO. Podiatric Surgeon does not cause any confusion. This had been a protected title for a long enough time for people to be familiar with them.

3. What are the potential impacts for consumers of the proposed change in title?

"Surgical Podiatrist" would further confuse the public, as any podiatrist by scope, can perform minor surgeries such as Nail avulsions. This would easily be confusing, as "Podiatric Surgeon" creates a more coherent job description, these are surgeons of the foot and ankle. Any person familiar with a Dental surgeon would be acquainted to such title.

4. What are the potential impacts, including potential costs, for podiatric surgeons of the proposed change in title?

The title change can affect the credibility of the training in which our Podiatric Surgeons underwent. Having a title that invalidates the basic job description of the profession is not only unfair but does not have any merits. Podiatry is a much-needed specialization, and podiatric surgery paves the way for the future of foot health in the general and high-risk population (Diabetic population etc.). Changing the title only Invalidates and strips away the literal job description of podiatric surgeons.

5. Are there any unintended consequences the Board might not have considered in relation to the proposed change of title?

The independent review suggested no change in the scope of practice amongst podiatric surgeons, what would a change of name achieve? Dental surgeons? Dentists who trained in surgery Podiatric Surgeons? Podiatrists who trained in surgery. In my opinion, other than recognising the job of these specialities and respecting their training, that is all that there is, and confusing the public is not the goal of these titles.

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☐ Myself [YES]

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☐ A registered health practitioner?

Profession: Student

☐ A member of the public? [YES]

☐ Other:

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Your responses to the consultation questions

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No it doesn't clearly represent the amount of training undertaken to specialize into the role.

2. Do you have an alternative suggestion for the protected title? If yes, how would your suggested title achieve the same result as 'surgical podiatrist' in providing greater clarity to consumers?

Podiatric Surgeon, clearly states that they have specialized in performing podiatric surgery. Surgical podiatrist is alarmingly non specific, indicating a role vaguely in, or adjacent to, the field of podiatric surgery.

3. What are the potential impacts for consumers of the proposed change in title?

The title doesn't advocate for the role and the services provided, meaning those with podiatric conditions might not be made aware of their options for appropriate high quality care.

4. What are the potential impacts, including potential costs, for podiatric surgeons of the proposed change in title?

The change would devalue the profession, meaning the cost of education and training would remain a burden for a large portion of their professional career. They would go uncompensated for the time it took to specialize. Years filled with ongoing burnout from balancing personal and family life with training, study, travel to study, and ongoing employment.

5. Are there any unintended consequences the Board might not have considered in relation to the proposed change of title?

The devaluation of the profession, the work they did to make a positive impact in the field and improve patient outcomes would go unrecognized. Patient and referring practitioner confidence in the profession would be minimized or lost, as well as years of incredibly hard work.



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Profession: Podiatrist

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Your responses to the consultation questions

1. Do you agree with the proposal to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of podiatric surgery to 'surgical podiatrist' to make it clear that the practitioner is a specialist podiatrist who performs surgery? Why or why not?

We do not support the proposal to change the title of "Podiatric Surgeon" to "Surgical Podiatrist." The term "Podiatric Surgeon" accurately conveys that the practitioner is a podiatrist with specialised surgical training, focused on foot and ankle procedures. The alternative term, "Surgical Podiatrist," is less consistent with established professional terminology. For instance, comparable titles in healthcare, such as "Dental Surgeon," clearly indicate practitioners who perform surgery without causing confusion or implying a medical degree. This distinction is essential for public understanding, as the term "surgeon" has long been associated with individuals who have completed specialist surgical training, regardless of whether they hold a traditional medical degree.

Additionally, "Podiatric Surgeon" is internationally recognised, with similar titles used across healthcare systems in the United Kingdom and the United States. Aligning with this standard facilitates international collaboration and maintains clarity within the healthcare community. Replacing it with "Surgical Podiatrist" would create inconsistency, potentially confusing referrers, collaborators, and patients, who may interpret "Surgical Podiatrist" as implying a lesser focus on surgery.

