

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

September 2024

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Making a submission

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Consultation closes on 8 November 2024.

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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, I do not agree with the proposal to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of Podiatric Surgery to 'surgical podiatrist'. I believe the title 'Podiatric Surgeon' should remain.

As a layperson, I believe that the alteration to the title would prove confusing for patients, and would run the risk of diminishing or trivialising the rigorous study, training and expertise required to become a Podiatric Surgeon.

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 do not have an alternative suggestion for the protected title, as I believe the protected title of 'Podiatric Surgeon' should remain.

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

The proposed change in title could run the risk of undermining patients' faith and confidence in Podiatric Surgeons. A sudden title change – where the title removes the word 'surgeon' – could undermine patients' confidence by implying that existing Podiatric Surgeons have formerly been, in some way, impersonating surgeons in performing their duties, which is absolutely not the case. This would also run the risk of undermining public perception of the importance and expertise associated with the field.

An alteration to the title of Podiatric Surgeon may also introduce confusion in terms of patients/consumers understanding a Podiatric Surgeon's skills, capabilities and expertise. As a layperson, when I read the words 'surgical podiatrist', I imagine a skilled practitioner who is able to perform surgery on an ingrown toenail (which is still very important!). When I read the words 'Podiatric Surgeon', I imagine a skilled surgeon who is able to perform surgery on all aspects of the foot and ankle.

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

Podiatric Surgeons (and the field of Podiatric Surgery more generally) could potentially suffer reputational damage due to the public perception associated with a sudden shift in title that removes the word 'surgeon'. As I mentioned above, the title change could run the risk of implying that existing Podiatric Surgeons have formerly been, in some way, impersonating surgeons in performing their duties, which is absolutely not the case. This would also run the risk of undermining public perception of the importance and expertise associated with individual Podiatric Surgeons, and with the field.

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

The potential for reputational damage is important to consider, as a change in title risks undermining public understanding of, and faith in, the skills and expertise demonstrated by Podiatric Surgeons.



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Profession: Click or tap here to enter text.

Podiatrist

☐ A member of the public?

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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?

No, I don't agree with changing the protected title to "surgical podiatrist" for several reasons:

Ambiguity and Confusion: The term "surgical podiatrist" can introduce confusion among the public and other healthcare professionals who may not fully understand the scope of practice within podiatry. Unlike "podiatric surgeon," which clearly denotes a focus on surgical interventions within podiatry, "surgical podiatrist" could be mistaken for a general podiatrist with some surgical skills rather than a fully qualified podiatric surgeon.

Risk of Diluting Specialization: The title "podiatric surgeon" is specific, denoting a practitioner with advanced training and qualifications in foot and ankle surgery. Changing this to "surgical podiatrist" may dilute the perception of specialization, reducing clarity about the rigorous additional training these professionals undergo to achieve this level of expertise.

Consistency Across Professions: Other specialties maintain titles that clearly indicate surgical expertise within a field, like "oral surgeon" or "cardiothoracic surgeon." Aligning with "podiatric surgeon" is consistent with these professional norms and enhances understanding across the healthcare system.

Potential Legal and Regulatory Implications: Changing the title could necessitate regulatory adjustments to clarify the qualifications and competencies associated with the title "surgical podiatrist," which may lead to additional administrative burdens. Maintaining the established term "podiatric surgeon" helps avoid this issue.

Patient Safety and Trust: Patients trust titles as markers of competency.

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, I don't have an alternative suggestion for the protected title. "Podiatric surgeon" is already a clear and widely recognized title that accurately reflects the specialized training and scope of practice of podiatrists who perform surgery.

This title follows established naming conventions across healthcare fields (e.g., "orthopedic surgeon," "plastic surgeon") and provides a straightforward understanding of the practitioner's role. Changing it risks diluting the specific expertise that the title "podiatric surgeon" conveys. This title is also clear for consumers, as it signals both the profession (podiatry) and the specific skill (surgery), which is critical for making informed healthcare decisions.

Retaining "podiatric surgeon" avoids unnecessary ambiguity or confusion, maintaining both professional integrity and public understanding.

