



NSW Physiotherapists Registration Board

Newsletter
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IAN COLLIER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Board is calling for applications for the 2006 Ian Collier Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is open to physiotherapists currently registered in NSW and who have worked in NSW for a minimum of two years full time practice or equivalent within the last five years.

The objective of the scholarship is to encourage research that addresses public safety.

Scholarship Categories:

1. Assistance to publish clinical research activity
2. Study project in the field of physiotherapy
3. Distance learning program for non-metropolitan physiotherapists

Funding:

A maximum of \$10,000 is available annually. Scholarships of up to \$10,000 may be awarded to a single applicant or more than one scholarship may be awarded with a maximum of \$10,000 divided amongst successful applicants. Funding may be granted for a project that extends beyond a 12-month period.

The closing date for applications is 31 July 2006. Notification of the award of the scholarship will be made at the end of September.

Applications, enquiries and requests for an information package can be directed to:

The Registrar
NSW Physiotherapists Registration Board
P.O. Box K599
Haymarket NSW 1238.
Telephone: (02) 9219 0255
Fax: (02) 9281 2030
Email: physioreg@hprb.health.nsw.gov.au

ACUPUNCTURE AND/OR MOXIBUSTION

The Physiotherapy Standards Advisory Committee of the Board recently handled a complaint of unsatisfactory professional conduct of a registered physiotherapist regarding administration of acupuncture with moxibustion to a patient over the thoracic area. The patient developed a pneumothorax following treatment. Issues arising from the complaint included the need to obtain informed consent regarding a change in intervention and the need to have protocols in place to manage an adverse event if it arises.

During investigation of the case several important considerations for public safety emerged regarding the delivery of acupuncture treatment. While some physiotherapists provide acupuncture in the course of delivering physiotherapy, acupuncture and/or moxibustion is not a routine physiotherapy intervention. As there are health risks associated with this treatment modality the Board has a public

safety responsibility to be satisfied that a physiotherapist performing acupuncture is competent to practise safely.

In practising acupuncture, physiotherapists should:

- Have undertaken appropriate education.
- Provide documented information and obtain informed consent for patients undergoing acupuncture and/or moxibustion, particularly when used in high-risk areas. Where treatment changes to include moxibustion or involvement of high risk areas, consent has to be gained again and documented.
- Provide warnings, discuss the risks involved, including for example pneumothorax, and document discussion.
- Provide patients with sufficient time to consider the risks of intervention before proceeding, for instance wait until the next appointment to perform the intervention rather than on the same day that initial information is provided.
- Regularly record in the patient's notes the size of the needles used and location of insertion.
- Observe and monitor closely the patient's response especially for those receiving higher risk treatments.
- Be able to recognise signs and symptoms of an adverse event.
- Develop first aid protocols to manage adverse reactions in patients to thoracic acupuncture or in patients who are at risk of developing serious adverse outcomes.
- Not perform a combination of acupuncture and moxibustion over the thoracic region.
- Undertake periodic refresher courses to remain current with safety and risk reduction issues.

The Board will be liaising with the APA and other institutions in working towards safer practice and development of guidelines for the practice of acupuncture and dry needling

by physiotherapists. In doing so the following will be considered:

- Competencies addressed in the APA courses and Level 1 Foundation Acupuncture Courses for the use of needling over high-risk areas and the management of adverse outcomes.
- First aid training, facilities and protocols incorporated in training programs for physiotherapist in the event that pneumothorax is considered an acceptable risk of acupuncture.
- Possible establishment of specified periods of supervised practice for physiotherapists using wider bore needles and moxibustion.
- The risk of insertion of needles in the thoracic area during various phases of the breath cycle and whether or not there may be a reduced risk if the needles were inserted during breath holding closer to residual volume.
- Possible restrictions on the use of long, wide bore acupuncture needles by physiotherapists and, in particular, bilateral applications over the thorax or other high risk areas until such time as competence can be demonstrated.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS AMENDMENT REGULATION 2006

The Minister of Health recently amended the Physiotherapists Regulation 2002 with regards to hand and skin cleaning. The amended regulation provides that hands may be cleaned by using non-water cleansers or antiseptics, whether or not washing facilities involving water and a soap or antiseptic are available.

BOARD WEBSITE

The Board is currently investigating redevelopment of the website at www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.au to provide more comprehensive information to registrants, consumers and the public in a user friendly format.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS 2005

The Board analysed a sample of 628 registration renewal forms listing professional development activities attended by physiotherapists in 2005. The sample is twice the size of the 2004 survey and the analysis also included several items from the Physiotherapists Labour Force Annual Survey. With the extra data, the Board is able to gain a clearer picture into physiotherapists' PD commitment and activities.