The title "Podiatric Surgeon" aligns with the rigorous training and accreditation standards that podiatric surgeons undergo in Australia, which are equivalent to those in medical education programs. Podiatric surgeons are thoroughly prepared to deliver safe and effective surgical care and rebranding this title would only serve to undermine the specialist recognition of these highly trained practitioners, diminishing professional clarity and potentially impacting patient trust.

Ultimately, changing this title does not contribute to improved patient outcomes and could even detract from the public's understanding of a practitioner's qualifications and expertise. The focus should remain on patient well-being and promoting transparent, consistent titles within healthcare to support trust and collaborative care.

2. Do you have an alternative suggestion for the protected title? If yes, how would your suggested title achieve the same result as 'surgical podiatrist' in providing greater clarity to consumers?

I believe the current title "Podiatric Surgeon" is already clear, precise, and appropriately conveys the advanced expertise involved in this specialised role. Redefining it to "Surgical Podiatrist" might, in fact, increase confusion for both patients and healthcare providers, as it creates ambiguity between podiatric surgeons, who have undergone extensive training in complex surgical procedures like bunionectomies and tendon repairs, and general podiatrists, who typically perform minor surgical tasks such as partial nail avulsions or wart curettage.

As a podiatrist, I find this distinction essential. The term "Podiatric Surgeon" accurately reflects the advanced surgical training and skill set, ensuring patients and other healthcare professionals understand the difference between these roles. There is currently no evidence that changing the title would reduce patient confusion or improve clarity.

Instead of altering the title, we could consider alternative measures to clarify roles, such as enhanced patient education. Tools like tailored consent forms, informative community workshops, digital resources, and public awareness campaigns could help patients better understand each practitioner's qualifications and scope. These steps would maintain the professional integrity of podiatric surgeons, accurately reflect their expertise, and prevent misconceptions that could arise from an ambiguous title change.

3. What are the potential impacts for consumers of the proposed change in title?

The proposed change from "Podiatric Surgeon" to "Surgical Podiatrist" could have considerable negative impacts on consumers, primarily due to increased confusion and potential compromises in patient safety. Firstly, such a change risks creating confusion about the practitioner's qualifications. The term "Surgical Podiatrist" does not clearly convey the extensive surgical training that podiatric surgeons undergo, potentially leading patients to misunderstand the level of expertise involved in complex foot and ankle surgeries. This confusion could erode consumer confidence, with patients perceiving the title as a downgrade, which may discourage them from seeking appropriate care.

Additionally, the revised title may undermine the perceived seriousness and complexity of foot and ankle surgery. The title "Podiatric Surgeon" helps patients understand the complex nature of the procedures involved and the level of expertise required, which is critical for fostering trust and adherence to pre-operative and post-operative care instructions. Without a clear title that reflects the practitioner's role, patients might underestimate the complexity of the surgery, leading to reduced compliance with recovery protocols and follow-up appointments, potentially compromising their outcomes and safety.

There are also broader implications for the healthcare system. A downgraded title may inadvertently lead patients to seek out traditional "surgeons" instead, creating additional strain on hospital waitlists and delaying treatment. Moreover, if other non-medical practitioners, like Dental Surgeons, continue to use the "surgeon" title, it could create inconsistencies that further confuse patients.

In summary, changing the title risks patient confusion, erodes confidence, and undermines the professionalism associated with foot and ankle surgery, ultimately impacting patient safety and care outcomes. Retaining the title "Podiatric Surgeon" is therefore vital to ensuring that patients understand and trust their practitioner's qualifications.

4. What are the potential impacts, including potential costs, for podiatric surgeons of the proposed change in title?

The proposed change from "Podiatric Surgeon" to "Surgical Podiatrist" would likely bring extensive financial, operational, and reputational challenges to the profession, affecting both podiatric surgeons and trainees.

Financial and logistical costs

Implementing the new title would necessitate rebranding costs, including updates to clinic signage, websites, business cards, brochures, and referral pads. Clinics would also need to invest in public education initiatives to clarify the title change, which would require time, funding, and possibly consultancy fees to reach patients effectively. Legal expenses may arise from contract adjustments, regulatory compliance with updated titles, and re-registration costs. Administrative burdens could also increase, as practitioners would have to modify records with insurance providers and negotiate any resulting reimbursement issues, potentially leading to delays in claims processing and revenue loss.

