



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the “new look” Podiatrists Registration Newsletter. Our Newsletter is designed to provide relevant information to all registered Podiatry practitioners in NSW and keep you informed about registration matters and other issues pertinent to the professional interest.

The Board has recently sent out a copy of the new Registration Act and Regulations and Code of Professional Conduct to every practitioner currently on the registration roll, to have available for reference.

It is important for all practitioners to read these important documents to become familiar with the current changes that may affect you in your current workplace. These documents may appear formal and procedural in tone, at first glance, however there are very important aspects regarding normal day to day practice that affect how you practice and what is expected of you should your place of work be subject to a routine inspection.

The new Act and Regulations has increased the workload of the new Board in providing protection to members of the general public by providing a framework of greater accountability and transparency about the profession and the status of the profession as a whole in the wider forum of health care.

Registered members may perceive “the Board” as a remote group of professional representatives making decisions about podiatric matters related to registration. Whilst this is a serious part of the Boards’ activity the Board’s function actually involves a lot more policy-making, research and professional contact today, than ever before.

The Board is currently developing policies and procedures about a range of issues including the very important area of professional currency.

“Professional currency” is the ability of the individual practitioner to account for and demonstrate their application to acquiring new knowledge and skills in podiatry and updating established foundation knowledge and skills in podiatry to the currently required levels expected of a practicing Podiatrist.

This area may also involve the use of new or non-traditional interventions to compliment and enhance the professional therapy and experience for the patient/client in podiatric practice.

Soon the Board will be writing to you again, asking about your individual experiences with podiatry post-qualifying educational opportunities and how you are keeping up to date with all the professional changes particularly in the

more remote country locations.

It is anticipated that in the future, all registrants will be required to identify on a regular basis their levels of participation in professionally based educational processes to establish their perceived currency to practice.

Lastly, it is important for you, as a registered professional to appreciate the Board is a statutory authority that must operate within the complexity of legal structure and process in implementing the relevant Act and Regulations.

However, the appointed Board membership needs to be in touch with the profession it represents and welcomes contact from any of the registered members should they wish to seek information on relevant issues or raise an issue of concern.

Jill Fogarty OAM
President

MEMBER PROFILE: BARBARA WRIGHT – CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVE

Our new Board member from the community is a 65 year old retired registered nurse, Barbara Wright.

She has two little grandsons who are in their very early school years and has lived at Busby,

outside of Liverpool, for forty years.

Barbara has been active in many organisations since her retirement over fifteen years ago. This includes transport and disability committees as well as the Health Committee at Combined Pensioners.

She was the president of the NSW Medical Consumers Association for some years before moving on to other interests.

She has been a volunteer at Liverpool Hospital for seven years and is also an active member of the Community Participation Network of the Sydney South West Area Health Service.

Barbara has used orthosis in her shoes for over twenty years and finds they help with her balance and gait.

Aside from many community activities she gardens and is a bit of a bookworm.

She also has a keen interest in current affairs, complementary therapies and advances in orthodox medicine.

She has multiple sclerosis and ankylosing spondylitis and this gives her great insight into chronic health conditions.

PODIATRY EDUCATION

University of Western Sydney

The Bachelor of Applied Science (Podiatry) program at The University of Western Sydney commenced in 1996 and was the first accredited podiatry program in Australia. To date the university has graduated 165 candidates, 18 of which completed their honours.

The University have five permanent staff members who work diligently to ensure that the high standard of education is upheld and are all involved in professional development:

- Stefania Penkala and Nerida Klupp commenced doctoral studies in 2005 on a full time basis.
- Verona du Toit commenced a doctorate degree (part-time) in 2003 and in 2005, received a \$10 000 grant from the NSW Podiatry Registration Board.
- Susan Lauric is enrolled in a graduate diploma in Psychology.
- Paul Bowles is a surgical registrar.

The university faculty also includes

- James Cresswell is the sole honour's student conducting a randomised controlled trial.
- Joel Radford is in a postgraduate program at UWS (Podiatry) and will be submitting his thesis later this year.

The University also have a total of 8 remaining casual staff members teaching in the university's Uniclinic and are fortunate to have a large cohort of external placement clinicians in both the private

and public sectors. They are providing an excellent service to 3rd and 4th year students which amount to a total of 95 students.

Charles Sturt University

Charles Sturt University (CSU) offers the only rural Podiatry course in Australia. The rural clinical experience gives the graduate of CSU podiatry a leading edge when it comes to knowledge and experience of all aspects of podiatry practice in Australia.

Each Graduate of CSU has a full documented 1,000 hours direct clinical experience in every aspect of podiatry from the treatment of "High Risk", Paediatrics, Sports, Biomechanics and Geriatrics.

CSU currently has 35 student places per year for each year of the four-year program. A blend of Medicine, Surgery, Pathology, Orthotics, Radiology, Paediatrics, Biomechanics, Dermatology and integrated clinical practice develops the student into the complete podiatrist.

CSU has some of the most experienced teaching staff in the country with over 100 years combined teaching and clinical practice.

The part-time clinical supervisors provide the CSU student with direct quality industry experience and competencies. The extensive national and international clinical placements ensure that CSU produce an all round graduate.

Newcastle University

The University of Newcastle will introduce the new, 3 year, Bachelor of Podiatry program in 2007. The first year of the program will focus on pre-clinical sciences including human anatomy, physiology, and sociology and psychology for health practitioners. The second and third years are devoted to podiatry-specific courses and related sciences including human pathophysiology and advanced lower limb anatomy and biomechanics.

