

17 November 2008

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
Ms Bronwyn Nardi
Chair
Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee
Health Workforce Principal Committee

NRAIP@dhs.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Nardi

Re: Consultation paper on proposed arrangements for handling complaints, and dealing with performance, health and conduct matters.

Thank you for the consultation paper dated 7 October 2008 inviting submissions for consideration on Proposed arrangements for handling complaints, and dealing with performance, health and conduct matters.

The New South Wales Podiatrists Registration Board wishes to make the following submission in relation to the Board's view.

Proposal 2.1

The Podiatrists Registration Board of NSW (PRBNSW) supports the introduction of the term 'notification' to describe a matter referred to the Board about a registered practitioner. PRBNSW believes that the use of this term is more inclusive than the word complaint and will assist the Board to manage not only complaints but also self-notification of impairment and other matters brought before the Board.

Proposal 3

The PRBNSW supports the procedure outlined in section three of the discussion paper with respect to the organisation of the notifications handling procedure. The PRBNSW would also support the introduction of clear guidelines under these procedures or within another area of the legislation outlining under which circumstances the Boards can refer matters to the crown for prosecution.

Proposal 4

4.3.1 The PRBNSW supports the outlined circumstances under which a notification may be made to the Board. The PRBNSW would also support the introduction of disputes between clients and practitioners with regard to treatment as being a form of notification. The PRBNSW believes that the conflict resolution procedures and assisted resolution provided by the PRBNSW and the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) (NSW) to be a very valuable procedure that may be weakened if it is not adopted into the national system.

4.4

The PRBNSW supports Option 1A.

4.7.1

The PRBNSW supports the introduction of immediate suspension powers and recommends that the time limit of said suspensions be left to the Board's discretion.

Proposal 5.5

The PRBNSW believes that the system outlined in this proposal will dilute the current powers of the HCCC (NSW) and will lead to reduced protection of the public. The PRBNSW supports the continuation of the current powers of the HCCC (NSW) and believe that the HCCC (NSW) should continue to be the prosecuting body.

Proposal 5.6

The PRBNSW supports option 1.

Proposal 7.1.2

The PRBNSW supports option 2.

Proposal 8.3.2

The PRBNSW supports the continued role of Inspectors under the Board. Currently inspectors provide random inspection of registrants' practices particularly with respect to infection control, use of title and advertising. The PRBNSW would like to see this role expanded to include matters associated with continuing education and mandatory professional development.

Proposal 9.1.1

The PRBNSW supports option 2

Proposal 9.1.2

The PRBNSW supports the introduction of powers for Boards of different professions to collaborate when investigating multi-professional/multi-discipline complaints.

Proposal 9.3

The PRBNSW supports option 4b.

Proposal 9.4

The PRBNSW supports the concept that panels are closed to the public to protect privacy. However the PRBNSW believes that Tribunals should remain open to the public and the outcomes of a Tribunal published in the public domain.

Proposal 11.6.1

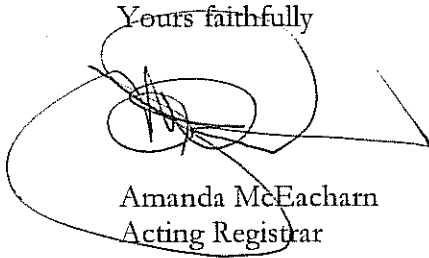
The PRBNSW supports option 1.

Proposal 12.1

The PRBNSW supports the proposed transitional arrangements to allow all matters currently before the state Boards prior to 1 July 2010 to be completed under current arrangements.

If you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me on 02 9219 0206.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda McEacharn', is written over a circular stamp or seal. The signature is somewhat stylized and overlaps the stamp.

Amanda McEacharn
Acting Registrar