

In reply please quote C42: DR

3 November 2008

Attention : Practitioner Regulation Sub-Committee  
[NRAIP@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:NRAIP@dhs.vic.gov.au)

### **Submission : Proposed Registration Arrangements**

Thank you for providing the Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia Inc (CCEA) with the opportunity to present a submission in relation to the provided Consultation Paper. The CCEA understands the importance of a National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and would like to put forward the following in relation to the questions contained within the Consultation Paper.

The CCEA is directly responsible for the accreditation of Australasian Chiropractic Programs and the evaluation of the suitability of overseas trained chiropractors for migration, work visa eligibility and practice in Australia. Australian Chiropractors Registration Boards rely heavily upon CCEA's activities and decisions with a great deal of frequent interaction. CCEA itself has nominees from each of the jurisdictional Boards. As such, CCEA believes it can provide meaningful input in reference to the Consultation Paper.

The CCEA's responses to the Consultation Paper Questions are contained on the following pages.

If you have any queries regarding the CCEA's submission, please feel free to contact us. Our contact details are contained within the footer of this document.

Yours sincerely



Philip Donato, Chairperson CCEA

**Proposal 2.1:** It is proposed that the registration provisions be framed in a way that:

- a. reflects the wording and intent of the IGA
- b. builds on the best aspects of State and Territory schemes, rather than the lowest common denominator or replicating one existing registration scheme, and facilitates a smooth transition to the national arrangements
- c. enables a robust system that is designed to protect the public
- d. is the least restrictive law necessary to achieve the policy objectives, and includes legislated restrictions on practice only where the benefits to the community as a whole outweigh the costs, and there is no other more responsive method of achieving these benefits, and
- e. facilitates the transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair operation of the scheme.

*The CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 4.1.1:** It is proposed that the legislation require applications for registration to be made to the responsible board, and that an application must be:

- in a form approved by the responsible board
- accompanied by the fee fixed for that profession, and
- accompanied by any information reasonably required by the responsible board.

*While the CCEA supports the inclusion of a facility for registrants to make applications on line, as well as paper based applications, it does have concerns regarding the authentication of documentation, identification of applicants and means for making legal declarations such as competency, fitness to practice, convictions, PI insurance etc in an on-line application process. Fail proof procedures will need to be implemented to enable direct verification of the information detailed in 4.2. When fee setting is being considered, the framework must ensure that all costs in relation to the operation of the responsible profession's accreditation body is included. It is imperative that costs in relation to the responsible profession's accreditation body operations remains with the respective profession and is not "cost shared" amongst all professions, which may be detrimental to the smaller professions.*

**Proposal 4.2.1:** It is proposed that the national boards have the power to require the following information to accompany an initial application for registration:

- a. evidence of the applicant's qualifications and supervised practice experience that they believe qualifies them for registration
- b. evidence of successful completion of an examination (if required) set by or on behalf of the responsible board
- c. evidence of previous registrations and registration status, ie disciplinary history (where the applicant has been registered under another law)
- d. information on any complaints made against the applicant to bodies such as health complaints commissioners, Commonwealth, State or Territory bodies
- e. evidence of recency of practice (except for new graduates) (see section 9 of this paper)
- f. workforce data required for national workforce analysis (further discussion of this will be provided in the information-sharing paper), and
- g. any other information reasonably required by the responsible board.

*CCEA recommends that the establishment of an applicant's command of the English language be ascertained at the "application" stage of the process by the provision of a relevant competency certificate, e.g. IELTS certificate or similar, for applicants from non-English speaking countries.*

*CCEA recommends that applicants also need to provide the following information:*

- *Evidence of identity such as "100-point" proof of identity, consistent with other government agencies;*
- *Evidence of current professional indemnity insurance;*
- *Evidence of:*
  - *Successful completion of the CCEA's Competency Evaluation if the applicant holds a qualification from outside of Australia or New Zealand*
  - *A current and relevant work visa for overseas applicants.*

**Proposal 4.3.1:** There are a number of options available on or relating to requirements for criminal history checking of applicants for registration and renewal of registration:

- Option 1:** That the legislation require criminal history checks be applied to all new applicants for registration from 1 July 2010, but not to existing registrants renewing their registration.
- Option 2:** That the legislation require criminal history checks on all new applicants and at renewal of registration, but these requirements be phased in over time from 1 July 2010.
- Option 3:** The legislation require criminal history checks on all new applicants for registration, with a discretionary power for boards to require checks at annual renewal, and self-declaration obligations imposed on registrants both at annual renewal and during the registration period.
- Option 4:** That the legislation provide the power to require criminal history checks on applicants at the discretion of the relevant board, while not making checks mandatory for all applicants.

*CCEA's preferred position is Option 3.*

**Proposal 5.1:** It is proposed that the legislation define the qualifications for general registration to mean one or a combination of the following:

- an approved course of study
- an approved period of supervised practice (if any) (ie an internship), and
- an examination (if any) set by or on behalf of the responsible board.

Allowing boards to determine the combination of qualifications, experience and examination required for registration reflects existing differences in registration requirements across professions. For some professions, supervised clinical practice is built into a course of study (eg psychology Masters programs), some require an internship following completion of an approved course of study (eg medicine), and others still require applicants to sit an additional board examination following completion of both an approved course of study and internship year (eg pharmacy).