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

The proposed change to "surgical podiatrist" could have several impacts on consumers, including:

Increased Confusion About Qualifications: Consumers may be unsure whether a "surgical podiatrist" has the same level of surgical training as a "podiatric surgeon." The term could imply that these practitioners are podiatrists with some surgical ability rather than fully specialized surgeons in foot and ankle surgery, leading consumers to question the practitioner's expertise.

Potential Misinterpretation of Scope: The change might blur the distinction between general podiatric care and specialized surgical care, making it harder for consumers to differentiate between standard podiatric services and those provided by a specialist trained in advanced surgical techniques. This could result in patients mistakenly seeking or avoiding certain providers based on their understanding of the title.

Reduced Patient Confidence and Trust: Shifting to an unfamiliar title like "surgical podiatrist" could decrease trust in the specialty. Consumers are accustomed to well-defined titles in healthcare, such as "cardiothoracic surgeon" or "neurosurgeon," which are consistent in both form and meaning. Deviation from this convention may create uncertainty, potentially leading patients to feel unsure about the level of care they will receive.

Potential Complications in Insurance and Referrals: Insurers, healthcare providers, and patients themselves could face complications in recognizing "surgical podiatrist" as equivalent to "podiatric surgeon," possibly affecting coverage, referrals, or eligibility for certain procedures. Clear titles facilitate administrative processes and help patients access appropriate care.

Impact on Consumer Education and Public Awareness: Established educational materials, healthcare resources, and professional guidelines use the term "podiatric surgeon." Adopting a new title could necessitate widespread updates in these resources to prevent misinformation, which could delay public understanding and create inconsistencies across healthcare platforms.

In summary, changing the title could lead to confusion, diminish consumer trust, complicate access to care, and require extensive updates in educational and administrative systems.

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

The proposed change to "surgical podiatrist" could have several significant impacts on podiatric surgeons, including potential costs related to professional reputation, financial implications, and logistical adjustments:

Professional Identity and Recognition: Podiatric surgeons have worked to establish a specialized identity that conveys their advanced training and surgical expertise. Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" could diminish the prestige and clarity associated with their specialization, potentially impacting their standing within the broader healthcare community and among peers in other surgical fields.

Potential Reduction in Patient Referrals: Referring physicians and other healthcare professionals may be less familiar with the term "surgical podiatrist," potentially leading to a drop in referrals if they question whether "surgical podiatrist" implies the same level of expertise as a "podiatric surgeon." This could reduce patient flow and income for podiatric surgeons.

Financial and Administrative Costs: Transitioning to a new title would require changes to professional materials, such as business cards, signage, websites, and marketing materials. Additionally, podiatric surgeons may need to update legal documents, medical billing codes, and insurance information to reflect the new title. These costs could add up significantly across practices.

Costs of Public Awareness and Education: To avoid confusion, podiatric surgeons may need to invest time and resources into educating patients, referring providers, and even insurers about the new title, clarifying that it reflects the same specialized qualifications. Professional associations and individual practices might also need to develop and distribute new materials or campaigns to maintain patient trust and understanding, all of which involve direct costs.

Potential Impact on Career Advancement: In the long term, a less distinctive title could affect career opportunities, as "podiatric surgeon" clearly signifies a high level of training and specialization, which is critical in academic, hospital, and leadership roles. With "surgical podiatrist," there is a risk that the title may not convey the same level of expertise or authority, potentially impacting job prospects, salaries, and advancement opportunities.

Potential Credentialing and Insurance Issues: Credentialing and insurance organizations are familiar with the term "podiatric surgeon." A change in title could introduce confusion and delays, especially if these entities do not immediately recognize "surgical podiatrist" as equivalent. Such complications could impact the efficiency of billing and reimbursements, possibly reducing income or delaying payments.

In summary, the title change could lead to financial costs, administrative burdens, and potential challenges in professional recognition, all of which could significantly impact podiatric surgeons' practices and livelihoods.

