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From the Chair

Evidence-based practice

Psychologists who abandon evidence-based interventions and use discredited treatments, or interventions that have no reputable evidence, put the public at risk of harm. In addition, such actions can significantly reduce the confidence of the public to seek assistance for problems in the future, and create a long-term loss of confidence in psychology.

If practices are not represented in mainstream psychology textbooks and the associated specialist scientific literature, then a registration board will be concerned and may take action. In August the American Psychological Association Council voted to adopt the 'Resolution on the Recognition of Psychotherapy Effectiveness' document (<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2012/08/psychotherapy-effective.aspx>). Psychotherapy is a specific evidence-based intervention involving client and therapist agreed tasks, goals and a strong bond to achieve symptom relief and personality change, and enhance relationship, work and lifestyle functioning. Different established schools of psychotherapy tend to achieve



similar outcomes, but all are enhanced by tailoring interventions to specific client needs, and depend on therapist and client factors for achieving good outcomes.

The resolution states: 'the research evidence shows that psychotherapy is an effective treatment, with most clients/patients who are experiencing such conditions as depression and anxiety disorders attaining or returning to a level of functioning, after a relatively short course of treatment, that is typical of well-functioning individuals in the general population.'

Such a finding is hardly a surprise to those who practise psychotherapy on a daily basis, but also important are other components of the statement, including that psychotherapy: exceeds or has comparable effects to pharmacotherapy without the side effects and costs; reduces disability, morbidity, mortality and improves work functioning; decreases hospitalisation and reduces medical costs; is effective for those with acute and chronic health conditions; and is effective for hard-to-reach and vulnerable groups including the elderly, those with disability, those living in poverty, and those who may be socially excluded due to race, class or gender bias.

When psychologists skilfully and thoughtfully adhere to evidence-based treatments such as a recognised psychotherapy, the effects can be powerful and long lasting and the public benefits.

Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair, Psychology Board of Australia

Upcoming events

Community engagement forums to be held soon

As part of the community engagement strategy for all National Boards, a partnership has been established with the Consumer Health Forum of Australia (CHF) to engage with health consumers and the broader community. CHF is the national peak body representing the interests of Australian healthcare consumers.

A series of state-level community forums have been scheduled between October and December, providing an opportunity to brief members from the community (non-practitioners) on how health practitioner regulation works and what it offers the community. More information about the forums will be published on the AHPRA website shortly.

Retirements from the National Board

In 2009 Health Ministers appointed the members of the first Psychology Board of Australia for three-year terms until 30 August 2012.

Of the twelve inaugural members of the Board, eight have recently been reappointed for a further three-year term and four have retired from the Board. This reflects the Minister's intention to balance stability with renewal in National Board membership.

The Board wishes to thank the four retiring members:

- Antonia Dunne, community member (Tasmania)
- Kaye Frankcom, practitioner member (Victoria)
- Dr Shirley Grace, practitioner member (Northern Territory)
- Irene Hancock, community member (New South Wales).

The contributions of these four retiring members to the National Board, and their work with regional boards and committees and in the community, have been invaluable.

Upon announcement of the appointments and re-appointments to the National Boards, Mr Peter Allen, Chair of AHPRA's Agency Management Committee, said he had been deeply appreciative of the level of commitment shown by all inaugural Board members to bringing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) to life.

'Our collective ability to meet the challenges involved in introducing the National Scheme relied on the goodwill, hard work and insight of every member of every National Board and their important work will form the basis of all future policy and regulatory decisions for regulated health professions in Australia. They have left a lasting legacy for the Australian community,' Mr Allen said.



Kate Crawley is registered psychologist with an area of practice endorsement in Forensic Psychology. Kate has extensive experience in the area of criminal risk assessment in Australia and overseas and was previously the Chair of the Northern Territory branch of the Australian Psychological Society.



Joanne Muller is community member from New South Wales. She is a lawyer with extensive experience as Chair of the NSW Psychology Tribunal and other health tribunals. She has also previously served as a community member on the Physiotherapy Board of Australia.



Professor Trang Thomas AM is a registered psychologist with an area of practice endorsement in Counselling Psychology. Trang is an Emeritus Professor of Psychology at RMIT University in Victoria. Trang has been granted a leave of absence from the Board until October 2013 to allow her to complete her current term as a

Director of the Australian Psychological Society before she takes up her position on the Psychology Board.