The work profile of the sample consisted of 83% physiotherapists currently working in physiotherapy jobs and 17% not currently working or working in non physiotherapy jobs. Of those working, 80% described their main job as clinical physiotherapists, 13% managers/clinicians, 1% managers/administrators, 2% teachers and 1% researchers. 4% chose "other" but few provided specific details. 17% of the sample had a second job. On average, the sample group had gained their initial physiotherapy qualification 19.1 years ago (ranging from 1 to 53 years ago).

The key findings of the analysis were as follows:

- 75% of physiotherapists indicated that they had engaged in professional development during 2005. This percentage is the same as in 2004.
- However when attendance was assessed in relation to work variables as reported in the Labour Force Survey, an improved picture emerged. Of the 25% of physiotherapists who did not engage in PD in 2005, over half were not working in physiotherapy jobs. When this group was removed from the analysis, the percentage of physiotherapists who had engaged in PD increased to 87%.
- Comparisons were made between those who had and had not engaged in PD during 2005. Generally, those who undertook PD worked more hours per week, were more likely to be members of

a professional association, and had higher levels of education than those who had not undertaken PD.

Membership of a professional association was also related to the type of PD activity with non members apparently more likely to attend employer-initiated events (e.g. in-service), while members were more proactive in attending conferences, undertaking courses, or reading etc.

- The higher level of PD activity compared to 2004, was attributed to the new reporting format. The average physiotherapist (of those who attended at least one activity) attended nearly 18 activities, compared to 5 in 2004. However, this needs to be balanced by the fact that over half the group attended only 10 events or less.
- There were large differences in reports of actual time spent in PD ranging from 2 hours for the year to 388 hours. The average for those who had participated in at least some PD was 66 hours, or just over 1 hour per week. However, time was not reported for publications, research or post graduate study so the average would have been higher.
- The most popular form of PD was in-service training with 68% of physiotherapists indicating they had attended at least one in-service. Reading continued to be popular, although only half of those working in physiotherapy actually read professional journal articles, internet sites etc.
- PD activity related to type and place of work. Those in education attended more conferences, researchers had more publications and research, and manager/administrators had lower amounts of PD than others. Those in public hospitals attended more in-service and journal clubs and those in sports clinics attended more courses and workshops.
- Place of residence seemed to have no effect on the amount of PD activity a physiotherapist engaged in.

The Board is finding the more in-depth analysis useful. There will be some further

refinement in the reporting format this year to include explanatory notes for completion of the form. This is to ensure activities are more clearly defined as it appears these are not always interpreted consistently between respondents.

UPDATE ON THE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF BOARD POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Board is currently reviewing/developing the following policies:

- Physiotherapists and sexual misconduct
- Medicines to be sold supplied or used therapeutically by physiotherapists
- Professional conduct
- Acupuncture

The following guidelines are also being reviewed/developed:

- Application and removal of plaster/casts
- Physiotherapists using therapy assistants
- Use of new or non-traditional interventions in physiotherapy
- Documentation in the Physiotherapy Clinical Record
- Standards of supervision – physiotherapy students

PRIVATE PRACTICE FEE STRUCTURES – INFORMATION TO PATIENTS

Physiotherapists should, as far as practicable, inform patients, or those involved in arranging 3rd party payments, in advance of any proposed services of the schedule of fees.

REGISTRATION FEE INCREASES

The Minister of Health in consultation with the Board recently announced physiotherapy registration fee increases, effective from 1 May 2006. The new fees are the first for physiotherapists in NSW in twelve years. The increase is necessary for the Board to fulfil its responsibilities under the Physiotherapists Act 2001. The fees approved are:

Annual renewal	\$100
Registration	\$110
Mutual recognition	\$110
Trans Tasman mutual recognition	\$110
Re-registration	\$100
Late fee	\$150
Temporary registration	\$ 70

Even with the increase, NSW fees are generally less than those for other States.

STATISTICS

As at 31 May 2006 a total of 6600 Physiotherapists were registered in NSW. For the period 1 Jan 2006 – 31 March 2006 there were 245 new registrations, as follows:

181	NSW graduates
12	Interstate graduates
38	Mutual Recognition
26	Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition
1	Overseas graduate

Copies of the NSW Physiotherapists Act 2001 and Regulations can be obtained:

1. from the Government Information Service Bookshop, Goodsell Building, Hunter Street, Sydney.
2. by phone and charged to a credit card by: Calling (02) 92380950 in Sydney or Freecall 1800463955 outside Sydney or
3. online at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

Visit the NSW Physiotherapists Registration Board website:

www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.auT

Please note that the Board has a new email address: physioreg@hprb.health.nsw.gov.au