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal however recommends that responsible boards consult with the responsible profession's accreditation body. CCEA also recommends that there needs to be a mechanism governing the process for any changes the National Board may wish to introduce with respect to requirements for registration. CCEA would also recommend that the word "completion" in the fourth line above should read "successful completion" to ensure clarity.*

**Proposal 5.2:** It is proposed that, in addition to the powers above relating to the IGA clause 1.25(c) to register those with approved qualifications, boards have the power to register persons who have training and experience the responsible board considers to be substantially equivalent to an approved course of study and supervised practice. This will allow a national board to recognise substantially equivalent qualifications recognised by registration authorities in another country.

*CCEA does not agree with this Proposal. CCEA believes there should be a formal assessment utilising an examination such as is referred to in 4.2.1 (b) above, or there should be a program accreditation requirement. At present applicants from CCEA accredited chiropractic programs within Australia and New Zealand are eligible for automatic registration with other applicants being required to successfully complete the CCEA's Competency Evaluation.*

*Another concern/reservation that CCEA has with this proposal is that the "substantial equivalence" of other training and experience would have to be established, presumably by a thorough assessment and comparison of other training and experience alternatives by an appropriate expert body (accreditation authority). This would have implications for resources, particularly if a reference list of such alternatives had to be established in anticipation of possible use. If this was not the case, then the "substantial equivalence" would have to be determined while the applicant waited, which could be a lengthy interval.*

**Proposal 5.3:** It is proposed that qualifications that are 'approved' by a responsible board for the purposes of registration are not 'prescribed in regulation', but rather that the legislation enables boards to publish a list of approved qualifications on a website.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal with the substitution of "chiropractic programs" for the word "qualifications"*

**Proposal 6.1.1:** It is proposed that the legislation provide for a responsible board at its discretion to exercise the following powers before deciding an application for registration:

- a. investigate the applicant
- b. require the applicant to attend before the board to answer questions about their application
- c. require the applicant to provide further information or any documents considered necessary by the board to decide the application
- d. require the applicant to undergo a written, oral or practical examination to assess the applicant's competence to practise, and
- e. require the applicant to undergo a health assessment (eg a medical examination or psychological assessment) to assess the applicant's capacity to practise.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.1.2:** With respect to terminology, it is proposed that the term 'health assessment' be used in the legislation rather than 'medical examination' because it allows a broader range of assessments to be conducted.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.2.1:** It is proposed that when a committee makes registration decisions the responsible board would otherwise be empowered to make, it is constituted appropriately. In order to achieve this, the legislation would require provisions that:

- a. require a committee, when exercising registration functions, to comprise at least the following:
  - i. a chair appointed by the responsible board who may be a registrant (from the profession regulated by the responsible board), or a non-registrant
  - ii. at least two members who are registrants from the profession concerned
  - iii. at least one lawyer
  - iv. at least one community member who is not and has never been a registered practitioner in that profession, and
  - v. no more than two thirds of members being registrants from the profession concerned

*CCEA agrees with the proposed composition of the committee however is of the opinion that the chair be a current or former registrant in good standing.*

- b. allow a committee to regulate its own proceedings, while requiring it to observe the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, and
- c. allow members appointed to committees to be paid the sitting fees and allowances approved by the Ministerial Council.

*CCEA agrees with b and c above and recommends that the sitting fees paid to committee members would be set by the National Board in consultation with the Management Agency (for budget purposes) and approved by the Ministerial Council.*

**Proposal 6.2.2:** It is proposed that the legislation include powers for a responsible board to delegate, in writing, to a member of the responsible board or a member of a committee, a person employed by the National Agency, or a person engaged by the National Agency to provide services to the board, its registration powers and functions under the legislation, other than its powers to:

- a. refuse to grant, or refuse to renew a registration or an endorsement of registration
- b. impose conditions on a registration or endorsement of registration
- c. impose conditions on a registration renewal or endorsement renewal
- d. amend, vary or revoke conditions on a registration or endorsement, and
- e. remove a person's name from the register where the person no longer meets the requirements for registration (see section '12.5 Removal from the register' of this paper).

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.3.1:** It is proposed that the legislation require registrants (except for non-practising registrants if any) to be covered by PII arrangements at all times during the registration period, as a condition of registration, and to require registrants demonstrate coverage to the satisfaction of the responsible board, at the time registration is granted for the first time, and annually on renewal of registration.

The legislation concerning PII must allow registrants to meet the requirements if they are covered by an employer's PII, their university's PII, or the PII of a health facility where they are a student, as well as when a registrant purchases their own PII cover.

*The CCEA supports compulsory PI Insurance as a condition of registration and practice. CCEA however suggests that registrants maintain an adequate "run off" insurance as in some instances, e.g. children, practitioners may need to be covered for considerable time after resignation of their registration.*

**Proposal 6.3.2:** It is proposed that each national board have the power to issue a guideline about what constitutes acceptable arrangements for PII for registrants.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.4.1:** It is proposed that the legislation provide powers for a responsible board to refuse to grant registration on a number of grounds, including but not limited to the following:

- a. the applicant has not satisfied the board of their **competence to practise** in the regulated profession and this cannot be satisfactorily addressed by the imposition of conditions
- b. the applicant's **character** is such that it would not be in the public interest to allow the applicant to practise in the regulated profession
- c. the applicant is considered by the board to be unfit to practise because of **drug or alcohol dependency** or **physical or mental impairment**
- d. the applicant has been **convicted** of or made the subject of a criminal finding for an offence in any participating jurisdiction or an offence under a foreign law, and the circumstances of the offence are such as to render the applicant unfit in the public interest to practise in the regulated profession
- e. the applicant has previously been registered under this Act or a corresponding previous enactment of a participating jurisdiction, and that registration has been suspended or cancelled, or during the course of that registration, the practitioner has had proceedings brought against him or her and those **proceedings have never been finalised**
- f. the applicant has been **deregistered or suspended** under a foreign law, for any reason relating to conduct that would constitute professional misconduct under this Act, or during the course of that registration, the practitioner has had proceedings brought against him or her and those **proceedings have never been finalised**
- g. the applicant has had **insufficient recent practice** experience in the relevant profession (with the time period within which an applicant must demonstrate they have practised to be determined by the responsible board, eg two years is preferred in some professions, five years in others)
- h. the applicant's **English language proficiency** is not considered sufficient by the board for the applicant to practise in the relevant profession
- i. the applicant does not have arrangements for **professional indemnity insurance** that the responsible board considers sufficient, or
- j. the applicant is **disqualified from applying** for registration under this Act or a previous enactment of a participating jurisdiction.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal however suggests that the term "drug or alcohol dependency" in c) be amended to "substance abuse".*

**Proposal 6.4.2:** It is proposed that the legislation provide for boards to deal with possible fraudulent registration applications. Failure to disclose relevant matters to a board (such as those listed above) might constitute a fraudulent application under the legislation. In such circumstances, the responsible board might refer the matter to the relevant State or Territory police force. In addition, it is proposed that the legislation set out a process for a responsible board to deal with a registrant whom it has reasonable grounds to believe has obtained, or is attempting to obtain registration by fraud. In such circumstances, the responsible board should be empowered to immediately suspend registration (if already granted), investigate the matter, and refer it, if necessary, for hearing by the relevant State or Territory tribunal. The tribunal would be empowered under the legislation to find that the practitioner's registration has or has not been obtained by fraud, and, if appropriate, order that the practitioner's registration be cancelled. The standard of proof that would apply in such proceedings would be on the balance of probabilities.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal however suggests that a timeframe be included by which the Tribunal must hear the matter to ensure a practitioner natural justice.*

**Proposal 6.5.1:** It is proposed that the legislation provide that in the event that a board is proposing to refuse an application for registration, or to attach conditions to a practitioner's registration, the board would be required to give the applicant notice of its proposal and provide the applicant with an opportunity to make a submission to the board. It is proposed that the legislation include timeframes for this process before a board makes such a decision.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.5.2:** It is proposed that the legislation require a board to notify an applicant of its decision, within a specified period, eg 28 days after determining an application for registration or renewal of registration, and if the application has been refused, or conditions have been imposed, to provide reasons for the decision. The legislation should also require a board to inform the applicant of their right to seek a review of the board's decision and advise of the appropriate review body (the relevant State or Territory tribunal). It is proposed that the same entitlements and obligations would apply with respect to an endorsement of registration (see section 10 of this paper).

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 6.6.1:** It is proposed that the legislation include provision for registrants or persons refused registration to have a right of review to the relevant State or Territory tribunal. It is proposed that this would be a merits review (rather than a review on points of law). The legislation would specify the following decisions as reviewable:

- a. A decision to refuse a person's application for registration or renewal of registration.
- b. A decision to refuse a person's application for endorsement of registration or renewal of endorsement (see sections 10 and 11 of this paper).
- c. A decision to impose a condition on a person's registration or endorsement of registration otherwise than by agreement.
- d. A decision to withdraw registration on the basis that a requirement for registration is no longer met.

*CCEA recommends that the National Board (or its delegated review committee) be involved with the initial appeal prior to the appeal to a State Tribunal. This may be a more timely approach and allows the National Board to review, monitor and maintain consistency amongst its State Committees. A timeframe should also be included.*

**Proposal 7.1:** It is proposed that the legislation enable a national board to grant any one of a number of different types of registration, depending on the circumstances of the applicant, and to impose conditions on a grant of registration. The proposed types and sub-types of registration are set out in Table 2.

*CCEA agrees with the Proposal to develop subtypes of registration however is not content with the subtypes as listed in Table 2 p16. We prefer to use the term “Full” or “Un-conditional” registration. The term “General” may present confusions with nursing.*

*The second category should be “Full with Conditions” or “Conditional” with a range of sub-types.*

*The third category should be “Limited” with a range of categories or subtypes.*

*A 4<sup>th</sup> Category could be “interim” where a delegated officer could provide interim or temporary registration where all criteria is satisfied and it is necessary prior to Board or Delegated Committees sitting/meetings, but to be approved or ratified at this next meeting.*

*CCEA is not in favour of any registration categories where there are not approved qualifications or not an approved and completed competency assessment by a delegated body for such purpose. This is certainly the position for our profession. Otherwise, we are of the belief that public safety becomes compromised.*

*Proposed “sub-types of specific registration” which cause concern are;- (b) “area of need” – this may suggest the granting of registration albeit in a limited environment of those without appropriate qualifications and competency, thus encouraging increase risk of public safety. Similarly, sub-type (h) is described as an applicant without approved qualifications.*

**Proposal 7.3.1:** It is proposed to include in legislation the capacity for boards to adopt a non-practising category of registration if they wish, in order to:

- make more transparent the distinction between those registrants who are and are not in active practice
- better target competency requirements, and
- provide more accurate data for workforce planning purposes.