Impact on patient trust and retention

A title change could lead to confusion among patients, diminishing their understanding of podiatric surgeons' qualifications and expertise in performing complex foot and ankle surgeries. This perception might reduce patient retention and hinder new patient acquisition. Additionally, referrers, such as general practitioners, could be less inclined to refer patients if they perceive the title as a downgrade, impacting access to appropriate surgical care and creating further obstacles for patients seeking timely treatment.

Professional morale and retention

The title change risks devaluing the intense training, skill, and commitment that podiatric surgeons bring to their field. For trainees and practising surgeons, it could exacerbate feelings of imposter syndrome and lower morale, as the title would no longer accurately reflect their specialist qualifications. Furthermore, there is a concern that it could deter future practitioners from entering or remaining in the profession, potentially reducing the availability of foot and ankle specialists and straining the healthcare system's capacity to meet demand.

Interprofessional relationships and systemic barriers

This change could put a strain in potential existing professional relationships, particularly in relation to

orthopaedic surgeons and medical organisations that have historically been resistant to podiatric surgery. This title change could strengthen these barriers, limiting collaboration and potentially undermining the quality of care patients receive.

Repercussions for training and curriculum

Educational programs would need adjustments to align with the new title, potentially adding to curriculum redesign and trainee support costs. Trainees may face additional fees for modified courses and new resources, which could place further financial strain on those entering the field.

Impact on the Healthcare System

Finally, the title change risks introducing further complexity to the healthcare system. Rebranding and administrative delays could divert valuable resources from patient care and strain public hospital waitlists. It also creates a potential inconsistency with other non-medical specialists who retain the "surgeon" title, further confusing consumers.

In conclusion, changing the title from "Podiatric Surgeon" to "Surgical Podiatrist" could be highly detrimental, not only imposing significant financial and operational costs but also affecting the morale and professional standing of podiatric surgeons and their trainees. The resulting consumer confusion and potential erosion of trust could impact patient outcomes, access to care, and interprofessional relationships, ultimately placing additional strain on the broader healthcare system.

5. Are there any unintended consequences the Board might not have considered in relation to the proposed change of title?

The proposed change in title for podiatric surgeons to "surgical podiatrist" may carry unintended consequences that could significantly impact the profession and healthcare system. Firstly, it could lead to decreased competitiveness within the healthcare setting, providing orthopaedic surgeons with an unfair market advantage. This shift might reduce podiatric surgeons' income, as the altered title could diminish patient and insurer confidence in their qualifications. Such financial repercussions could reach can affect individual practitioners significantly.

A title change could foster feelings of unfair treatment within the profession. Moreover, the review recognised the symbolic capital of the term "surgeon," a designation that signifies expertise and carries a level of societal respect. Losing this title could reduce morale within the profession and might inadvertently support anti-competitive pressures from other specialist groups.

Changing the title could also cause public and professional confusion, given the longstanding use of "podiatric surgeon." Patients, referrers, and insurers may misinterpret "surgical podiatrist" as indicating a lesser qualification or even a different role entirely, leading to potential reductions in patient trust and delays in accessing appropriate care. Internationally, podiatric surgeons are recognised under this title in countries like the United States and United Kingdom, where standardised terminology facilitates collaboration and professional respect. A title change could create inconsistency with international peers, hampering cross-border professional relationships, research collaborations, and shared training programs.

Additionally, there are systemic implications: altering the title for one non-medically qualified group while allowing others, such as dental and veterinary surgeons, to retain it sets a concerning precedent. This discrepancy could lead to perceptions of inequality within the Australian healthcare system, complicating professional roles and potentially opening debates in other areas, which might further blur professional identities.

The title change may also hinder greater integration of podiatric surgeons into the public health system. The current title accurately reflects their skill set and helps distinguish their role from general podiatrists, making it clearer to administrators, patients, and other healthcare professionals. Redefining this role might obscure the specific expertise of podiatric surgeons, complicating their integration and contribution to reducing public health waitlists.