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

Yes, several unintended consequences might arise from changing the title to "surgical podiatrist," potentially complicating the role of podiatric surgeons, confusing patients, and affecting overall healthcare dynamics. These include:

Erosion of Public and Professional Trust: Patients and healthcare professionals may question whether "surgical podiatrist" signifies the same level of surgical expertise as "podiatric surgeon." This could lead to a perception that podiatric surgeons are less specialized than other surgical professionals, reducing trust and confidence in their skills and qualifications.

Negative Impact on Referrals and Interdisciplinary Relationships: The established title "podiatric surgeon" clearly identifies a specialist with advanced surgical skills, aligning with titles in other medical fields. The change might prompt hesitation from physicians and other healthcare providers who may be unclear about the qualifications of a "surgical podiatrist," leading to fewer referrals and potentially straining collaborative relationships in the healthcare system.

Potential Legislative and Regulatory Complications: Laws, regulations, and healthcare policies that reference "podiatric surgeon" would need to be updated to recognize "surgical podiatrist" as equivalent. This change could involve legislative revisions, creating a legal and administrative burden for regulatory boards and potentially slowing the recognition and practice rights of podiatric surgeons in certain regions.

Impact on Professional Mobility and International Recognition: Podiatric surgeons moving to other countries or states may face barriers, as "podiatric surgeon" is a widely recognized title internationally. Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" might not carry the same weight abroad, potentially limiting mobility and recognition in areas where the title "podiatric surgeon" is standard.

Unintended Creation of Subspecialty Confusion: Some patients and practitioners may perceive "surgical podiatrist" as indicating a subspecialty or alternative skill set within podiatry rather than advanced surgical expertise. This could inadvertently create a perception that there are different tiers within podiatric surgery, leading to confusion about practitioners' capabilities.

Administrative and Financial Burdens on Professional Organizations: Podiatric professional bodies would need to update resources, certification documents, educational materials, and outreach to align with the new title. This could redirect resources away from other critical initiatives and create additional financial and time-related burdens on these organizations.

Complications in Medical Billing and Insurance Claims: The change in title may lead to complications in billing and coding, as insurers may not immediately recognize "surgical podiatrist" as equivalent to "podiatric surgeon." This could result in claim denials, reimbursement delays, or potential loss of coverage for certain procedures, affecting both podiatric surgeons and their patients.

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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?**

I do not agree with the proposal to change the protected title for podiatric surgeons to "surgical podiatrist." The current title, "podiatric surgeon," accurately reflects the advanced training, qualifications, and expertise required to perform specialist foot and ankle surgeries. Changing it to "surgical podiatrist" risks diluting the recognition and authority of the role, potentially creating confusion for patients and other healthcare professionals.

Moreover, "podiatric surgeon" is a recognised and respected title within the healthcare system. Altering this designation may undermine public confidence in the profession and mislead individuals regarding the scope and rigour of podiatric surgical training. Retaining the current title would better preserve the distinction and trust that podiatric surgeons have earned through their specialised education and clinical competencies.

- 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," should remain unchanged as it already provides a clear, concise, and widely understood designation. This title accurately conveys the practitioner's high level of expertise and specialised training in podiatric surgery. If further clarification is deemed necessary, perhaps adding an explanatory subtitle or description on registration materials, professional websites, or healthcare directories could be more effective than changing the title itself. For example, listing practitioners as "Podiatric Surgeon – Specialist in Foot and Ankle Surgery" would add context for consumers without altering the recognised title.

Maintaining "podiatric surgeon" helps avoid ambiguity and respects the trust that has been built around this title, while any additional descriptive wording could fulfil the goal of increasing public understanding.

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

Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" could create unnecessary confusion for consumers. "Podiatric surgeon" is a title that clearly conveys expertise in surgery within the field of podiatry, aligning with public understanding and professional expectations. By switching to "surgical podiatrist," there's a risk that patients may misinterpret the role as a less specialised or less rigorously trained position compared to surgeons in other specialties. This could undermine trust in the qualifications of podiatric surgeons and diminish the credibility that the title has earned within healthcare.

