

Welcome to the Physiotherapy Board of Australia's September 2012 newsletter.

## The Board – its second term

The three-year term of the inaugural Physiotherapy Board of Australia ended on 30 August 2012. The hard work, teamwork and dedication of inaugural Board members during this term made it an exciting, challenging and rewarding experience. The Board is made up of physiotherapy and community members from every jurisdiction in Australia. Everyone worked exhaustively to develop national standards, codes and guidelines from scratch. It was also an exciting three years of partnerships with the other National Boards and Chairs, and the Australian Physiotherapy Council; engaging with stakeholders and registrants; and working together with AHPRA staff members in the national, state and territory offices. In August, the inaugural Chair of the Board, Mr Glenn Ruscoe and two community members, Joanne Muller and Susan Brady were farewelled. Their significant contributions and leadership to the Board over the past three years is acknowledged.

In February 2012, an advertisement was placed in national and major metropolitan newspapers and the AHPRA website calling for expressions of interest and nominations for appointment or reappointment to the National Boards. On 31 July 2012, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council announced appointments for the next term of Board members. The following members were reappointed/appointed to the Physiotherapy Board for the next term from 30 August 2012:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Mr Paul Shinkfield   | Appointed as Chair and reappointed as a practitioner member from Tasmania |
| Ms Kathy Grudzinskis | Reappointed as a practitioner member from Queensland                      |
| Ms Kim Gibson        | Appointed as a practitioner member from Western Australia                 |
| Dr Charles Flynn     | Reappointed as a practitioner member from Victoria                        |
| Ms Anne Deans        | Reappointed as a practitioner member from New South Wales                 |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Ms Alison Bell        | Reappointed as a practitioner member from South Australia                  |
| Ms Karen Murphy       | Reappointed as a practitioner member from the Australian Capital Territory |
| Mrs Philippa Tessmann | Reappointed as a practitioner member from the Northern Territory           |
| Mr Timothy Benson     | Reappointed as a community member  |
| Mrs Elizabeth Kosmala | Reappointed as a community member  |
| Mr Peter Kerr         | Appointed as a community member  |
| Mrs Lynette Green     | Appointed as a community member  |

## 30 November registration renewal opens soon

Practitioners should look out for email reminders for this year's registration renewal, which is due by 30 November 2012.

AHPRA will shortly send email reminders to renew to all physiotherapists for whom an email address is known. Look out for these email reminders as confirmation that online renewal of registration is open.

Hardcopy letters reminding practitioners of their responsibility to renew will be sent to all practitioners who do not renew after their first email prompt.

Practitioners are urged to check that contact details provided to AHPRA are up to date, including current email addresses, in order to receive the renewal reminders.

To date, AHPRA has email addresses for more than 90% of registered physiotherapists, which enables direct and effective communication about important issues, such as renewal of registration. Providing email details reduces the need and reliance on hardcopy letters and forms, which has an overall benefit of reducing the National Board's production, printing and postage costs.

## Referral from the Coroner

From time to time, a State Coroner may refer a finding of an inquest or investigation to AHPRA or the Board to bring to the attention of the profession.

AHPRA will publish a case summary of each referral from the Coroner on its website, naming the deceased person, with the Coroner's recommendations in full. A link will also be provided to the Coroner's website. Practitioners are encouraged to access the AHPRA website at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) to keep up to date with these cases and the Coroner's recommendations.

When the Board decides that a referral from the Coroner has wide-reaching implications for practitioners, it may publish a summary of the case, and highlight particular issues relevant to the profession. The following case has been summarised for the education of all practitioners:

**Board:** Physiotherapy (of interest to medicine, osteopathy, podiatry)

**Finding date:** 18 May 2011

**Details:** Finding into the Deaths of Annette Woodbridge by the State Coroners Court in Western Australia

**Major issue considered by the Coroner relevant to the Board: Education for the profession to be alert to the risk of Pulmonary Thromboembolism and Deep Vein Thrombosis**

### Introduction and background

Ms Woodridge died on 5 February 2010 at the age of 31 years. On 30 January 2010, Ms Woodridge flew back home to Perth from Japan, where she had been holidaying.

On the day of her arrival, 31 January 2011, she flew to Adelaide for a business trip and returned to Perth that evening. Ms Woodridge had complained of a sore heel and calf near the end of her stay in Japan which she put down to walking in Kyoto. She continued to suffer discomfort on arrival in Australia and at work. On 4 February 2011 Ms Woodridge consulted a physiotherapist for treatment. The physiotherapist conducted extensive physical tests and examinations as well as functional and resistance tests and formed the opinion that Ms Woodridge was suffering from calf strain. The following morning Ms Woodridge died.

### Cause of death

The Coroner did not conduct an inquest. On investigation and post mortem the cause of death was established to be Pulmonary Thromboembolism in association with left calf Deep Venous Thrombosis (DVT).

### Coroner's recommendations

The Coroner stated in a letter to AHPRA that 'it would have been very difficult for any medical practitioner to

have diagnosed the deceased's symptoms as a definite DVT, however, with the history of recent travel it is always prudent to consider DVT especially as the consequences of missing the diagnosis are often tragic'.