In conclusion, while intended to clarify patient understanding, the title change from "podiatric surgeon" to "surgical podiatrist" could actually introduce confusion, weaken competitiveness, and potentially impact income, morale, interdisciplinary relations, and public health integration. It may create more

barriers than benefits, underscoring the need for alternative strategies to address public understanding without diminishing the profession's standing and effectiveness.

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☐ Organisation

Name of organisation: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Contact email: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☒ Myself

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Question B

If you are completing this submission as an individual, are you:

☒ A registered health practitioner?

Profession: AHPRA Registered Medical Doctor

☐ A member of the public?

☐ Other: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Question C

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☐ Yes, publish my submission **with** my name/organisation name

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☐ No – **do not** publish my submission

Your responses to the consultation questions

1. Do you agree with the proposal to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of podiatric surgery to 'surgical podiatrist' to make it clear that the practitioner is a specialist podiatrist who performs surgery? Why or why not?

I strongly disagree with the proposed title change from **“Podiatric Surgeon”** to **“Surgical Podiatrist.”** As a medical doctor who frequently refers/recommends patients to Podiatric Surgeons, I have full faith in their qualifications, surgical skills, and expertise. The current title, **“Podiatric Surgeon,”** accurately reflects their level of training and competence. Changing the title to **“Surgical Podiatrist”** not only creates confusion but also diminishes the recognition of their rigorous surgical training. These professionals perform complex foot and ankle surgeries with good reported patient outcomes that require a high level of expertise, and the current title reflects that. Their compulsory audit data suggests safe delivery of patient care. I do not believe title **“Podiatric Surgeon”** implies a medical degree, but rather implies a Podiatrist who has undergone specialist training to perform podiatric surgery.

2. Do you have an alternative suggestion for the protected title? If yes, how would your suggested title achieve the same result as 'surgical podiatrist' in providing greater clarity to consumers?

I believe the title **“Podiatric Surgeon”** should be retained. It is already clear, descriptive, and accurately communicates to patients and healthcare providers that these practitioners are trained and specialised in foot and ankle surgery. If further clarity is needed, a possible alternative could be **“Podiatric Surgeon – Foot and Ankle Specialist,”** but the term **“surgeon”** must remain. It is essential to maintain the distinction that Podiatric Surgeons are highly trained in surgical procedures, just like other surgical specialists.

3. What are the potential impacts for consumers of the proposed change in title?

The proposed change in title risks confusing consumers about the qualifications of Podiatric Surgeons. Patients may not realize that **“Surgical Podiatrist”** refers to someone with extensive surgical training, and they may mistakenly assume they are dealing with a general podiatrist rather than a surgeon. This confusion could lead to patients delaying or avoiding necessary surgical care, or seeking out other specialists, such as general orthopaedic surgeons or general surgeons, even when a Podiatric Surgeon would be the most qualified to treat their foot and ankle condition. This ultimately reduces patient access to appropriate care and could result in poorer outcomes. Navigating the world of foot and ankle conditions as a consumer is already frustrating and confusing. I have come across countless patients who have received inappropriate care for their foot and ankle condition. They are typically referred to practitioners who do not have specific training in foot and ankle management or they are confused who they should seek care from. This results in disastrous patient outcomes. Foot and ankle conditions are complicated and often under-represented in medical school, and I certainly appreciate our podiatric surgeon colleagues in this space. They have excellent knowledge in elective foot and ankle surgery and diabetic foot management.

4. What are the potential impacts, including potential costs, for podiatric surgeons of the proposed change in title?

The title “**Surgical Podiatrist**” undermines the years of specialised surgical training these professionals have completed and suggests a lesser role compared to other surgeons. This may lead to fewer referrals from medical professionals, as the title no longer conveys the full surgical scope of practice. Additionally, there is a risk that insurance companies and hospital systems may view the new title as a diminishment of surgical qualifications, further limiting Podiatric Surgeons' access to performing surgeries in certain facilities.