Teaching is to be primarily case-based to prepare graduates for the complex and changing nature of health care. In addition, teaching material will emphasise the use of evidence-based practice in podiatry.

The clinical program will be integrated with the academic components and conducted concurrently. Present plans are for slightly over 1,000 hours of experience with the focus being on developing competencies.

Another focus of the University of Newcastle program is the integration of podiatry into the healthcare setting.

Discussions are proceeding about the location of the university podiatry clinic but it is designed to meet a central aim of the program: the development of many of the students' clinical skills in a healthcare setting where they can actively participate in multidisciplinary patient management in both the outpatient and acute care settings.

ROUTINE INSPECTIONS

The Board's inspector carried out several random inspections of registrants' practices during the year to observe the standard of practice and report to the Board. In general, the observations indicated a standard acceptable to the Board.

COMPLAINTS

During the reporting period there were 13 complaints lodged with the Board.

In order of frequency the allegations concerned: fraud, unregistered practitioners, hurt or injured patients, inadequate explanations of treatment, breaches of professional boundaries, breaches of the Act, and ill fitting orthoses.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGE AND SURGICAL PODIATRISTS

Podiatrists should be aware of recent changes in legislation both at a national and state level that impacts upon the practice of podiatry in NSW.

In 2004 the Commonwealth Government passed the Health Legislation Amendment (Podiatric Surgery and Other Matters) Bill. This bill includes surgical podiatrists accredited by the Federal Department of Health and Ageing as providers of professional attention. Previously, this definition applied only to medical practitioners, dentists and midwives.

This bill amends the Health Insurance Act of 1973 to enable private health insurance funds to pay accommodation and nursing

costs associated with foot surgery performed on admitted patients by accredited surgical podiatrists.

In line with this change at a federal level the NSW Government have amended the Private Hospitals Regulation 1996. This ensures that surgical podiatrists who have attained federal accreditation by the Department of Health and Ageing can perform procedures in accredited day procedure centres and hospitals within NSW.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF REGISTRATION BOARDS

New South Wales Registration Board hosted the first Australian and New Zealand Council of Registration Boards Conference on the 10 February 2006 held at the Mercure Hotel, Sydney. The Conference was attended by representatives from Australian and New Zealand Podiatrists Registration Boards.

The most significant benefit of this meeting is that it enables the registration Boards to more closely coordinate their efforts to benefit registrants and the public's access to podiatry services.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Board's Education and Research Account Committee, chaired by Ms Jill Fogarty, considers applications for grants from the Education and Research Account and makes recommendations to the Board.

Applications are made on the Board's Education and Research Application forms. Guidelines

for making applications for the award together with the application form are available on the Board's website or by telephoning the Board.

The availability of the Education and Research grant is advertised each year through the Board's Newsletter, the Board's website and the Australian Podiatry Association.

The Board granted one award this year for the following research:

- Mr Joel Radford –
"Effectiveness of short-term treatments for plantar fasciitis"

The Board was pleased to be able to offer the award as a means of advancing podiatry and looks forward to receiving the final report.

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Board needs to hear from Podiatrists who may like to serve on the many committees that make up the Board's new functions. These positions require professional representatives from all podiatric backgrounds and must be representatives of all age groups, cultures and include both genders.

Whilst serving in these roles, the new Act makes provision for you to be remunerated and also receive relative travelling costs and related expenses at the discretion of the Board.

Working in this way ensures that the Board has a current cross-section of practitioners who are representative of the working profession throughout NSW and able to comment and make

valuable, transparent decisions from a personal background of professional reality.

You may like to read your copy of the new Podiatrists Registration Act that was sent to you by the Board in recent times, to get an idea of some of the formal committee structures that are necessary. There is also a need to create sub-committees for various Board responsibilities and it is necessary to be able to draw from a collection of professional representatives from time to time.

If you think you would like to be on our list and would be interested in contributing to your profession in this activity, please let us know.

It is wrong to think you would not be able to offer anything in this way. Every Podiatrist has a wealth of professional experience to draw from as well as a background of personal skills development. Please consider this opportunity.

REGISTRATIONS

Registered podiatrists	
As at 30 June 2005	783
As at 1 July 2006	804
New registrations	49
Podiatrists Act	36
NSW	25
Interstate	6
Overseas	5
Mutual Recognition Act	12
Trans Tasman Act	1
Restorations	11
Removal of names	48
Unfinancial	39
Deceased	4
At own request	5
Changes of name	11

WEB SITE

The Board maintains a web site for registrants and the public. The index is as follows

- About the Board
- How to contact the Board
- Membership of the Board
- How to apply for registration
- Reregistration to the Register
- Fees
- Legislation
- Code of Professional Conduct
- Clinical Guidelines for Orthotic Therapy
- Complaints
- Annual Report
- Podiatry Education and Research Information
- Newsletter
- Contacting other Organisations
- Privacy Statement
- Comments/Questions
- Links to other sites.

The site contains copies of all the commonly used forms such as application forms required for various submissions to the Board

Visit the Board's website at:
www.podreg.health.nsw.gov.au
for more details

If you have an item you would like the Board to cover in a future Newsletter please advise the Registrar.

The Board wishes you all the compliments of the approaching Festive Season

BOARD STAFF

Acting Registrar
Ms Amanda McEacharn

Assistant Registrar
Ms Corinne Warby