



NSW Physiotherapists Registration Board

Newsletter
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PAYING YOUR REGISTRATION FEE BY B-PAY?

When physiotherapists renew their registration each year they must complete an annual declaration which includes information that legislation requires the Board to collect eg information about any criminal proceedings, impairment, professional development activity and, from October 2007, professional indemnity insurance details.

However, with the convenience of B-pay, over 500 physiotherapists did not complete their annual declaration when they renewed their registration during 2006. The Board has had to follow up these physiotherapists for annual declarations. A number of physiotherapists have still not returned their declarations and the Board will be conducting interviews to determine what further action is to be taken.

If you paid your registration fee by B-pay in 2007, please remember to also complete and return the annual declaration.

IAN COLLIER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Board is pleased to announce the successful applicant of the Ian Collier Memorial Scholarship. Two applications were received and after careful consideration the Board granted the scholarship to Nicole Harvey, under category 1, assistance to publish physiotherapy research. She was awarded \$10,000 for her project, Intrarater and interrater reliability of physiotherapists using "A Method of Clubfoot Evaluation" (Pirani et al, 1994) to assess children with congenital talipes equinovarus (CTEV). Her project aims to examine the intrarater and interrater reliability of

physiotherapists using ACME to score digital photographs of infants' feet, and to provide support for rural and sole paediatric physiotherapists. Preliminary results have provided clinically significant and clinically relevant information indicating that ACME can be used reliably by physiotherapists. Nicole wishes to publish the results in a scientific journal to allow clinician access to this important information and the Board looks forward to the positive outcome.

FUNDING FOR PEDro

PEDro will again receive support from the Board for 2008 to assist physiotherapists to access reliable evidence based information.

CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

Health-care associated infection is a serious disease burden with significant impact on patients and health systems. In recognition of this the Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC), Department of Health launched a major 'hand hygiene' campaign 'Clean hands saves lives'. An Expert Group, established by the NSW Minister for Health to advise on all aspects of preventing and controlling infections, identified the need to improve hand hygiene amongst all healthcare workers including physiotherapists. The CEC states that reducing the spread of germs in hospitals and serious infections amongst patients is vital for improving patient safety and hand decontamination has been demonstrated to prevent the spread of infectious agents in clinical settings for over 150 years.

Physiotherapists have a high 'hands on' approach in patient care and it is vital that they are vigilant in cleaning their hands before and after each patient contact. Good hand hygiene

involves using either alcohol-based rub or soap-and-water to help stop the spread of germs, thus reducing infections. To make hand hygiene a success in controlling infection, a team approach is important. Physiotherapists should encourage patients and visitors to join in and if you see another staff member not complying, you are encouraged to give a gentle reminder.

The Board reminds physiotherapists of their professional obligation to meet infection control standards. Failure to comply would risk censure for professional misconduct and possible de-registration. More information on infection control, multiple resistant organisms and hand washing are available on the NSW Health Website:<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/ha/index.html>

OCCUPATIONAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING VACCINATIONS POLICY DIRECTIVE

NSW Health is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all clients in health care settings and providing a safe and healthy work environment for all staff. This commitment includes adopting an assessment, screening and vaccination policy that minimises the risk of acquiring infectious diseases. It has recently released the new Policy Directive PD2007_006 Occupational Assessment Screening & Vaccination Against Specified Infectious Diseases, which replaces PD2005_338. The policy aims to:

- 1) Assist employers to meet their OH&S obligations and their duty of care to staff, clients and other users of health service premises and
- 2) Advise staff of their rights and responsibilities in meeting these OH&S and duty of care requirements.

The policy applies to existing, new or agency contracted staff, students on clinical placements, volunteers and people on work experience in health settings. These people will have to provide proof of vaccination status for the following infectious diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Hepatitis B
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella

- Tuberculosis
- Varicella
- Influenza (annual)

Acceptable evidence of protection against specified infectious diseases includes a written record of vaccination signed by the provider and/or serological confirmation of protection. Overseas applicants applying for work and registration must also be made aware of the requirements prior to their arrival in Australia.

For those of you who are familiar with the old policy, the following are the key changes in the revision:

- The addition of a recommendation regarding an adult vaccine against pertussis.
- Specification of clinical areas to which unprotected staff must not be deployed without approval of the Area Chief Executive.
- Specification of employer, staff and other clinical personnel (eg students, agency personnel and other contractors) responsibilities with regard to meeting the cost of screening and vaccination.
- A requirement that compliance with the policy directive be made an essential criterion for recruitment of new staff.
- A requirement that contractual agreements with agencies ensure only staff who comply with the policy directive in respect of level of protection for the specified infectious disease are provided.

Further information can be obtained from http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/ohs_vaccination/

TAKEN A WALK TO THE BOARD WEBSITE?

The Board's website www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.au is being expanded to provide more information to physiotherapists and consumers. Additions include:

- Stop Press - latest issues impacting on physiotherapists.
- Search the register - information about a physiotherapist's registration status and whether there are conditions on practice. Employers will find this handy when checking on staff registrations.
- Reports.
- Other Documents.

The other sections are constantly being updated. In relation to policies/guidelines, new and revised ones have recently been sent to registrants. If you have not received them please contact the Board or print off the website.

The documents are:

- Physiotherapists and Sexual Misconduct
- Medicines to be Sold, Supplied, or Used Therapeutically by Physiotherapists
- Policy on Professional Conduct
- Guidelines for the Application, Modification and Removal of Plasters/Casts
- Use of New or Non-traditional Interventions in Physiotherapy

A JOB WELL DONE

The Board is proud and pleased to announce that the following Board staff were nominated for a NSW Health Award for Excellence in appreciation of outstanding service.

Sue Hardman (Registrar)

Jennifer Caldwell (Deputy Registrar)

Sue Toohey, Jean Letts-Littlefield, Brad Skidmore (Assistants to the Registrar)

The Board has numerous responsibilities and functions to fulfill and the work of Board members is supported by staff who carry out the day-to-day operations. These operational functions are in the very capable hands of Ms Sue Hardman, Board Registrar who has worked tirelessly for the Board for many years. She is very knowledgeable and meticulous in her work and very professional in her approach. She is backed up by a great team and their positive contribution is very much appreciated. Congratulations to Sue and staff for a job well done.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

You will note that you have recently been sent your annual renewal notice, which requests that you provide information on your current professional indemnity insurance arrangements.

On 1 September 2007 The *Health Care Liability Regulation 2001* was repealed and the new *Health Care Liability Regulation 2007* commenced. Changes have been made to the numbering of the clauses. The Regulation specifies the classes of health practitioners who are required under section 25 of the *Health Care*

Liability Act to be covered by approved professional indemnity insurance and the classes of health practitioners who are exempt from that requirement.

Since the introduction of this new requirement, the Board has received numerous questions from physiotherapists regarding their insurance status.

Please visit the Board's website to find more information about PII, including frequently asked questions (FAQ's)

STATISTICS - THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 2007

As at 8 January 2008 a total of 6,806 physiotherapists are registered in NSW. There were 438 new registrations, as follows:

263	NSW graduates
30	Interstate graduates
85	Mutual Recognition
42	Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition
18	Overseas graduates

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

1. Online at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.
2. From the Government Information Service Bookshop, SALMAT, Level 3, 2-24 Rawson Place, Sydney NSW 2000.
3. By calling 1300 656 986 and charging to a credit card.

Visit the NSW Physiotherapists Registration Board website:

www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.au

