



Podiatrists Board of New Zealand

NEWSLETTER

December 2007

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE PODIATRISTS BOARD: DECEMBER 2007

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RE-CERTIFICATION COMPETENCE PROGRAMME AND CREDIT ALLOCATION REVIEW

The Board is pleased to advise that its Re-Certification Competence Programme and credit allocation have been reviewed again with the aim of simplifying the process for both practitioners and Board recertification programme auditors. A major change is the introduction of a four year cycle.

The three year cycle has proven a difficult cycle for the Board to design its audit system around, with regard to the Compulsory Continuing Medical Education (CCME) section. As the Board had decided to revise the PBRCF documentation as part of the process of its audit design, it became apparent that a four year PBRCF cycle would work better.

A four year cycle will allow for a less complex, less time consuming and more cost effective audit process. It also has the potential to make compliance less of an issue and life somewhat easier for podiatric practitioners. The Board has therefore revised the PBRCF to now be extended from a three to a four year cycle whilst still retaining the minimum 200 credits (i.e. the equivalent of 25 hours of PBRCF activity per annum) over that time.

The Board would like to thank both the Chair, Trevor Tillotson, who undertook the huge task of creating the PBRCF from scratch, to provide a fully developed robust competence requirement framework for the profession, and to Board Member, Terrence Bradshaw, who undertook the enormous task of redesigning the new PBRCF compliance documentation and designing the PBRCF Audit Tool. The Board is greatly indebted to them both, as without their great depth of experience, knowledge and skill,

the Board would have found these tasks extremely difficult, if not impossible to achieve.

The 4 areas of competence have been retained, CCME, CME, CPD and CQI, and the number of credits required is laid out clearly. For all courses and activities, 1 hour will be worth 2 credits, in any area. The new document will be forwarded to you with your Annual Practising Certificate Renewal forms. Please take the time to read it before sending in your renewal application. You will note that there will be a mock logbook attached for your information that may assist as an example guide as to what is required. The Board is confident that practitioners will find the updated 4 year cycle programme easier to use.

This document will also be available for viewing on the Board's website at www.podiatristsboard.org.nz.

The Board would like to remind practitioners that the requirement level set out in the Framework, is to ensure the minimum competencies required of practising practitioners under the HPCA Act 2003. This acknowledges the various high level, and often invasive, clinical activities described in the various registered scopes of practice for podiatrists.

The Board's intention in setting a minimum annual credit requirement, is to enable practitioners to maintain flexibility in their practices and to complete re-certification programmes, insofar as possible as is convenient to them. The Board's primary obligation is to ensure the safety of the public and that therefore, practitioners are competent to practice.

ENDORSED CONTINUING PODIATRIC EDUCATION

The Board requires that all courses and activities undertaken for the PBRCF have Board endorsement. The Board welcomes contact from course providers, presenters and practitioners providing details of courses they are requesting for endorsement. In order to assess a course for endorsement, the Board requires sufficient information on topics covered, length of time and details of all presenters with a brief bio. The Board receives constant queries and is continually updating the list of endorsed courses, which is available on the Board's website (under practitioners / re-certification requirements.)

PRESCRIBING RIGHTS UPDATE

The Board originally presented the submission for its Application for Consideration of Extended Prescribing Authority for Registered Podiatrists to the Ministry of Health, New Prescribers Advisory Committee (NPAC) in 2005. The NPAC has accepted in principle the Board's submission and had requested various further information with regard to an undated medicines list. The Board contracted with consulting pharmacists and has now provided the NPAC with a final list of medications. Further final work is currently underway on case histories and proposed monitoring processes. This submission has been a very long process and the Board looks forward to its completion in January.

OVERSEAS TRAINED REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The Board has reviewed and simplified the entry level requirements for overseas trained podiatrists. The Board's intention was to remove unnecessary barriers to registration and to help alleviate the current shortage of podiatrists in New Zealand. If podiatrists hold a qualification from one of the Board's Approved Schools (list available on the website) and: have either graduated in the past 3 years and been registered in the country where they obtained their qualification; or practised in the past 3 years, they are able to apply for registration in NZ.

Applicants are also required to sit an Open Book Exam (focusing on cultural competence and legislative requirements). As this exam has not yet been finalised, successful applicants have a further year from when the exam is available, in which to sit it. For those practitioners in this situation, the Board will make contact with you when the exam is available.

The Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition (TTMR) application process remains the same.

COMPLAINTS

Unfortunately the Board has received a greater number of complaints from the Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC) this year. This is regrettable and creates a further drain on the Board's resources.

The Board cannot over-stress the importance of practitioners utilising the PBRCF programme requirements in order to maintain the highest level of competence and conduct in their practise, to minimise patient complaints.

The Board also encourages regular familiarisation with the Board's Code of Practice and Code of Ethics (both of which are available on the website).