Members of the second Psychology Board of Australia appointed from 31 August 2012 to 30 August 2015

Meet the Board's new members

In September 2012 the Board welcomed the four newly appointed members to their first meeting of the Psychology Board of Australia.



Mary Brennan is a community member from the Australian Capital Territory. She is a lawyer practising in Canberra and has served as a tribunal member for the Health Professional Councils Authority in New South Wales



from left to right – Joanne Muller, Alfred Allan, Geoff Gallas, Kate Crawley, Radek Stratil, Brin Grenyer (Chair), Fiona McLeod, Ann Stark, Chris O'Brien, Gina Geffen
absent – Mary Brennan, Trang Thomas

Registration renewal – renew online, on time

The registration renewal cycle for psychologists in Australia with general, limited and non-practising registration is due each year by 30 November. Psychologists with provisional registration renew on the anniversary of their initial registration. About 26,000 psychologists across Australia are due to renew their registration by 30 November 2012.

The registration renewal period for psychologists with a registration expiry date of 30 November 2012 is about to open. Visit the website at www.psychologyboard.gov.au/ to renew your registration online.

The Board and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) recognise the importance of a smooth renewal process. AHPRA has begun an intensive communication campaign to support the renewal process, including sending reminder emails and hard copy letters to practitioners who do not respond to the email prompts or for whom AHPRA does not hold an email address. Practitioners should watch for the reminders to renew.

While AHPRA will send registration renewal reminders, the responsibility to renew rests with the individual practitioner. There will be a late fee applied to psychologists who do not apply to renew by the due date, but who apply to renew within one calendar month of expiry (the 'late renewal period' permitted under the National Law). Those who do not apply to renew within one month of their registration expiry date must, under the National Law, be removed from the register and make a new application for registration if they wish to continue to practise.

National Psychology Examination update

National Psychology Examination consultation

The Psychology Board of Australia (the Board), in conjunction with AHPRA is developing a national psychology examination which is intended to be implemented from 1 July 2013. The exam is going to provide nationally consistent accreditation as well as an increased level of confidence in the profession for the public, reassuring them that registered psychologists are suitably qualified.

The Board has published two consultation papers (#9 and #13) on the proposed curriculum and readings for the national exam. These papers can be found on the Board's website at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/National-Psychology-Exam.aspx. The consultation paper on the transition arrangements for the national

exam is in development and is expected to be ready for both preliminary and public consultation later this year/early 2013. This paper will include information about the rules and policies relating to the exam, and the transition arrangements.

The Board has previously agreed to apply an exemption from sitting the examination for graduates of accredited Masters, Doctorate or combined Masters/PhD programs who apply for general registration by 30 June 2016. This exemption is based on the Board's view that the internal examination and assessment processes within accredited degree programs currently meet the Board's standards for general registration.

Please review the Board's monthly communiqué and website for information on the Board's consultations.

Tender process for the exam

Owing to the technical nature of the examination, a select group of providers have been invited to tender for the delivery of the examination, all of whom are proven and experienced in the provision of computer-based testing platforms. The tender was issued on 8 October 2012 and will remain open for approximately one month. The successful tenderer will be announced in December 2012 in the Board's newsletter and communiqué. The introduction of the national examination is a positive move for the profession and both the Board and AHPRA are working hard to ensure the examination – including delivery – is of the highest quality possible.

Expression of interest for the National Psychology Examination Committee

In November 2010 the Psychology Board appointed the inaugural National Psychology Examination Committee for a period of one year, which was renewed for a further year. The Board is very grateful to members for their outstanding contribution to the committee, which concludes November 2012. The Psychology Board of Australia now invites senior, experienced psychologists to express an interest in being on the National Psychology Examination Committee commencing February 2013.

The committee consists of nine members of the profession and includes members of the Psychology Board of Australia and members appointed through this expression of interest. The examination is being developed to support applications for general registration following an internship, and to ensure a consistent professional standard of psychologists nationally and is due to begin on 1 July 2013. Committee members are required to meet six times during 2013, over two full days on Friday and Saturday (or other two days) in Sydney. The Board will cover expenses associated with attending meetings and pay a sitting fee.