Moreover, the title "surgical podiatrist" may blur the lines between different levels of practice within podiatry. Patients could be unsure if they are seeing a fully qualified surgical specialist or another type of podiatrist with a more general scope, leading to potential safety concerns and a lack of clarity around the practitioner's skill set. Retaining "podiatric surgeon" respects consumer expectations, maintains clarity, and upholds the high standards that patients rely on.

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

The proposed change to the title "surgical podiatrist" could have substantial impacts on podiatric surgeons, both in terms of perception and cost. "Surgical podiatrist" does not effectively convey the level of expertise and advanced surgical skills that podiatric surgeons possess. The title sounds more akin to a practitioner who performs minor procedures, such as ingrown toenail operations, rather than complex and reconstructive foot and ankle surgeries. This could mislead consumers, diminishing the perceived competence of podiatric surgeons and undermining the credibility they've worked hard to establish.

This shift could also lead to increased costs for podiatric surgeons. To mitigate potential confusion, practitioners might have to invest in rebranding, updating credentials, patient education materials, marketing, and explaining the scope of their role to patients and referrers. Additionally, there would be costs associated with updating all practice materials, including websites, business cards, and signage, to align with the new title.

Ultimately, the term "podiatric surgeon" is both clear and well-established, accurately reflecting the advanced level of care and scope of services these professionals offer, including complex reconstructive surgeries. Retaining this title ensures that both the public and healthcare professionals have a correct understanding of podiatric surgeons' qualifications and expertise.

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

Yes, there are several unintended consequences the Board might not have considered with the proposed title change to "surgical podiatrist."

1. Diminished Professional Perception: The title "surgical podiatrist" risks diminishing the perceived level of expertise of podiatric surgeons. It could imply that these practitioners are only performing minor procedures, such as treating ingrown toenails, rather than complex or reconstructive surgeries. This misperception may impact patient confidence and lead to individuals seeking alternative care for more advanced surgical needs, even when podiatric surgeons are fully qualified to perform such procedures.

2. Challenges in Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The title "podiatric surgeon" is widely recognised and respected by other medical professionals, which facilitates collaboration and referrals. Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" could introduce confusion, especially with orthopaedic surgeons, who historically have had significant influence over the domain of foot and ankle surgery. There is a clear bias and a high level of politics within the orthopaedic surgery community, and the new title could

exacerbate tensions between the two professions. This could result in fewer referrals, delayed patient care, and unnecessary barriers to effective interdisciplinary collaboration.

3. Increased Financial and Administrative Burdens: Podiatric surgeons may face unforeseen costs in rebranding their practices and updating marketing materials, credentials, and online presence. Furthermore, they would likely need to spend more time educating patients, other healthcare professionals, and even insurers about their qualifications and scope of practice. This would add to both their financial and administrative burdens.

4. Patient Safety Risks: If patients are unclear about the qualifications of a "surgical podiatrist," there could be a risk of misdirected care. This confusion could lead to patients choosing less appropriate practitioners for complex surgeries, which may result in negative health outcomes or delays in treatment.

In conclusion, the proposal to change the title could have negative implications for both the podiatric surgery profession and patient care. Retaining the title "podiatric surgeon" would prevent these unintended consequences, protect professional credibility, and ensure clear communication within the healthcare system.

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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?**

There are good reasons not to change the protected title for the podiatry specialty of podiatric surgery to "surgical podiatrist."

Firstly, the current title "podiatric surgeon" clearly indicates specialization within podiatry, similar to how terms like "orthopedic surgeon" or "neurosurgeon" are used in other medical fields. Changing the title to "surgical podiatrist" could dilute this clarity by shifting emphasis away from the surgeon's qualifications and toward their basic podiatric background. This could confuse patients and other healthcare professionals, as it might imply that the individual is a general podiatrist with some surgical skills rather than a fully specialized surgeon.

Secondly, the current title upholds the integrity of podiatric surgery as a recognized specialty. The word "surgeon" conveys expertise in a surgical field, while "podiatrist" alone does not, so using "podiatric surgeon" reinforces the high standards of training and competence required for these practitioners. Retaining the existing title respects both the specialist's expertise and the patients' need for trust in the qualifications of their healthcare providers.