The impact on morale, particularly for podiatric surgical registrars, cannot be overstated. I have colleagues who are podiatric surgical trainees, and I see firsthand how hard they work. Their surgical training is robust, evidence-based, and comparable to that of other surgical specialties. For them, a title change would be demoralizing, making them feel as though their efforts are being undervalued despite the extensive education and training they have undergone.

I am sure there are other impacts on podiatric surgeons, financially, mentally and globally.

5. Are there any unintended consequences the Board might not have considered in relation to the proposed change of title?

One major unintended consequence is that this title change could exacerbate existing **anti-competitive behaviours** from other medical professions, particularly orthopaedic surgeons. There is already tension between Podiatric Surgeons and orthopaedic surgeons, and this title change could provide orthopaedic surgeons with more leverage to claim that Podiatric Surgeons are not true surgeons, further limiting their ability to practice in hospitals or access certain referral pathways.

Additionally, the title change could erode public trust and confidence in Podiatric Surgeons, making it harder for these specialists to establish themselves in an already competitive healthcare landscape. Referring medical doctors like myself may face more difficulty explaining the qualifications of Podiatric Surgeons to patients, leading to unnecessary confusion and potential delays in care. In a system where we should be encouraging multidisciplinary collaboration, this change threatens to drive further divisions, all to the detriment of patient care.

In conclusion, as a medical doctor who regularly refers patients to Podiatric Surgeons and values their expertise, I see no reason for a title change. The current title of “**Podiatric Surgeon**” accurately reflects their training and the care they provide. Altering this title would only lead to confusion, diminish their professional standing, and negatively impact patient care.

I am in strong belief that medical turf wars are an outdated practice which does not focus on patient outcomes. This once again another example of medical dominance.

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Your responses to the consultation questions

1. Do you agree with the proposal to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of podiatric surgery to 'surgical podiatrist' to make it clear that the practitioner is a specialist podiatrist who performs surgery? Why or why not?
<p>No, I do not agree with the proposal to change the protected title from "podiatric surgeon" to "surgical podiatrist." While the intention behind the proposed change is to reduce consumer confusion, I believe that the current title, "podiatric surgeon," is already well-established within the profession and effectively communicates that the practitioner is a specialist within the field of podiatric surgery.</p> <p>Changing the title could introduce unnecessary disruption for both practitioners and the public, especially given that "podiatric surgeon" is a recognized term within the medical and health communities. Additionally, many consumers are already familiar with the term, and the problem of confusion around qualifications could be better addressed through public education campaigns and clearer communication about the training and roles of podiatric surgeons, rather than altering the professional title.</p> <p>A title change risks undermining the profession's history and could cause unnecessary costs and administrative burdens for practitioners without a clear, significant benefit to patient safety or consumer understanding. Instead of focusing on changing the title, efforts should be directed towards better education and awareness for the public to clarify the distinctions between podiatric surgeons and other medical practitioners.</p>
2. Do you have an alternative suggestion for the protected title? If yes, how would your suggested title achieve the same result as 'surgical podiatrist' in providing greater clarity to consumers?
No
3. What are the potential impacts for consumers of the proposed change in title?
<p>Increased Confusion: Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" could confuse consumers even more, especially those who are already familiar with the current term "podiatric surgeon." The new term may not effectively convey the distinction between podiatric surgeons and other medical practitioners, leading to further confusion about qualifications.</p> <p>Loss of Familiarity: The title "podiatric surgeon" is already well-established and trusted by many consumers. Changing it risks disrupting this familiarity, creating unnecessary uncertainty for patients who rely on this title to understand the practitioner's role and qualifications.</p>

Erosion of Public Trust: If the change is perceived as unnecessary or confusing, it could reduce public confidence in podiatric surgeons and the regulatory system, undermining the relationship between practitioners and patients.

Increased Costs: Practitioners will likely need to update their advertising, signage, and professional materials to reflect the new title, which could incur significant costs. These costs may be passed on to consumers, resulting in higher prices for services.

Fragmentation of Professional Identity: Changing the title could lead to a fragmented perception of the profession, creating inconsistency within the healthcare system. This may affect the recognition of podiatric surgery as a specialized field, potentially diminishing its standing within the broader medical community.