The role and function of the committee is to work to an agreed set of tasks identified by the Board, which include:

- to develop the National Psychology Examination multiple-choice questions
- to contribute to the development of the curriculum
- to work on testing and refreshing examination items on an ongoing basis
- to monitor the progress of the examination roll-out and implementation across Australia
- to review and provide input into drafts of consultations and policy documents
- to work with other Board working parties and committees as required, and
- to assist AHPRA staff and the Chair with specific projects and requests.

Expertise is required in the following areas:

- ethical, legal and professional matters
- psychological assessment and measurement
- intervention strategies
- communication skills, and
- multiple-choice exam theory and statistics.

Expressions of interest are due by 5pm on 3 December 2012. The Board will select the committee from the applicants at its Board meeting in December. Appointment is for two years with possibility of renewal for a further term.

If you are interested, please submit a one-page expression of interest, outlining your expertise in one (or more) of the areas above, and a CV with contact details and two referees, to the Chair, Psychology Board of Australia (psychologychair@ahpra.gov.au).

Online graduate applications for provisional registration now open!



If you have completed – or are about to complete – an accredited fourth-year psychology course you can now apply online for provisional registration as a psychologist. This new function helps smooth the path from undergraduate study to postgraduate training as a provisional psychologist.

You can apply for provisional registration as soon as you have completed all the requirements of your fourth year degree, before formally graduating (i.e. attending the graduation ceremony).

You are eligible to use the online service if you intend to continue your psychology training and require provisional registration to undertake the fifth and sixth years of psychology training through one of the approved pathways leading to general registration as a psychologist. These are:

- 4+2 internship program
- 5+1 internship program, or
- higher degree program (Masters/Doctorate professional qualification).

You will need to know which one of the provisional registration pathways you will be taking at the time you apply and you must mail the details of your provisional registration pathway – a supervised practice plan or enrolment in an approved postgraduate degree – to AHPRA within 60 days of making the online application. Therefore, if you are going on to further study at university you should wait until you can provide enrolment details for a Doctorate, Masters, or Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology, which may not be until 2013.

If you already have your placement/s and supervisor/s for a 4+2 internship confirmed and are keen to get started you can apply right away. If you are feeling confident you can even apply while still waiting for your final results – just as long as your university or college provides AHPRA with confirmation of your eligibility to graduate within the 60 days. You can also use the 60 days to meet with your supervisor and finalise your supervised practice plan.

To become a registered provisional psychologist, eligible students must also meet the National Board’s registration requirements relating to criminal history, English language skills and professional indemnity insurance. Make sure you visit the Board’s website and check the requirements for provisional registration before you apply.

Find out how to use the Graduate Online service by accessing the information at www.ahpra.gov.au under *Graduate Applications*.

For more information

- Go to the Graduate Applications webpage at www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Graduate-Applications.aspx for FAQs and links to more information
- Go to the Provisional Registration webpage at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Provisional.aspx
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers) or lodge an [online enquiry](#).

New area of practice endorsement and supervisor statistics published

Quarterly registration data

The Board has published the latest registration statistics which show that there were 29,868 psychologists nationally. Psychology remains the third largest health profession after nursing and medicine, and still just ahead of pharmacy which has 26,704 practitioners and physiotherapy which has 23,711.

The Board will publish the next set of quarterly registration data in early 2013.

Area of practice endorsement statistics

The National Board has released new statistics on area of practice endorsements, including information about psychologists who hold more than one area of practice endorsement and the geographic location of psychologists with endorsements.

The area of practice endorsement data shows a snapshot at June 2012 and includes new information about psychologists with multiple endorsements. In June 2012 there were 7088 endorsed psychologists, which is over 28% of psychologists with general registration. Over 10% of psychologists with an endorsement have two or more endorsements and the most common combinations for dual endorsements are clinical and forensic, and clinical and counselling.

The June area of practice endorsement data were also included the first statistical breakdown of endorsed psychologists in metropolitan, regional and remote areas of Australia.

The Board will publish updated area of practice endorsement statistics in the future.