It may also mean some non-practising registrants maintain a connection with their profession that may facilitate their return to active practice.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal. CCEA recommends that a definition for “non-practicing” be developed. Our suggestion would be that the registrant in this category not be engaged in clinical practice.*

**Proposal 7.3.2:** If a non-practising registration is to be provided under the legislation, then it is proposed that those granted this type of registration be required, as a condition of their registration, not to practise at all. This means that such registrants would be acting unprofessionally (and possibly also committing an offence), if they were to breach the conditions attached to their registration. For example, if a non-practising medical practitioner were to write a prescription this would constitute active practise in breach of their non-practising registration.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 7.4.1:** It is proposed that the legislative provisions with respect to student registration would be framed to:

- require only those students who are undertaking clinical training that involves contact with patients/clients to be registered
- empower boards to deal with students whose ability to undertake clinical training is affected by physical or mental impairment, drug or alcohol dependency, and
- give boards the discretion to include or not include a student category of registration.

Alternative options are as follows:

- Option 1:** The legislation include powers to register and regulate students, but only for specified professions and boards, for example, the medical and dental professions.
- Option 2:** The legislation include powers for all boards to register and regulate students, and student registration be mandatory, but only for those students who are undertaking clinical training, that is, those who are at the point in their course where they are in direct contact with patients.
- Option 3:** The legislation include powers for all boards to register and regulate students, and student registration be mandatory for students in all regulated professions, at the point of enrolment and for the duration of their course.

*CCEA's preferred position is Option 3.*

**Proposal 7.5:** It is not proposed that the legislation make provision for registration of corporations.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

### 8.1 Title protection

Clause 1.28 of Attachment A of the IGA states that the primary basis for regulation is to be 'protection of professional title', with statutory offences to prevent unregistered or unauthorised persons using professional titles.

*CCEA agrees with the professional titles listed against the chiropractic profession in this Proposal however suggests that all derivatives of the word "chiropractor" be included. We note that the profession of Podiatry has been omitted. We request that Physical Therapy as a derivative not be restricted as it relates to a broad range of care end modalities used over a range of regulated and unregulated professions.*

**Proposal 8.1.1:** With respect to the use of courtesy titles, such as the title 'doctor' or 'professor', it is proposed that these not be legislated as protected titles, nor reserved for use only by members of one or a number of regulated health professions.

Therefore, unregistered persons using such titles would risk prosecution only where use of a courtesy title could, in the circumstances, lead others into believing the person is qualified and registered under the Act in a regulated health profession when they are not.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal provided the title is a qualified title and is used in a way that it's use does not lead others to believe the person is qualified and registered under a regulated health profession when they are not, i.e. use with a clarifier e.g. "Dr J Smith, Chiropractor."*

**Proposal 8.3.1:** With respect to protection of the practice of dentistry, it is proposed that there be defined in legislation a number of restricted acts relating to dentistry and that there be an offence for a person who carries out a restricted act and is not a registered dental care practitioner or a person who falls into a class of exempted persons (for example a registered medical practitioner). It is proposed that the restricted acts with respect to the practice of dentistry be along the following lines:

- a. the performance of any operation on the human teeth or jaws or associated structures
- b. the correction of malpositions of the human teeth or jaws or associated structures
- c. fitting or intra-oral adjustment for a person of artificial teeth or corrective or restorative dental appliances, and
- d. the performance of any operation on, or the giving of any treatment or advice to, any person that is preparatory to or for the purpose of the fitting, insertion, adjusting, fixing, constructing, repairing or renewing of artificial dentures or restorative dental appliances.

*CCEA has no objection with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 8.4.1** With respect to protection of the practice of optometry, it is proposed that the legislation prohibit unregistered or unauthorised persons from prescribing optical appliances. It is proposed that an optical appliance would be defined as: 'contact lenses, spectacle lenses, or any other appliance designed to correct, remedy or relieve any refractive abnormality or defect of sight'.

Stakeholders are invited to address in their submissions whether the definition of optical appliance should be framed broadly to include all contact lenses (whether for therapeutic or cosmetic purposes), or narrowly, to exclude 'plano' or cosmetic contact lenses.

If cosmetic contact lenses are included in the definition of a restricted optometry act, the effect would be to make it illegal to supply cosmetic contact lenses to a person, except in accordance with a prescription issued by a registered optometrist or other authorised person.

*CCEA has no objection with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 8.4.2:** If the prescribing of optical appliances is to be a restricted act under the legislation, then it is proposed that an orthoptist who is listed with the Australian Orthoptic Board (not a statutory board in this scheme) be exempted from committing an offence for prescribing spectacle lenses in the normal course of their practice.

*CCEA has no objection with this Proposal.*

## **8.5 Restrictions on spinal manipulation**

Current arrangements with respect to regulation of spinal manipulation vary across States and Territories, with some jurisdictions restricting its practice to registered practitioners (such as chiropractors, osteopaths, physiotherapists and medical practitioners), and in others, there is no legislative restriction on its practice. The key question is whether there is any evidence to suggest that the community is more vulnerable in those jurisdictions where no restrictions apply, compared with those where restrictions apply. It may be that the more serious risks associated with spinal manipulation relate mainly to manipulation of the cervical spine, and that if a restricted act is to be included in the legislation, it should be narrowly framed.

Clause 1.28(c)(ii) of the IGA (Attachment A) states that 'elements of the practice of spinal manipulation may also require legislative protection, and further work will be undertaken to define these for this purpose.