The Coroner wished AHPRA to emphasise 'the importance of ensuring education and training provided to physiotherapists provides sufficient focus on the identification of the possibility of DVTs especially with risk factors such as recent travel, oral contraception use and or recent surgery'.

## Graduate online applications to open in October

AHPRA will soon be calling for online applications for registration from health practitioner students completing National Board-approved programs of study at the end of 2012.

From October, students of physiotherapy will be urged to apply for registration as a health practitioner four to six weeks before their course ends using AHPRA's online [graduate registration application service](#).

All applications require students to return some supporting documents to AHPRA.

The online service builds on the early application process put in place at the end of 2010 for graduating students. The number of students using the online graduate registration application service continues to grow each semester.

## Publication of HPA

The Physiotherapy Board of Australia and AHPRA this month increased public access to financial information about the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

In the interests of transparency and accountability, the Board and AHPRA have for the first time published the Health Profession Agreement that outlines the services that AHPRA provides to the Board, in this case for the 2012/13 period.

Under the National Law, the Board and AHPRA work in partnership to implement the National Scheme, each with specific roles, powers and responsibilities set down in the National Law. The guiding principles of the National Law require the National Scheme to operate in a 'transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair way'; and for registration fees to be reasonable '...having regard to the efficient and effective operation of the scheme'.

Board Chair, Paul Shinkfield, said the Board was accountable to the profession and the community.

'We are responsible for using practitioners' registration fees wisely in regulating the profession in the public interest. The Board is pleased to provide more detailed information about how registration fees are allocated to regulate the profession in Australia,' he said.

AHPRA CEO, Martin Fletcher, emphasised that the Board and AHPRA were committed to increasing transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

‘As AHPRA’s reporting capability strengthens, we are able to publish more detailed information about each National Board’s financial operations and AHPRA’s performance. This complements the audited data and performance reporting included in each year’s annual report,’ Mr Fletcher said.

The Physiotherapy Board of Australia Health Profession Agreement is available for review on the Board website [www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au)

## Latest registered workforce snapshot

New Board data show there are 23,501 physiotherapists registered in Australia. Last month the Board published the second of its quarterly data profiling Australia’s physiotherapy workforce, including a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants such as state/ territory, age and gender by registration type.

[insert table from August statistics release – raw text underneath for lay up: NB for design, same table framework as last newsletter, but different figures]

### Physiotherapists: state and territory by registration type

| State        | General       | Limited             |                 |                     | Non-practising | Total         | % By State |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
|              |               | Postgrad / training | Public interest | Teaching / research |                |               |            |
| ACT          | 422           | 1                   | 2               |                     | 12             | 437           | 1.86%      |
| NSW          | 6,609         | 16                  | 18              | 4                   | 207            | 6,854         | 29.16%     |
| NT           | 145           |                     |                 |                     |                | 145           | 0.62%      |
| QLD          | 4,263         | 22                  | 4               | 1                   | 70             | 4,360         | 18.55%     |
| SA           | 1,838         | 42                  | 12              |                     | 15             | 1,907         | 8.18%      |
| TAS          | 384           | 1                   | 2               |                     | 6              | 393           | 1.67%      |
| VIC          | 5,487         | 36                  | 45              | 3                   | 193            | 5,764         | 24.53%     |
| WA           | 2,667         | 17                  | 2               |                     | 49             | 2,735         | 11.74%     |
| Not Stated   | 736           | 7                   |                 | 2                   | 89             | 834           | 3.58%      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>22,440</b> | <b>140</b>          | <b>79</b>       | <b>11</b>           | <b>631</b>     | <b>23,301</b> |            |

The latest quarterly registration data also show that nine practitioners have an acupuncture endorsement. In its last newsletter (July 2012), the Board announced

the development of a new fact sheet that explains how the restrictions on the use of the title ‘acupuncturist’ apply to physiotherapists and the current pathways to an acupuncture endorsement. The factsheet is available from the website ([www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au)) in the *Codes and Guidelines* section.

Find the Physiotherapy Board of Australia’s statistics in the [About](#) section of its website.

## AHPRA releases 2012-13 business plan and service charter

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) recently released a service charter and its 2012-13 business plan, outlining how AHPRA will achieve future goals in implementing the national regulation scheme for health professionals.

AHPRA chief executive Martin Fletcher said the 2012-13 business plan illustrated how AHPRA would focus its efforts and work with National Boards to protect the public and facilitate access to health services over the coming year.

The service charter sets out the values that guide AHPRA; the standards of service health practitioners, the public, employers and other stakeholders can expect; and the steps to be taken if these standards are not met.

‘AHPRA’s 2012-13 business plan and service charter provide the public and health practitioners with a window into what we do, how our efforts are focused and how we can be held accountable,’ Mr Fletcher said.

The service charter, developed in consultation with health profession representatives, the community, National Boards and AHPRA staff, will be reviewed in 12 months.

Both documents are published on the AHPRA website [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

## For more information

- Visit [www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au) for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines and FAQs
- Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [Enquiries](#) link on the bottom of every page
- For registration enquiries call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (for overseas callers)
- Address mail correspondence to: Mr Paul Shinkfield, Chair, Physiotherapy Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne, Victoria 3001