- 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, I don't have an alternative suggestion for a protected title. The existing title, "podiatric surgeon," already provides clarity by explicitly highlighting the practitioner's dual role as both a podiatrist and a surgeon. It effectively communicates the specialization to consumers, similar to how terms like "cardiac surgeon" or "neurosurgeon" clarify other medical specialties.

Changing the title could potentially create more confusion than clarity, as any alternative might imply different levels of training or a different scope of practice. Retaining "podiatric surgeon" upholds a clear standard, ensuring that consumers recognize these practitioners as highly specialized professionals within podiatry who are qualified to perform surgery.

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

The proposed change in title from "podiatric surgeon" to "surgical podiatrist" could have several potential impacts on consumers:

1. **Reduced Clarity in Specialist Qualifications:** Consumers may find the new title less clear regarding the practitioner's expertise. The term "podiatric surgeon" directly conveys that the individual is a specialist trained in surgery, while "surgical podiatrist" might imply a podiatrist with some surgical skills, rather than a dedicated specialist.
2. **Possible Decreased Trust:** When patients undergo surgery, they often seek reassurance that the practitioner is a highly qualified specialist. The title "podiatric surgeon" upholds a sense of trust and credibility by aligning with established titles in other medical fields, like "orthopedic surgeon." Changing the title could make consumers question whether the same level of expertise and qualification is implied.
3. **Potential Confusion Among Healthcare Providers and Referrals:** Other healthcare providers may also be less clear about the specific skills and qualifications of a "surgical podiatrist" compared to a "podiatric surgeon." This could impact the accuracy of referrals and affect patient access to the appropriate care.
4. **Patient Perception of Services Offered:** The change could lead to misunderstandings about the scope of services, with some consumers possibly perceiving "surgical podiatrist" as less specialized. This may lead patients to seek care from other surgical specialists, even when a podiatric surgeon would be the most qualified provider for their condition.

Retaining the title "podiatric surgeon" might, therefore, best serve consumer understanding and confidence in the specialized care provided by these practitioners.

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

The proposed change in title from "podiatric surgeon" to "surgical podiatrist" could have several potential impacts, including costs, for podiatric surgeons:

1. **Professional Identity and Recognition:** The title "podiatric surgeon" carries significant weight and aligns with other specialist surgical titles, reinforcing these practitioners' expertise and qualifications. Changing it to "surgical podiatrist" could dilute this recognition, potentially leading to a loss of professional identity and reduced respect from colleagues in other medical fields.
2. **Potential Loss of Referrals:** Medical professionals who refer patients might be less clear on the specific qualifications of a "surgical podiatrist" versus a "podiatric surgeon," leading to fewer or less appropriate referrals. This could reduce patient flow and impact revenue, especially if patients are redirected to other surgical specialists rather than podiatric surgeons.
3. **Additional Costs of Rebranding and Communication:** If the title changes, podiatric surgeons and their practices would likely incur rebranding costs, including updating signage, printed materials, digital presence, and advertising to reflect the new title. There would also be costs associated with public education efforts to help patients and referral sources understand the meaning and qualifications behind the new title.
4. **Possible Credential Devaluation:** The title "surgical podiatrist" could imply a less intensive level of surgical training or specialization, which may affect podiatric surgeons' bargaining power with insurance companies and health systems. This could result in lower reimbursement rates or reduced eligibility for certain contracts and positions traditionally reserved for surgical specialists, ultimately impacting income.
5. **Time and Resources for Advocacy:** Podiatric surgeons might also need to invest additional time and resources into advocacy to protect their scope of practice and explain their qualifications to other healthcare professionals and patients, which could detract from clinical time and practice growth.

In sum, the title change could lead to decreased recognition, reduced referrals, rebranding costs, and possible financial implications, making it potentially costly and counterproductive for the podiatric surgery field.

