



**The following members of the Physiotherapists Board were appointed on 6 September 2004 for a term of four years.**

Professor Bill Vicenzino (Chairperson)

Ms Kathy Grudzinskas (Deputy Chairperson)

Ms Glenys Cockfield

Professor Gwendolen Jull

Ms Jane Leow

Mr Robert Thams

Mr Geoff Rowe (Public Member)

Mrs Margaret Sifter (Public Member)

Mr Chris O'Brien (Lawyer)

### FROM THE CHAIR

Over the past year, the trend for a steady increase (5.4%) in the number of registered physiotherapists continues, with most (78%) located in south east Qld. As well as these facts and information, this newsletter provides some indication of the Board's activities over the past 12 months. A key concern for health care in Queensland is the documented and palpable workforce shortage of physiotherapists, one manifestation being the increase in entry-level programs and another the re-entry into the workforce of previously registered practitioners who have not engaged in the practice of the profession for a considerable period of time. The latter presents a challenge to the Board in the discharge of its duties to subserve the objects of the Act, as enunciated under the *Physiotherapists Registration Act 2001*, which are to protect the community, ensure standards of practice and competence, and also to maintain public confidence in the profession of physiotherapy. The Board is engaged in a number of activities to meet the challenge of ensuring re-entry into the workforce that complies with the Act; for example, as reported in this newsletter, the Research Funding Scheme has particularly targeted this area, and information regarding the issues is being circulated to key people in the community. The Board continues to be proactive in the education of entry-level physiotherapists by providing to the candidates of all entry-level university physiotherapy programs in Queensland a lecture presentation and the resource pack. Finally, the Board has a strong desire to prevent registrants acting in such ways that may expose themselves to being the cause of a complaint; much of the information contained herein and at the Board's website may be viewed in this light.

Bill Vicenzino  
Chairperson

### RESEARCH GRANTS

In accordance with the Board's Research Funding Scheme which was established in June 2005, the Board recently advertised for applications for its second research grant on *Re-entry Training – Physiotherapy*. This grant will support research to a maximum of \$100,000 per annum for up to three years. The Board's priority

is to fund research that focuses on training programs that are relevant to a person's eligibility for registration and on models for re-education of practitioners who have been absent from the workforce for extended periods of time.

The application period closed on 26 February 2007 and the Board is currently considering the applications received.

### RE-ENTRY INTO THE PROFESSION

The Board's primary responsibility under the *Physiotherapists Registration Act 2001* is "to protect the public by ensuring health care is delivered by registrants in a professional, safe and competent way".

When the Board considers an application for registration, it is obliged to ensure that the applicant is qualified and is fit to practise the profession. To determine an applicant's fitness to practise the profession, namely that the applicant is competent and safe to practice, the Board must take into consideration a number of issues. In particular, one issue that the Board must address is the nature, extent and period of any practice of the profession that the applicant has undertaken since the applicant qualified.

The Board, in working within the constraints of the legislation, is currently considering options that may allow the Board to assess an applicant's competence to re-enter the profession when the applicant has not been registered to practise for some time. Once an applicant's competence has been assessed, the Board is then in a position to determine if the applicant meets the requirements for registration and whether any conditions need to be imposed on the registration.

As soon as the Board has a resolution to this challenging issue, information will be circulated.

### NEW POLICIES / GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE BOARD

On 24 August 2006 the Board endorsed the Australian Physiotherapy Association Position Statement for "Physiotherapists issuing Sick Leave Certificates" (refer [www.apa.advsol.com.au](http://www.apa.advsol.com.au)).

In 2006 the Board had drafted a policy on assistants in physiotherapy practices/services. The Board has subsequently responded to an Australian Physiotherapy Council document on assistants in physiotherapy which is being developed in consultation with the Board, the Council and the Australian Physiotherapy Association.

