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**Australasian Podiatry Council**

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Browyn Nardi  
Chair  
Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee  
of the Health Workforce Principal Committee

## **Other Matters for inclusion into Bill B**

**Following are responses from by the Australasian Podiatry Council to issues raised in the *CONSULTATION PAPER* – ‘Other matters for inclusion in Bill B’ have been addressed.**

Should you have any queries on this submission, I can be contacted on 03 94163111 or mobile 0411 741815 and kelli@apodc.com.au.

Yours sincerely

**Kelli Cheales**  
CEO  
Australasian Podiatry Council

23<sup>th</sup> December 2008

## Submission on Consultation Paper – “Other matters for inclusion in Bill B”

**Proposal 3.5.1:** *It is proposed that the second stage legislation provide a broad delegation power (as in Clause 46 of the National Law Bill), that would allow a national board to delegate any of its functions, including all of the key decisions listed above, to committees of the board or to staff or other persons, other than the power of delegation. Under such an arrangement, a board would have the discretion to determine the constraints or boundaries placed on any delegation, as well as the number and make up of any committees it requires in order to make key decisions listed above.*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 3.5.2:** *It is proposed that the only statutory committees in the new scheme would be panels convened for the purposes of hearing individual matters (health, performance or conduct).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 3.5.3:** *It is proposed that the legislation require a minimum of three members on a panel for the purposes of statutory decision-making with at least 50 per cent and no more than two thirds of the members being registrants from the profession concerned and at least one member being a community member.*

**APodC Comment:** While APodC agrees with the requirements contained above regarding registrants and community members, we believe that a larger, yet still uneven, number of members on a panel convened for the purposes of statutory decision making, would be more ideal. APodC believes the ideal number of members for such a panel would be five.

**Proposal 3.5.4:** *It is proposed that the legislation provide that a panel should not include any person who was a member of the board or committee that took the decision to refer the matter to the panel.*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 3.5.5:** *It is proposed that where a board establishes any committee other than a statutory committee or panel that the composition is not prescribed in legislation but rather is a matter for the board to determine in line with any directions from Ministerial Council.*

**APodC Comment:** APodC would recommend that any panel or committee convened by a national board include in its composition at least one registrant of the relevant profession, and that this requirement be included in legislation.

**Proposal 3.6.1:** *It is proposed that the legislation provide for safeguards relating to the delegation of board powers as follows:*

- *a delegation must be in writing and specify the person or persons to whom the delegation made, the decision or decisions that may be taken under delegation, and*

*the period to which the delegation relates, as well as any conditions the board has attached to the exercise of the decision making under delegation, and include the ability to rescind a delegation*

- *a right of review for a person whose interests are affected by a decision made under delegation similar to the rights of review against decisions of the board itself (with powers for the board to delegate the conduct of such a review)*
- *a statutory limit on the length of time a practitioner's registration may be suspended without review by the board (or delegate of the board)*
- *a right of review for key registration and panel hearing decisions, as outlined in section 10 of the complaints consultation paper, to the relevant State or Territory tribunal for decision*
- *general and specific provisions with respect to conflicts of interest that require a person to exclude themselves from decision-making in the event of a conflict, including, for example, where a small number of practitioners operate in a single geographical area, and*
- *general provisions with respect to procedural fairness, such as separation of powers between original decision making and review of decisions.*

**APodC Comment:** APodC agree with all the provisions contained in the above proposal.

**Proposal 4.1.1:** *With respect to advisory committees, it is proposed that the legislation, while providing powers for boards to establish such committees, would be silent on the process through which a board might select members of its advisory committees. This would afford a board maximum flexibility to determine their terms of appointment.*

**APodC Comment:** While APodC recognises the need for flexibility in the appointment of members to advisory committees, APodC would strongly recommend that all appointments are made through an open and transparent process consistent with processes used for appointments to other committees or panels convened by national boards.

**Proposal 4.1.2:** *The stakeholders are asked to advise of their preferred option for appointments to committees to which board powers are delegated.*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports Option 1, which provides for an open and transparent process consistent with processes used for appointments to other committees or panels convened by national boards.

**Proposal 4.1.3:** *Stakeholders are requested to advise of their preferred option for appointments to statutory hearing panels.*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports Option 1, as per proposal 4.1.2.

**Proposal 5.2.1:** *With respect to freedom of information, it is proposed that the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act apply (Option 1).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 5.2.2:** *With respect to confidentiality and lawful disclosure, it is proposed that tailor made provisions along the lines of Clause 53 of the National Law Bill be included in the second stage legislation (Option 4).*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports tailor made provisions in principle, but would like to see the composition of such provisions before offering specific support.

**Proposal 5.2.3:** *With respect to the application of a privacy regime, it is proposed that the existing Commonwealth private sector privacy regime and the National Privacy Principles apply, and are incorporated by reference into the national scheme legislation (Option 1).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 5.2.4:** *With respect to ombudsman legislation, it is proposed that the Commonwealth Ombudsman Act 1976 apply (Option 1).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 5.2.5:** *With respect to financial accountability, it is proposed that tailor made provisions be included in the second stage legislation (Option 4).*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports tailor made provisions in principle, but would like to see the composition of such provisions before offering specific support.

**Proposal 5.2.6:** *With respect to the employment arrangements and accountability of staff and board members under the scheme, it is proposed that tailor made provisions be included in the second stage legislation (Option 4).*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports tailor made provisions in principle, but would like to see the composition of such provisions before offering specific support.

**Proposal 5.2.7:** *With respect to statutory interpretation, it is proposed that tailor made provisions be included in the second stage legislation (Option 4).*

**APodC Comment:** APodC supports tailor made provisions in principle, but would like to see the composition of such provisions before offering specific support.

**Proposal 5.2.8:** *With respect to warrant powers, it is proposed that the national scheme legislation require application for a warrant to be made via existing State and Territory legislation (Option 2).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 5.2.9:** *With respect to working with children legislation, it is proposed that existing State and Territory legislation, where it exists, continues to apply (Option 2).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 5.2.10:** *With respect to special events legislation, it is proposed that existing State and Territory legislation, where it exists, continues to apply (Option 2).*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

**Proposal 6.1:** *It is proposed that the national scheme legislation and any consequential amendments be framed in a way that allows for the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Principle, and preserves the linkages between Australian and New Zealand regulatory authorities and supports joint standard setting and accreditation.*

**APodC Comment:** Agree.

APodC has extensive experience working within the context of the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement, and would be willing to take part in any work associated with area.

....ends