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

Yes, there are several unintended consequences that the Board might not have considered with the proposed title change from "podiatric surgeon" to "surgical podiatrist":

1. **Public Confusion and Decreased Confidence:** The new title could inadvertently confuse patients about the specialist's qualifications. "Podiatric surgeon" clearly identifies someone trained extensively in surgery, whereas "surgical podiatrist" may sound like a general podiatrist with some additional skills, which might lead to decreased patient confidence in choosing these specialists for complex procedures.
2. **Scope of Practice Misinterpretation:** Other healthcare providers might misinterpret the scope of practice, assuming that a "surgical podiatrist" performs less complex or limited types of surgery compared to a "podiatric surgeon." This could inadvertently lead to fewer referrals for surgical cases that podiatric surgeons are fully qualified to handle.
3. **Potential Implications for Insurance and Reimbursement:** Insurance companies and health systems might view "surgical podiatrist" as a lower-tier specialist title compared to "podiatric surgeon," which could impact reimbursement rates, network inclusion, and credentialing. This could negatively affect the financial viability of podiatric surgeons' practices.
4. **Impact on Recruitment and Retention in the Specialty:** The title change could reduce the perceived prestige of the specialty, potentially making it less attractive to new practitioners. If future podiatrists see "surgical podiatrist" as a less recognized or valued specialization, it could impact recruitment and retention, limiting the growth of qualified podiatric surgeons.
5. **Increased Legal and Regulatory Ambiguity:** Changing the title could create regulatory and legal ambiguities around qualifications, licensing, and practice boundaries. Legal definitions and scopes of practice may need to be updated across different jurisdictions, which could lead to inconsistencies in how podiatric surgery is regulated and practiced nationwide.
6. **International Perception and Mobility:** The term "podiatric surgeon" aligns with international standards and is widely understood within global medical communities. A title change might make it harder for podiatric surgeons to work internationally or gain

recognition, impacting mobility and professional opportunities outside of their home country.

In summary, unintended consequences could include public confusion, reduced confidence in specialist skills, lower referral rates, financial and regulatory challenges, and potentially diminished attractiveness of the field.

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 specialty 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

The Board publishes submissions at its discretion. The Board generally publishes submissions on its website to encourage discussion and inform the community and stakeholders. Please advise us if you do not want your submission published.

We will not place on our website, or make available to the public, submissions that contain offensive or defamatory comments or which are outside the scope of the subject of the consultation. Before publication, we will remove personally identifying information from submissions, including contact details.

The views expressed in the submissions are those of the individuals or organisations who submit them, and their publication does not imply any acceptance of, or agreement with, these views by the Board.

The Board accepts submissions made in confidence. These submissions will not be published on the website or elsewhere. Submissions may be confidential because they include personal experiences or other sensitive information. Any request for access to a confidential submission will be determined in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth), which has provisions designed to protect personal information and information given in confidence.

Please let us know if you do not want us to publish your submission or want us to treat all or part of it as confidential.

Published submissions will include the names of the individuals and/or the organisations that made them, unless confidentiality is requested.

Initial questions
<i>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.</i>
Question A Are you completing this submission on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?
Your answer: <input type="checkbox"/> Organisation Name of organisation: Contact email: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> Myself <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 180px; margin-top: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 375px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
Question B If you are completing this submission as an individual, are you: <input type="checkbox"/> A registered health practitioner? Profession: Podiatrist <input type="checkbox"/> A member of the public? <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Click or tap here to enter text.
Question C Would you like your submission to be published? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, publish my submission with my name/organisation name <input type="checkbox"/> X Yes, publish my submission without my name/ organisation name <input type="checkbox"/> 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, I do not feel the change of title will make it any clearer for the public regarding the qualifications of the practitioner.

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 is used globally and generally been well understood.

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

I feel only more confusion especially during the transition phase.

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

Unsure exactly but I expect the costs will be significant.

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

There will be an impact on the willingness of podiatrists to undertake further surgical/specialty training in the future, overall harming the quality of care in the country. There may also be a greater divide between the professions of orthopaedic surgery and podiatry.