**Proposal 8.5.1:** With respect to protection of the practice of spinal manipulation, it is proposed that further consideration be given to practice restrictions as detailed in the IGA at 1.28(c)ii).

*See Attachment 1.*

**Proposal 9.2.1:** With respect to ensuring continuing practitioner competence, it is proposed that the legislation require the boards to establish requirements within each profession for registrants to demonstrate continuing competence at the time of annual renewal, with the scheme to be implemented for each profession on 1 July 2010. Since continuing competence would be a condition of registration renewal, requirements would apply to all registered health professionals, regardless of whether they work in public or private settings, and are employees or self-employed.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 9.2.2:** It is proposed that the legislation enable the national boards to:

- a. develop and publish minimum standards (approved by the Ministerial Council) for:
  - i. the continuing competence requirements that registrants must meet in order to renew their registration in a regulated profession, and
  - ii. the requirements that any accreditation/certification/performance appraisal scheme must meet in order for registrants who participate to be able to satisfy the board's continuing competence requirements
- b. oversee a system of approval of various accreditation/certification/performance appraisal providers or schemes, or approve an external body or bodies to ensure these schemes meet the board's standards
- c. refuse to renew the registration of a practitioner on any ground on which the board might refuse to grant registration (see section 6.4 of this paper), and on grounds that the registrant has not met the responsible board's continuing competence requirements and therefore has not demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the board, that they are competent to practise in the regulated profession, and
- d. impose conditions on registration at renewal in the same way conditions may be imposed at first registration, including with respect to those registrants who have not met the continuing competence requirements of the board.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 9.3.1:** It is proposed that the legislation require registrants to submit to their respective boards at the time of annual renewal various items of information required by the board in order to determine whether the practitioner is fit to practise. As part of such an annual return, the legislation might require reporting on a range of matters including:

- a. how the board's continuing competence requirements have been met
- b. if charged with or convicted/subject of a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more
- c. any medical negligence claims
- d. if any clinical privileges or credentials have been withdrawn or restricted by a health service body or third party payer, and
- e. any data required to be provided to the Ministerial Council for workforce planning purposes.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 9.4.1:** In addition to the proposed continuing competence arrangements outlined above, it is proposed that the legislation include a range of provisions which empower boards to effectively monitor practitioners whose competence or fitness to practice may be in question. Some of these powers will be addressed in more detail in the consultation paper on complaints and discipline. However, in general terms, it is proposed that the legislation confer on boards the following powers.

**Powers to issue guidelines about professional standards**

**Proposal 9.4.2:** It is proposed that the national boards have a general power to issue guidelines for registrants about standards recommended by the responsible board with respect to professional practice.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Reporting obligations on registrants – during the registration period**

**Proposal 9.4.3:** It is proposed that the legislation require registrants to report to boards, at any time during the registration period, and within 30 days, on the following matters:

- a. if charged with or convicted/subject of a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more
- b. any medical negligence claims
- c. any withdrawal or limitation of clinical privileges or credentials by a health service body, and any other matter set down from time to time by the Ministerial Council.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal and would like to recommend that issues pertaining to impairment be also considered.*

**Proposal 10.1.1:** Given the framework set out in the IGA, it is proposed that the legislation include the following provisions:

- a. A general power (in the part of the legislation which sets out the broad powers and functions of the national boards) for the national boards to recommend to the Ministerial Council specialties that should be recognised for their profession, and the qualifications that the responsible board considers should apply for the purposes of endorsement of registration in each recognised specialty. This would be in addition to the role of the national boards in recommending to the Ministerial Council approved qualifications for registration purposes.
- b. Powers for the Ministerial Council, following recommendation from a national board to:
  - i. approve those professions for which specialist recognition will operate under the national scheme
  - ii. approve the list of specialties against which those boards referred to above will approve suitably qualified registrants for endorsement of their registration
  - iii. approve the qualifications required for endorsement in each approved specialty, and
  - iv. approve changes, from time to time, to the list of recognised specialties for a regulated profession and the qualification requirements for specialist endorsement within an approved specialty.
- c. For those boards with a specialist endorsement function, the same powers as when dealing with an application for registration or renewal of registration, that is, powers to receive an application for endorsement of registration, require further information, require attendance at the board, refuse an endorsement or attach conditions to an endorsement, etc. Review rights would also apply.

- d. Offences for registered or unregistered persons who:
- i. Use restricted titles listed in the legislation (for example, the titles of ‘medical specialist’, ‘surgeon’ or ‘dental specialist’) when they are not entitled to; or
  - ii. Hold themselves out as being registered and endorsed as a specialist under the legislation when they are not.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 10.1.3:** With respect to protection of specialist titles, it is proposed that:

- for registered medical practitioners:
  - those with specialist endorsement from the Medical Board of Australia be authorised to use the title ‘medical specialist’, and
  - there be an offence for a person who is not a registered medical practitioner with endorsement as a specialist to hold themselves out as a medical specialist
- for registered dentists:
  - those endorsed as dental specialists by the Dental Care Practitioners Board of Australia be authorised to use the title ‘dental specialist’, and
  - there be an offence for a person who is not a registered dentist with endorsement as a specialist to hold themselves out as a dental specialist
- for registered podiatrists:
  - there be an offence for a person who is not a registered podiatrist with endorsement as a podiatric surgeon to hold themselves out as a podiatric specialist.