### NATIONAL REGISTRATION

On 14 July 2006 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed that, to facilitate workforce mobility, improve safety and quality and reduce red tape, a single national registration and accreditation scheme for health professionals, beginning with nine professions currently registered in all Australian jurisdictions,

would be established by 1 July 2008. The nine professions are: chiropractors, dental care, medicine, nursing, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy and psychology.

The Australian Physiotherapy Council (APC), on behalf of the profession, has participated in consultation sessions with the COAG Health Working Group, as well as providing submissions addressing key issues on national registration and national accreditation. The latest submission addressed such issues as scopes of practice, reserved titles, reserved practices, offences and exemptions that should apply under the national scheme.

It is anticipated that the final model will be announced within the next few months.

## REGENCY OF PRACTICE

The introduction in April 2008 of recency of practice requirements of Queensland's 38,000 registered health practitioners is on schedule following a second round of consultation on the issue.

The consultation process has been staged deliberately over some years to allow practitioners in the regulated health professions an opportunity to identify and undertake appropriate continuing professional education.

For the same reason, the requirement will not be introduced before next year's annual registration renewal period for general registrants, from 30 April to 30 June 2008. This will provide a further 14 months for practitioners to undertake appropriate education to meet requirements.

The Boards are seeking to introduce a requirement that every practitioner who applies for registration or to renew registration must, at the time of application, be able to show that they have practised their profession - while registered - within the last five years.

Practitioners who cannot meet this requirement will be required to remedy this by undertaking activity such as an examination, a return to practice course, continuing professional development and/or accepting conditions on practice before registration will be granted.

By introducing recency of practice requirements, each Board is acting to fulfill its duty under its respective registration Act - to ensure safe and competent practice by registrants and to maintain the public's confidence in the profession.

In February 2005, Queensland's 13 health practitioner registration Boards released a discussion paper on the issue of recency of practice for feedback to help develop a draft policy. Feedback on the discussion paper was collated and distributed, with the draft policy, for consultation from November 2006 to end January 2007.

The Boards will now review information provided by members of the 18 regulated health professions, professional associations and the community. This second round of feedback will inform the final recency of practice policy which will be referred to Queensland Health to develop into a Regulation.

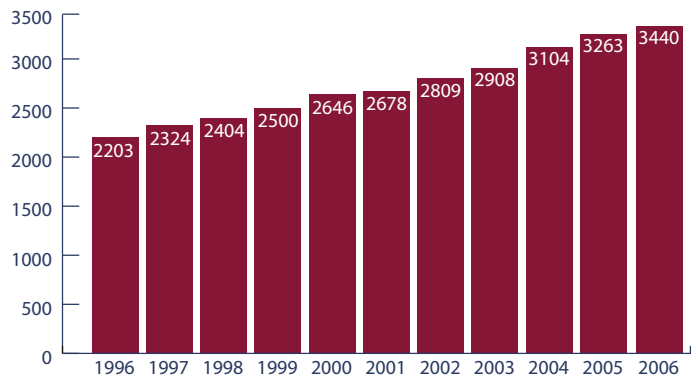
Information on recency of practice can be viewed at individual Board websites by choosing the relevant Board at [www.healthregboards.qld.gov.au](http://www.healthregboards.qld.gov.au).

**\*\*Note:** There are 18 health professions regulated in Queensland by 13 registration Boards. They are chiropractors, dental (comprising dentists, dental auxiliaries and dental specialists), dental technicians, dental prosthetists (regulated by the Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Board), medical, medical radiation technology (comprising medical imaging technology, nuclear medicine technology and radiation therapy), occupational therapists, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists and speech pathologists

## SHORT TERM REGISTRATION

From 1 March 2007, physiotherapists may apply for general or special purpose registration for short-term registration of up to 5 weeks, for which no application fee or registration fee will apply. In approving such applications, the Board must be satisfied that the applicant has a good reason for a period of registration of that length.

