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# CHIROPRACTORS REGISTRATION BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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## **National Registration & Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions**

### **Consultation Paper on Proposed Registration Arrangements**

#### **Submission by the Chiropractors Registration Board of WA (CRBWA)**

#### **4. Initial registration**

##### **4.1 Applications for registration**

The Chiropractors Registration Board of Western Australia (“CRBWA”) supports the making of enquiries regarding registration on line but has concerns regarding authentication of documentation and identification of applicants in an on-line application process. Fail proof procedures would need to be developed to enable direct verification of the information detailed below in 4.2.

CRBWA supports the availability of on-line re-registration with payment by BPay or other electronic transfer. There needs to be a means for making legal declarations incorporated into this process to cover issues such as competency, fitness to practice, convictions, PI insurance etc.

##### **4.2 Information required on initial application**

CRBWA supports the information required in 4.2.1 for initial application for registration, other than the workforce data requirement in f. At present Chiropractors are not required to provide any workforce data and question why this would be a requirement of registration. In addition, at present many documents are required to be originals or certified copies. Will that still be a requirement?

##### **4.3 Criminal history checks**

CRBWA supports Option 3. CRBWA considers that criminal history checks, by way of National Police Certificates, are important on initial registration as Chiropractors are often in close relationships with vulnerable members of the public. It is preferable to obtain a declaration from the practitioner every year rather than obtaining criminal history checks every year.

#### **5. Qualifications for registration**

It is noted that the IGA proposes that the Ministerial Council will assign accreditation functions to existing accreditation bodies. All State and Territory Registration Boards have been utilising the services of the Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia (“CCEA”) to undertake this accreditation task. In addition to accrediting courses it also assists the boards in accessing individual’s qualifications and conducting examinations for foreign trained practitioners and the Board will register practitioners on the basis of successful completion of that examination. CRBWA considers that this arrangement provides transparency to the process of assessing individual applicants’ qualifications and believes that whilst the Board has ultimate responsibility for registering purposes,

the legislation should provide for the Board to seek independent advice before making a decision on an individual's qualification.

CRBWA supports the proposal that the national board has the power to prescribe the necessary qualifications, periods of internships and examinations required for registration.

## **6. Registration decisions**

### **6.1 Powers of boards before deciding applications for registration**

CRBWA supports the powers outlined in 6.1.1 and supports the term "health assessment".

### **6.2 Who makes registration decisions?**

CRBWA supports the proposed structure for local committees responsible for registration. Such committees should be paid sitting fees and allowances, but CRBWA questions whether sitting fees should be set by Ministerial Council. Sitting fees should be set by the National Board within the budget process. CRBWA is also of the view that the Chair of the Board and this committee should be a registrant.

CRBWA supports the power of the Board to be able to delegate, in writing, the registration powers with regard to routine registrations to a member of a board or committee or an employee or contractor to the national agency. This is important to allow timely processing of applications.

### **6.3 Professional indemnity insurance**

CRBWA supports compulsory PI Insurance and supports the national board issuing a guideline regarding suitable arrangements

### **6.4 Powers to refuse to grant registration**

CRBWA supports the grounds listed in 6.4.1 for refusal of registration save for e and f where CRBWA is of the view that firstly it should only relate to disciplinary proceedings and only to disciplinary proceedings which are such that , if proved, it would not be in the public interest to allow the applicant to practice in the regulated profession. CRBWA considers the present wording is too broad and could lead to a practitioner who, if the proceedings had been finalised, may have been found to have performance which was unsatisfactory, but not of such a serious nature as to amount to professional misconduct or unsatisfactory professional misconduct.

CRBWA strongly supports the Board having powers to refuse an applicant's fraudulent application and refer the matter to the police.

## **7. Types of registration granted**

At present, under the current Chiropractors Act Provisional Registration is only for those situations where an applicant has not provided the Board with all requisite evidence, however it is likely to occur. This is normally the case with new graduates, whose degree has not been conferred, but will be.

Conditional registration currently covers applicants who seek registration for the purposes of teaching or lecturing.

### **7.2 Specific registration**

CRBWA supports a "specific registration" for the registration of students who are required to practise under a supervision plan, however considers the title "limited registration" to be preferable.

### **7.3 Non-practising registration**

CRBWA supports a category of non practising registration being available and strongly considers that such registrants should not practise at all.

### **7.4 Student registration**

CRBWA supports Option 2 but only for students undertaking practical training where they are interacting with members of the public.

## **8. Authorities conferred by registration**

### **8.1 Title protection**

CRBWA supports the protection of the title Chiropractor and the catchall provision. It is important that the public is protected from individuals who use terminology which implies that they have the skills of a registered Chiropractor. CRBWA supports the use of the courtesy title ‘doctor’ for Chiropractors only where it is used in conjunction with the words ‘chiropractor’ or ‘chiropractic’.

### **8.5 Restrictions on spinal manipulation**

Unless it can be proved inconclusively that spinal manipulation should not be protected, CRBWA is of the view that the risks of allowing unqualified persons from manipulating the spine is obvious.

### **9.1 Continuing competence requirements**

CRBWA supports continuing professional competence and understands that this would be measured by a recency of practice requirement and a CPD requirement. CRBWA believes any CPD requirement would be dependant upon the capacity for such CPD to be available to practitioners in remote and regional Australia.

CRBWA supports proposal 9.4.3 other than it believes the word “medical” in b should be changed to “health” and should be extended to include the words “or a personal injuries claim”

## **10. Endorsement of registration**

CRBWA supports the use of specialist titles provided they are only used by Registered Chiropractors who have attained the speciality from additional training at a level set by the National Board.

CRBWA supports proposal 10.3.1. This would allow highly specialised procedures and techniques to be regulated to ensure that only those with appropriate training are endorsed. CRBWA supports the use of endorsement to general registration to cover other areas of practice.

## **11. Other matters**

### **11.1 Duration of registration**

CRBWA considers this to be an administrative nightmare. History would show that where staggered renewal dates have existed it has substantially increased the workload for Board staff. In addition registrants have got used to an annual renewal date (June 30) and can plan and organise for payment of renewals in those circumstances where they may be away at renewal date. It is unlikely that they will remember the anniversary date of their registration.

CRBWA supports the imposition of a penalty for non notification of change of address.

CRBWA supports the requirement for a practice address.

CRBWA would prefer to see an easy process for restoration to the register and a grace period of 1 month.

#### **11.4 Reinstatement to the register**

CRBWA supports the first proposal with a period of five years given that the current recency of practice requirements is 5 years. CRBWA, however, questions whether, if a non-practicing registrant requirement is to be introduced, the period should not be reduced to 1 year, as a person could always change their status rather than letting their registration lapse.