*CCEA has no objection with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 10.2.1:** To give effect to this, it is proposed that the national legislation make provision for a prescribing endorsement for those boards that regulate the nursing and allied health professions. This will link to various authorities conferred on identified practitioners under State and Territory drugs and poisons legislation.

*CCEA has no objection with this Proposal. Chiropractors in Australia do not currently have prescribing rights. It is important to note that in some international jurisdictions prescribing rights for chiropractors do exist. We would support the opportunity for this to be available if considered, providing appropriate and adequate training has been achieved, and within a restricted range of scheduled medicines.*

**Proposal 10.3.1:** It is proposed that the national legislation make provision for a mechanism through which a board may identify a sub-group of practitioners within the profession who have specific training and are considered qualified to deliver a particular type of service that they would otherwise be prevented by law from delivering.

In order to give effect to this, it is proposed that the legislation include provisions that:

- a. empower a responsible board to endorse a registrant whom it considers qualified to practice in an ‘approved area of practice’, and to impose any conditions on an endorsement
- b. empower the Ministerial Council, on application from a responsible board, to approve an ‘area of practice’ for the purposes of endorsement of registration and, at any time, to amend, vary or revoke a notice approving an area of practice
- c. require the responsible board to publish a list of ‘approved areas of practice’ on its website and in a publication circulated to registrants regulated by the board, and

- d. set out the powers of boards with respect to applications for endorsement qualifications required for endorsement and powers to refuse an endorsement (in a similar manner to those provisions relating to applications, qualifications for and refusal of registration).

The distinction between an endorsement with respect to an ‘approved area of practice’ and an endorsement as a ‘specialist’ would be the level and complexity of the training required, and whether this is or may in the future be part of an undergraduate qualification (an approved area of practice), or is only available to post-graduates (specialties).

The endorsement function would serve as a means of identifying practitioners with particular qualifications who are then authorised to undertake practices or provide certain kinds of services that are otherwise restricted under the Act or under other legislative or administrative schemes, such as Medicare, PBS.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 11.1.1:** It is proposed that the legislation provide for the national boards to grant registration for a period of up to 12 months and that a grant of registration be subject to annual renewal.

It is not proposed that there be a standard registration period in legislation that applies to all practitioners, for example a calendar year or a financial year. Rather, it is proposed that the legislation enable, for example, renewals to be staggered throughout the year, with the renewal date for each practitioner falling due 12 months after they first registered or renewed their registration.

*CCEA does not support staggered renewal dates due to monitoring and resource issues. Where this has been attempted in the past has been a shambles.*

**Proposal 11.2.1:** It is proposed that the legislation provide powers for the national boards to issue certificates of registration or renewal of registration to those persons who have met the registration or renewal requirements specified by the responsible board.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 11.2.2:** It is proposed that the legislation provide for these certificates/renewals to be in a form approved by the responsible board (subject to the operational framework established by the National Agency in consultation with the national boards). It is not proposed that there be a separate ‘practising certificate’ in addition to the certificate of registration or renewal of registration. It is proposed that if practitioners are required, by their employers or agents for example, to demonstrate their right to practise, then they should show their current registration or renewal certificate. There should be flexibility under these arrangements to allow a responsible board to issue either electronically or otherwise, on first registration, an attractive certificate suitable for display, and to issue a renewal in different form (for example a wallet sized card).

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 11.2.3:** It is proposed that the legislation require a practitioner whose registration has been suspended or cancelled to return their certificate of registration to the responsible board. It is proposed that the legislation also provide that, for the purposes of legal certainty, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, a certificate of registration is evidence that the person to whom the certificate is issued is registered.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 11.2.4:** It is proposed that the legislation impose an obligation on registered practitioners to notify the responsible board of a change of contact address, within 28 days and that a penalty apply for failure to comply.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 11.2.5:** It is proposed that the legislation provide a power for boards to require registrants provide details of each practice address from which they offer regulated health services. Special arrangements would be required so that the reporting obligations are manageable for locum practitioners whose practice address changes regularly.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTION:** There be no requirement to provide a practice address.

*CCEA supports the requirement for a practice address as well as a postal address. This should also apply to locums.*

**Proposal 11.3.1:** It is proposed that the legislation include provision for a ‘grace’ period of three months following expiry of registration, during which a practitioner is ‘deemed’ to be registered, but that if they fail to renew by the end of this period, then the board removes their name from the relevant register.

*CCEA does not agree with this Proposal as it allows a practitioner to continue working for a period of up to 3 months without paying their associated renewal fee and then finishing practice. It may also lead to a situation whereby if professional problems (misconduct; malpractice etc) were to occur during the 3 month period, the practitioner could just decide not to re-register. Secondly, causes PI insurance problems eg patients would be unprotected in the event of injury*

**ALTERNATIVE OPTION:** That there is no ‘grace’ period and that if a practitioner fails to renew their registration on time, their name is removed immediately from the register and they may be committing an offence if they continue to practise.