## NUMBER OF REGISTERED REGISTRANTS



### Gender

28% of registrants were male and 72% of registrants were female.

### Age groupings

Age grouping	% of registrants
Under 25 years	6%
25 – 34 years	36%
35 – 44 years	26%
45 – 54 years	22%
55 years and over	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Geographical distribution

- 78% of registrants gave their addresses on the Register as within south east Queensland (postcodes 4000 to 4399 and 4500 to 4581), comprising 49% within Brisbane and 29% elsewhere in south east Queensland;
- 14% of registrants had Queensland addresses outside south east Queensland; and
- 8% of registrants had addresses outside Queensland.



## ADVERTISING

Registrants are reminded that all advertising of a professional service must comply with the advertising provisions (sections 128 & 129) of the *Physiotherapists Registration Act 2001*. A copy of the Act is available on the website [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au). If registrants are unsure whether their advertising complies with the Act, they should seek their own legal advice.

## IMPLICATION OF PRACTISING WITHOUT REGISTRATION

A physiotherapist who fails to pay the renewal fee and continues to practise as if still registered is, in accordance with the legislation, "holding out" and/or "claiming" to be a physiotherapist and therefore is in breach of section 121 of the *Physiotherapists Registration Act 2001*.

Section 121 of the Act relates to the use of a "restricted title". The titles "physiotherapist" and "physical therapist" are restricted titles under the Act and a person must be registered to use these titles.

If a person does use a restricted title without being registered, they are in breach of section 121 of the Act and, if prosecuted, a maximum penalty of \$75,000 may be imposed.

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Over the past few years, the Board has received a number of complaints from employers regarding the performance of their registrant employees. The complaints related to concerns over time management, communication skills, conflict resolution, capacity and performance of the registrants.

Following investigation, the Board determined that, based upon the material provided, the registrants were competent to practice physiotherapy, did not present a safety risk to the public and the circumstances did not warrant action by the Board.

The employment relationship requires effective management of staff when performance is not satisfactory. Correctly applied, performance management programs facilitate improved employee capability through setting specific measurable goals related to identified deficits. The Board recommends that employers develop and implement policies and procedures enabling the effective and reasonable performance management of staff. Employers should also train their managers, supervisors and senior physiotherapists in effective performance management, according to relevant policies.

The Board's primary function relates to registration of physiotherapists and protecting the public by ensuring health care is delivered by registrants in a professional, safe and competent way. The employment relationship enables employers to performance manage registrants, and the Board's role is limited in relation to these matters.

## COMPLAINTS

The Board received five new complaints under the Professional Standards Act in 2005-06. The following table outlines the source and nature of the complaints received.

Source of complaint/information	Number of complaints received 2005-06	Nature of complaints
Consumer or consumer's representative	0	
Other entity	4	2 x inappropriate commercial activities 1 x competence 1 x standard of care/facilities
Referred by Health Rights Commission (HRC)	1	1 x sexual assault
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	

The following table indicates the primary issues identified in ongoing and new complaints investigated by the Board.

Nature of investigations conducted	Number
Sexual harassment	2
Sexual assault	2
Inappropriate commercial activities	1
Incorrect treatment	1
Competence	1
Standard of care/facilities	1

## RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

The application for renewal of registration forms are distributed to registrants in late April. These forms must be completed and **RECEIVED BY THE OFFICE BY 30 JUNE 2007**. Failure to renew by 30 June results in:

- a registrant having to apply for restoration to the register;
- restoration to the register incurs an additional fee; and
- the registrant has a "gap" in their registration from 30 June until the date of restoration.

**REMINDER: Registrants must complete the mandatory disclosure on the renewal of registration form stating whether they suffer from any ongoing medical condition, of which they are aware, or know or ought reasonably to know adversely affects their ability to competently and safely practise the profession. If such a condition is notified to the Board, registration is renewed, but the Board may deal with the matter under Part 7 of the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* which relates to the management of impaired registrants.**

The renewal form will be available on the Board's website [www.physioboard.qld.gov.au](http://www.physioboard.qld.gov.au) at the beginning of May each year.