Potential for Misinterpretation: While the intent is to clarify, the term "surgical podiatrist" could still be misinterpreted as someone who primarily works in a non-surgical capacity (e.g., a podiatrist with surgical training but not regularly practicing surgery), further muddying the waters instead of offering clarity

****International Inconsistency:** The change to "surgical podiatrist" may lead to confusion for patients who seek care internationally, as podiatric surgery is often referred to by different titles in other countries. This lack of consistency could create misunderstandings when patients travel or consult with international healthcare systems.

4. What are the potential impacts, including potential costs, for podiatric surgeons of the proposed change in title?

Rebranding & communication cost- updating signs, materials, website etc. Also need to change professional stationary- invoices, letter head, reminders

Patient communication & transition: education- the podiatric surgeons will need to inform their existing patients re the title change, will require additional time & resources. Consultation time, if explaining changes over consultation time, this will cause the consult to be longer & may affect the surgeon's efficiency & capacity to see as many patients

Potential for public confusion & trust issue- If patients are confused about the title change/do not fully understand the reason behind it, they may experience uncertainty or reluctance in seeking care, potentially leading to a decline in appointments. Loss of patient's trust, If the public perceives the change as unnecessary or confusing, there may be a loss of trust in podiatric surgery as a profession, which could negatively affect patient inflow and overall business.

Impact on Professional Identity & recognition- Identity crisis- some podiatric surgeon might feel that the title could alter how they are perceived by the colleagues & the public, leading to concerns about their professional identity. For those who have built their reputation under the title "podiatric surgeon", the change may create sense of uncertainty or loss of professional stature, and may cause mental health issues. International recognition issue- other countries such as the UK also uses the podiatric surgeon title. If this changes, this may affect the ability of the Australian podiatric surgeon to engage in international collaborations or consults, which would reflect poorly on our profession.

5. Are there any unintended consequences the Board might not have considered in relation to the proposed change of title?

Some keys I feel that the board might not have considered are:

1. Consumer confusion over multiple titles
2. Difficulty in differentiating specialisation within podiatry- The change to "surgical podiatrist" may create challenges in distinguishing between general podiatrists and those with specialist surgical qualifications. If the new title does not adequately reflect the scope of practice or the advanced training required for podiatric surgeons, it could result in the blurring of lines between general podiatrists and surgical specialists. This might confuse consumers and potentially diminish the perceived expertise of podiatric surgeons.
3. Increased in legal risk- The title change could inadvertently lead to greater scrutiny of podiatric surgeons' qualifications and practices. With a new title in place, there may be an expectation for more stringent oversight or legal accountability. If this expectation isn't properly managed or communicated, it could lead to a rise in complaints or lawsuits if consumers feel misinformed or if they have higher expectations of the professionals' expertise.
4. International Recognition and Mobility Issues. Other countries uses "podiatric surgeon". Changes to the title would mean limiting opportunities for professional exchange, research, or practice in foreign markets. The global consistency of titles and qualifications in healthcare is important for international collaboration and professional mobility.
5. Disruption to Established Referral Networks. The change in title could disrupt established referral networks where other healthcare providers (such as general practitioners, physio, vascular surgeons, etc) are accustomed to referring patients to "podiatric surgeons." If the new title is not widely understood or accepted by referring doctors or specialists, it could disrupt referral patterns, leading to a delay in patients receiving the appropriate care or treatment. It could also lead to reluctance among referring professionals to adopt or recognize the new title.
6. Patient Perception of Decreased Surgical Expertise. Some patients may mistakenly believe that the title "surgical podiatrist" implies a lower level of expertise or qualifications than "podiatric surgeon." They could see the title "surgical podiatrist" as a downgrade in terms of professional skills, which could diminish the perceived expertise of podiatric surgeons and affect patients' willingness to seek surgery from them.
7. Negative Impact on Existing Reputation- Many podiatric surgeons have built their reputation over time under the title "podiatric surgeon." The title change could inadvertently diminish their established recognition and credibility. Patients who have already established a relationship with their podiatric surgeon may be less trusting of a new title or feel that the change signals a reduction in quality or expertise.