*We support the alternative option providing there are mechanisms built in to ensure adequate reminders. There should also be a requirement for a practitioner to be notified of “removal”.*

*CCEA recommends that a provision be included stating that the practitioner will be notified by mail of both their pending “removal” and also if “removal” occurs.*

**Proposal 11.4.1:** It is proposed that the legislation include provisions that allow a practitioner's name to be restored to the register, if they re-apply within a period of two years following a lapse of registration (under this Act, or a previous enactment of a participating jurisdiction), and they meet any continuing competence requirements set by the responsible board.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTION:** There be no provision for restoration to the register, and practitioners who hold outdated qualifications and let their registration lapse be required to meet current registration requirements in the event that they reapply for registration, that is, they complete either an approved course of study and supervised practice, or an approved re-entry or refresher course.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal with a period of five years. We would suggest that the term reinstated be considered in place of "restored"..*

*CCEA does not agree with this alternative option.*

**Proposal 11.5.1:** It is proposed that the legislation include provision for a responsible board to remove a person's name from the register for a range of specified reasons, including where they no longer meet the mandatory requirements for registration, removal in cases of death, failure to renew, cancellation by agreement or via a tribunal decision.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

**Proposal 12.1:** With respect to transition arrangements, it is proposed that transitional provisions provide for:

- a. all persons who are registered on 30 June 2010 in one or more of the ten regulated health professions be automatically deemed to be registered under the new national scheme on 1 July 2010, on the register or division of the register specified in the transition provisions, and for the term specified in their registration renewal
- b. all persons who have endorsements on their registration of a type available under the national scheme on 30 June 2010 be deemed to have endorsement of that type under the national scheme from 1 July 2010
- c. all persons who have conditions imposed on their registration or endorsement of registration on 30 June 2010 in one jurisdiction be automatically deemed to have the same conditions imposed on their registration or endorsement of registration from 1 July 2010
- d. where there are disparities between the types of registration or endorsements available under the national scheme and those conferred by existing State and Territory legislation, wherever possible registrants be migrated across to the national scheme with the widest possible scope of practice that is consistent with public safety. They would then be expected to practice within their competence, with conditions imposed only if it is considered necessary to limit their practice in order to protect the public
- e. where a practitioner is registered in more than one jurisdiction and these registrations expire at different dates, then they be automatically deemed to be registered through until the latest date of registration that applies, unless they have conditions placed on their registration, in which case, they will be deemed to be registered through until the first expiration date that applies, and
- f. if a practitioner holds or has held multiple registrations and has been either deregistered in one jurisdiction, or has not renewed in a jurisdiction where an investigation or disciplinary process was not finalised, then they not be automatically 'deemed' to be registered from 1 July 2010 and will be required to make a fresh application for registration with an expeditious process required.

*CCEA agrees with this Proposal.*

## **Attachment 1**

### Restrictions on spinal manipulation

The Consultation Paper “Proposed Registration Arrangements” Section 8.5 asks a series of questions;-

1. Is there any evidence to suggest that the community is more vulnerable in those jurisdictions where no restrictions apply, compared with those where restrictions apply?
2. Should the restricted act if included be narrowly framed eg manipulation to the cervical spine?
3. The need, if any, for inclusion in the national legislation of a restricted act with respect to spinal manipulation? If so, how broad or narrow framed?
4. What definition should be adopted?

Evidence of injury between practice restriction and non-restriction of spinal manipulation is unavailable in Australia. There are no known studies which have addressed or compared this question directly. From a research perspective the answer is unknown. Similarly there is no known data to determine how widespread or rare is the practice of spinal manipulation by non-regulated persons in non-practice-restricted jurisdictions.

CCEA is aware that there are a number of reports or incidences related to the evidence of injury between practice restriction and non-restriction of spinal manipulation however there is no comparative trail data from which to glean statistics.

Again, if injuries have occurred by non-regulated persons, we have no access to that information from any source. As a profession we indeed have continued to monitor and research complications and adverse event in relation to spinal manipulation as reported and alleged to have occurred following spinal manipulations.

The over-arching objective of the national scheme as set out in Section 5.3(a) in the Intergovernmental Agreement is to “provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered.

The principle in 5.4(c) sets out; “..... that restrictions on a practice of a profession should only occur where the benefits of the restriction to the community as a whole outweigh the costs”. The practice of spinal manipulation in our view needs to be restricted primarily for public safety and protection purposes where its practice is permitted by practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to do so. We would further argue that the practice restriction should also extend to extremity joint manipulation.

The World Health Organization “Guidelines on basic training and safety in Chiropractic” ([www.who.it/medicines/areas/traditional/Chiro-Guidelines.pdf](http://www.who.it/medicines/areas/traditional/Chiro-Guidelines.pdf)) encourages and supports the proper use of the practice of SMT including the understanding of the significance and detection of contraindications for such care. WHO discusses the need to facilitate safe and qualified practice as well as protect the public and patients by;-

- Providing minimum requirements for education
- Reviewing contraindications; minimizing the risk of accidents; advise on the management of complications arising during treatment; and to promote safe practice.

Spinal manipulation (SMT) involves the forceful passive movement of the joint beyond its active limit of motion and as such practitioners providing this care must identify the risk factors that contraindicate this modality. (1.)

### Contraindications

Contraindications to SMT range from a non-indication for such an intervention, where SMT may do no good, but should not cause any harm, to an absolute contra-indication, where SMT is life-threatening and/or catastrophic. The haphazard application of SMT by non-regulated individuals and untrained is dangerous.

There are a number of contraindications to joint manipulation (especially spinal), which have been reviewed in practice guidelines developed by the chiropractic profession and in the general chiropractic literature (1.-8).

An extensive list of absolute and relative contraindications can be found in the WHO document “Guidelines on basic training and safety in Chiropractic” (9).