Supervisor statistics

The Psychology Board of Australia (the National Board) has recently published the second set of national data on approved psychology supervisors in Australia which shows the number of approved supervisors at September 2012.

Psychology supervisor statistics were first published in March 2012 after technology improvements that allowed national data to be collected for the first time, and which also enabled the launch of a searchable online supervisor list.

- In the six months since the first supervisor statistics were published, over 500 new supervisors have been approved and there are now 6135 psychologists who are approved supervisors, which is nearly a quarter of all psychologists with general registration.
- In addition to an update on the number of supervisors in different supervision categories across the

jurisdictions, the September statistics include new data which show the breakdown by jurisdiction of individual supervisors who are approved in one or more categories.

- The September data show that in the last six months number of principal supervisors for the 4+2 internship program has increased in every state and territory and the number of registrar program supervisors has also increased across the country.
- The mover and shaker of the last six months is New South Wales. That state has now overtaken Tasmania as the state with the highest ratio of 4+2 principal supervisors to provisional psychologists – New South Wales now has more than two 4+2 principal supervisors for every provisionally registered psychologist.
- New South Wales has also overtaken Western Australia as the state with the highest number of supervisors for the clinical psychology registrar program with 68 new principal supervisors, an increase of 37%.
- New South Wales also had the highest overall percentage increase in principal registrar program supervisors – up 38.4%, just ahead of South Australia which had an overall increase of 37.7%.
- It is pleasing to note that Western Australia has become the first state with registrar program supervisors for all nine areas of practice as there is now a Board-approved community psychology supervisor in that state – the first community psychology supervisor to be approved outside Victoria, where the community psychology higher degree programs are offered.

The National Board will continue to publish updates on supervisor statistics on its website. The Board also intends to publish statistics on the number of higher degree supervisors and other supervisor types, such as for the 5+1 internship program, after the end of the transition period on 30 June 2013.

Psychologists are reminded that from 1 July 2013 higher degree placement supervisors are required to be approved by the Board in addition to meeting the requirements of APAC and universities. New supervisors approved before 1 July 2013 will qualify for transition provisions, which means they don't have to complete a supervisor training program until after 1 July 2013. Details of the transition provisions can be found in the *Fact sheet on supervisor training*.

For more information

- Read all the latest statistics published on the National Board's website, www.psychologyboard.gov.au, under the *About Psychology* tab including the new endorsement information in the *Area of practice endorsement data – June 2012*, the quarterly registration data in the *Registration data tables* –

September 2012, and the *Psychology supervisor statistics – September 2012*.

- Find out more about area of practice endorsement – www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Endorsement.aspx
- Apply to become an approved supervisor – visit the supervision webpage www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision.aspx and download the *Application to become a Board-approved supervisor of provisional psychologists and registrars – ABAS-76*
- Read the *Fact sheet on supervisor training* and the *Fact sheet for supervisors* on the supervision webpage
- Search the approved supervisors list at www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Supervision/Search.aspx
- Lodge an online enquiry form under *Contact us* at www.ahpra.gov.au or email us at psychologysupervisor@ahpra.gov.au.
- For registration enquiries, call: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries, call: (03) 8708 9200.

Consultations: have your say

Review of registration standards, guidelines and codes

One of the Board's functions under the National Law is to develop or approve standards, codes and guidelines for the psychology profession. The Board must consult widely about any standards, codes or guidelines that it develops.

Registration standards are developed by the Board and must be approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AHWMC). Registration standards are due for review at least every three years. The following registration standards, which are common across all the health professions, will be up for review in 2013:

- *Continuing Professional Development Registration Standard*
- *Criminal History Registration Standard*
- *English Language Skills Registration Standard*
- *Recency of Practice Registration Standard*

The registration standard specific to the psychology profession that is up for review in 2013 is:

- *General Registration Standard*

The Board has recently reviewed the *Professional Indemnity Insurance Arrangements Registration Standard* and *Provisional Registration Standard* (in 2012) and the *Area of Practice Endorsements Registration Standard* was updated in 2011.

The Board is also due to review the following:

- *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- *Guidelines for advertising of regulated health services*
- *Guidelines on CPD*
- *Guidelines on the 4+2 internship program for provisional psychologists and supervisors*

The Board will also consult on whether to continue to endorse the *APS Code of Ethics* for the profession.