REVIEW OF HEALTH PRACTITIONERS COMPETENCE ASSURANCE ACT 2003

The HPCA Act is the Act of Parliament under which the Podiatrists Board operates. The Ministry of Health's review of the Act commenced in September 2007, and it has prepared a survey for practitioners to make comment on the current Act.

This survey will be available at <http://moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/hpca-review#phase1> from 17 January 2008 to mid February 2008. Feedback from this survey will be collated by the Ministry of Health and form part of a discussion document that the Ministry will circulate later in 2008.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Board is very pleased to advise that there are three new Board members who commenced at the end of 2006. Terry Bradshaw and Julianne Jackson are both practitioners in the greater Wellington area, and Wendy Neilson of Tauranga is the Board's new lay member. The Board is very fortunate indeed to have such skilled and dedicated members to provide their expertise to the Board's skill base.

ANNUAL PRACTISING CERTIFICATE FEE INCREASE

Due to increased administration costs, a reflection of the increasing cost of Board compliance with the HPCAA in all areas, the Board has reluctantly resolved to increase the cost of the Annual Practising Certificate fee for practitioners from 1 April 2008. The APC fee will increase from \$650 to \$800, and the fee for those paying after 1 April 2007 (who held an APC for the previous year) will increase from \$750 to \$900.

The Board wishes to remind practitioners that it is essentially self funding. It receives no funding from the government and the Board's income is totally dependant on fees received from APC and registration applications.

As podiatry is a smaller profession in terms of practitioner numbers, the Board is challenged to comply with legislative requirements on a limited budget. In comparison with some other "smaller" professions, (for example the Chiropractic Board and the Osteopathic Council), our fees have compared very well, with the other two APC fees being over a \$1,000 in the past few years.

ADMINISTRATION TRANSITION FROM REGISTRATION BOARDS SECRETARIAT (RBS)

The Board wishes to advise practitioners that, along with the other four Registration Boards currently using the services of RBS (the Optometrists & Dispensing Opticians Board, Dietitians Board, Chiropractic Board and Osteopathic Council) it will be moving to a new secretariat structure, with the purpose of enabling greater control over the administrative functions and expenses. It is anticipated that the office address will change, and practitioners will be advised of new contact details in the new year with the APC renewal application forms.

Over the past couple of years some of the larger Boards with RBS had decided to leave and develop their own office/administration. The remaining (RBS) Boards were relatively small and as the larger Boards left, the administration fees charged by RBS became correspondingly larger.

As a profit making company, RBS obviously derives its profit from the services it provides to its clients. The remaining Boards do not have sufficient monetary reserves to sustain the increases being sought by RBS. Following extensive research it became very obvious that the five remaining Boards/Councils could develop their own shared administration unit at a far lesser cost than the services offered by RBS.

It also means that the remaining Authorities, as employers, will have better control of their individual staff.

The structure of the combined administration unit is not yet finalised but it is anticipated that a group owned not for profit company will hold the most potential for all of the Authorities concerned. Whilst there will be some challenges in the development of a new administration system and work place they will, none the less, be exciting challenges for the Board as it develops its structure for the future. The changes are happening at the time of writing this newsletter and will be well underway to becoming reality by the end of the current contract with RBS early in 2008.

The Board is especially thankful that it was under the administration of RBS during the introduction of the HPCAA 2003, where RBS took a leading initiative to assist all Authorities under its administration, in the understanding and implementation of HPCAA policy. The Board extends to the RBS Directors all good wishes for the future.

ANNUAL PRACTISING CERTIFICATE REQUIRED TO PRACTICE IN NEW ZEALAND

Finally, the Board wishes to remind all podiatrists that practitioners must hold a current Annual Practising Certificate. It is illegal to practise podiatry in NZ without such a certificate and the Health Practitioner Competence Assurance Act 2003 section 7(5) provides that this offence may be punishable by a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

Please make every effort in the next APC round, to have your application and payment returned to the Board well before **31 March 2008**. Each year there are still a number of practitioners who

apply and pay late for their APC. The Board is hopeful that those of you who have done so in the past, will make their arrangements to renew their APC in plenty of time in 2008 to avoid having to pay the extra \$100 administration costs.

Please remember that payments cannot be processed without receipt of the fully completed application form.

A reminder also that if you do not intend to practice during the 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 period, you must complete and **return the Non-practising Declaration** attached to your APC renewal form. The Board requires that you notify any address or phone contact changes, and thanks those of you who do so promptly.

CONTACTING THE BOARD

For all queries please contact the Registrar:

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annabel.whinam@regboards.co.nz

Phone: 04 4740 706 or 04 4997 979

Fax: 04 472 2350

Postal Address: PO Box 10-140, Wellington

Street Address: Level 21, Grand Plimmer Tower, 2-6 Gilmer Tce,
Wellington

Web site: www.podiatristsboard.org.nz

Please note this address is correct until 31 May 2008. Refer to the website for updated address and contacts in the new year.

Please note:

the Office will close on 21 December 2007 and re-open on 14 January 2008.

The Board and staff would like to take this opportunity to wish all practitioners a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