### Complications

A discussion of contraindications, accidents and adverse reactions is found in the WHO document as detailed above. (9.) According to Henderson et al (10) causes of complications and adverse reactions are;-

- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of skill
- Lack of rational attitude and technique

Henderson gives examples of inappropriate practices and a description of serious adverse outcomes to all spinal regions (11-23). SMT is generally regarded as safe, effective and conservative, however although rare, accidents have been reported. As with all therapeutic interventions, complications can arise. Serious neurological and vascular complications have been reported and in some instances catastrophic. Examples of reported incidences are as follows;-

### Cervical Region

- Vertebrobasilar accidents (2-5, 7-8, 11, 15, 23-26)
- Horner’s syndrome (12)
- Diaphragmatic paralysis (13)
- Myelopathy (14)
- Cervical disc lesions (20)
- Pathological fractures (15,16)

### Thoracic Region

- Rib fracture and costochondral separation (17)

### Lumbar Region

- Lumbar disc rupture (21)
- Lumbar artery aneurysm (22)
- Cauda equine syndrome

### Miscellaneous Neuro Conditions Reported to have occurred following SMT. (27)

- Upper brachial plexus paralysis
- Axillary nerve lesion
- Long thoracic nerve lesion
- Spinal accessory neuropathy
- Diaphragmatic paralysis – phrenic N.
- Femoral neuropathy
- Spinal Haemotoma (27)

Reports of neurological complications following SMT fall into four major categories:-

1. Cerebrovascular accidents or incidents as a consequence of arterial dissections resulting in specific stroke syndromes.
2. Lumbar disc syndromes including radiculopathy and cauda equine syndrome.
3. Cervical disc syndromes including radiculopathy and myelopathy
4. Miscellaneous and often unexplained post-manipulation symptoms. (27)

#### Cerebrovascular Accidents (CVA)

Estimates of the incidence of serious cerebrovascular syndromes following cervical SMT based on clinical surveys range from 1 in 400,000 to 1 in 2 million dependant upon various authorities. In the example of arterial dissection, there are no highly reliable clinical tests to determine this possibility, however, practitioners are on the “look-out” for various initial symptoms which may or may not be present; eg “thunder-clap” headaches and any brain-stem related signs and symptoms – dizziness, drop attacks, visual problems, speech difficulties, coordination difficulties, one-sided numbness, etc. The lay-person does not have the knowledge and clinical skills to assess the patient properly. In such instances, if SMT was utilized the underlying arterial dissection could be further aggravated leading to a significant condition.

#### Disc Syndromes

In the case of a presenting cervical or lumbar disc injury, the trained professional understands the underlying disc and nerve anatomy, understands the pathology, can clinically assess the patient for signs and symptoms of a nerve root lesion (muscle strength, sensory loss, reflexes and nerve tension tests) and therefore in appropriate cases would desist from treatment and refer for appropriate imaging versus aggravating the pathology with the possible need of urgent surgery.

#### Prevention of Complications from manipulation

Complications that can arise from SMT can often-times be prevented by careful appraisal of the patient’s history and examination findings. Information must be sought about coexisting diseases and the use of medications, including long term steroid and anticoagulant therapy. A detailed and meticulous examination must be carried out. The use of appropriate technique is essential and the practitioner must avoid techniques known to be potentially hazardous. (28)

Trained professionals are required to obtain Informed Consent which includes a discussion and explanation of both positive and negative outcomes, a list of options, and the knowledgeable ability to answer and explain any questions the patient might have. How can the layperson be able to provide this requirement without sufficient formal training and expertise.

Regulated trained professionals are required to have adequate public indemnity insurance when performing SMT. This allows patients access to funds in the event of an injury. How can laypersons using SMT receive this form of insurance from insurers without adequate tertiary training. It would be unsatisfactory to allow uninsured laypersons to perform a therapeutic method which can have serious/lethal consequences, without the injured person having access to financial aid which may be required for daily living.

Furthermore regulated practitioners expertly educated and trained in these procedures are taught courses in first aid as well as instructions for those occasions where adverse incidents occur. There are further professional expectations and requirements for Continuing Professional Development program which include regular risk management re-education including the need for continual first aid updates.

The above discussion details the recommendation that practice restriction should be based upon:-

- public safety
- the need for practitioners with demonstrated practical and cognitive skill in the application of spinal manipulative therapy.

- the need for formal education with minimum standards and requirements as detailed within the WHO document (9) (only the chiropractic and osteopathic professions meet this requirement within the entry-level programs. The WHO document recommends that other health practitioners would need a further 12 months instruction in SMT. This is achieved with the medical and physiotherapy post-graduate programs.)
- a professional code of practice should be formulated to include (a) the need for health professionals to administer and provide interventions of demonstrated competence, and (b) the minimum educational standard necessary for the provision of SMT.
- the need to recognise and understand the significance of contraindications, the ability to minimize risk, the ability to administer first and provide appropriate advice and management in the event of a serious complication.
- the ability to provide genuine Informed Consent
- the availability and regulated requirement of public indemnity and malpractice insurance.
- continuing professional education and development.

### **SUGGESTED DEFINITIONS**

Options for a definition are as follows:-

1. No Definition.
2. Spinal Manipulation is a procedure that is only performed by a person registered to perform such restricted practice.
3. As per the NSW Public Health Act.

“the rapid application of a force (whether by manual or mechanical means) to any part of a person’s body that affects a joint or segment of the vertebral column”

4. A manual manoeuvre utilizing a high velocity, low amplitude thrust that affects the vertebral column.

Our recommendations would be option 4.

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