Over the next few months, all National Boards will be starting a process to review their registration standards and the codes and guidelines that are due for review. The reviews will draw on the best available evidence and address issues that have been identified with the registration standards and the codes and guidelines in the first three years after implementation. A plan is being developed to try and minimise the impact on stakeholders of multiple consultation processes, particularly for stakeholders common across professions.

Review of accreditation arrangements for the psychology profession

Under the National Law the accreditation authority appointed by Health Ministers for the psychology profession is the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC). The National Law requires the 10 National Boards that joined the National Scheme in 2010 to review the arrangements for the exercise of the accreditation functions no later than 30 June 2013.

The Board recently conducted a public consultation on the existing accreditation arrangements, and this feedback will inform its decision on the future arrangements for the profession.

Social media policy

The 14 National Boards have developed a joint draft policy on the use of social media by registered health practitioners to clarify the National Boards' expected standards relating to social media use. The recent advent of social media, and its expanding use from a social networking tool to a medium for commercial/business related information sharing and advertising, has prompted the need for clarity. The development of the policy has been supported by requests from health practitioners and professional associations seeking guidance from the National Boards on this issue.

The preliminary consultation period has recently concluded and feedback received via this process is being considered. A public consultation paper will be released and published on the Board's website in 2013.

The 14 National Boards have agreed on a consistent process for conducting public and preliminary consultations. For information on the agreed process for consultation, please see the AHPRA website at www.ahpra.gov.au/Legislation-and-Publications/AHPRA-Publications.aspx.

Guidelines for the 5+1 Internship program

The Board is continuing to work on developing the draft *Guidelines for the 5+1 Internship program*. Preliminary consultation will begin soon and a public consultation will follow in 2013.

The Board has also agreed to a transition plan for those provisional psychologists who wish to begin the 5+1 Internship program before the *Guidelines for the 5+1 Internship program* are finalised. These provisional psychologists are permitted to begin the internship year in accordance with the requirements of the 5+1 internship program set out in the *Provisional registration standard*. They may use the forms currently provided for the 4+2 internship program and refer to the *Guidelines for 4+2 internship programs* for more detailed guidance.

Information on transition will be published on the Board's website shortly.

The Board's past consultations can be viewed at: www.psychologyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx

30th International Congress of Psychology



The 30th International Congress of Psychology was recently held in Cape Town, South Africa. Members of the Psychology Board of Australia presented on regulation and licensure in Australia. Issues discussed included:

- transition to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme
- the importance of title protection under the National Law, including title protection for nine recognised areas of practice endorsement
- the development of unified education standards for psychology, with an integrated accreditation scheme across all higher education training providers
- the development of registration standards outlining mandatory professional indemnity insurance requirements, mandatory continuing professional development, and obligations to report malpractice, as well as criminal history checks, requirements for English language competency, and advertising and ethics standards
- the opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration with 13 other health professions being regulated within the same single National Scheme, and
- the challenges of matching national with international psychology standards to promote mobility.

In addition, the Board participated in a number of other international symposia and panel discussions on the development of international standards for competence as a psychologist, and was also involved in a range of other professional meetings with psychology regulators from across the globe.

Invitation to participate in research on barriers and facilitators to practising as a psychologist in Australia

The Board from time to time will present invitations to participate in research projects related to the aims of the National Scheme. These projects have been assessed and referred to the Board from a national data and research committee within AHPRA.

Charles Sturt University is undertaking a study that focuses on a number of issues relevant to the professional practice of psychologists across Australia and would be grateful to psychologists who can assist us by completing an online survey.

The issues covered in the study are access to continuing professional development (CPD), peer consultation, job satisfaction, and how these issues relate with the geographical location of practice. The study also explores the benefits and disadvantages of location of practice. The data obtained will assist with the development of better support programs for psychologists, and help shape initiatives to attract psychologists to work in various locations.

The survey is anonymous and should take no more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The research is funded by Charles Sturt University and is independent of AHPRA, the Psychology Board of Australia, and all professional organisations.

The survey can be accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/s/AustralianPsychologists. The value of the results is directly related to the number of responses, and the researchers would greatly appreciate the assistance of the profession.

For more information about the study please contact:

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