## MANDATORY NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD

**NOTE: Physiotherapists are no longer required to notify the Board of a business name providing a professional service.**

Registrants are required to notify the Board in the following circumstances:

- change of name (within 21 days);
- change of address (within 21 days);
- the withdrawal or cancellation of qualification for registration (within 21 days);
- conviction of an indictable offence (within 30 days);
- if a party to proceedings in court claiming damages or compensation for alleged negligence in the practice of the profession and in which either a judgement has been delivered or in respect of which there has been a settlement of the proceedings or part of the proceedings (within 30 days); or
- if you are registered under a corresponding law and your registration, licence or certification under that law is affected by disciplinary action or is otherwise cancelled, suspended or made subject to a condition or an undertaking (within 30 days).

## MOVING INTERSTATE OR TO NEW ZEALAND

If you are intending to practise in another State, Territory or in New Zealand, please contact the relevant Board for details on applying for registration under the mutual recognition or the Trans Tasman mutual recognition arrangements.

### Physiotherapists Registration Board of NSW

Tel: (02) 9219 0255  
Fax: (02) 9211 9318  
E-mail: [physioreg@hprb.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:physioreg@hprb.health.nsw.gov.au)  
Website: [www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.physioreg.health.nsw.gov.au)

### Physiotherapists Registration Board of Victoria

Tel: (03) 9286 1888  
Fax: (03) 9286 1880  
E-mail: [registrar@physioboard.vic.gov.au](mailto:registrar@physioboard.vic.gov.au)  
Website: [www.physioboard.vic.gov.au](http://www.physioboard.vic.gov.au)

### Physiotherapists Registration Board of Tasmania

Tel: (03) 6224 9331  
Fax: (03) 6231 3565  
Email: [physio@regboardstas.com](mailto:physio@regboardstas.com)  
Website: [www.physioboard.tas.gov.au](http://www.physioboard.tas.gov.au)

### Physiotherapists Board of South Australia

Tel: (08) 8274 1488  
Fax: (08) 8372 6677  
E-mail: [jbailey@gtasa.com.au](mailto:jbailey@gtasa.com.au)  
Website: [www.physioboardsa.org.au](http://www.physioboardsa.org.au)

### Physiotherapists Registration Board of Western Australia

Tel: (08) 9368 2644  
Fax: (08) 9368 2677  
E-mail: [enquiries@prbwa.com.au](mailto:enquiries@prbwa.com.au)  
Website: [www.prbwa.com.au](http://www.prbwa.com.au)

### Physiotherapists Board of ACT

Tel: (026) 205 1601  
Fax: (026) 205 1602  
E-mail: [jill.northey@act.gov.au](mailto:jill.northey@act.gov.au)  
Website: [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au)

### Physiotherapists Board of NT

Tel: 08 8999 4157  
Fax: 08 8999 4196  
E-mail: [healthprofessions.ths@nt.gov.au](mailto:healthprofessions.ths@nt.gov.au)

### Physiotherapists Board of New Zealand

Tel: 64 4 471 2610/2612  
Fax: 64 4 471 2613  
E-mail: [physio@physioboard.org.nz](mailto:physio@physioboard.org.nz)  
Website: [www.physioboard.org.nz](http://www.physioboard.org.nz)

## OFFICE CONTACTS

The Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards (OHPRB) is open to the public between 9.00 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday and is located at:

Level 19, Forestry House  
160 Mary Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

### Executive Officer:

Mr Jim O'Dempsey

### Director (Board Support & Advisory Program)

Mr Michael Demy-Geroe

### Principal Coordinator (Board Support & Advisory Program)

Mrs Pauline Portier

**Phone:** 61 7 3234 1164

**Fax:** 61 7 3225 2527

**Email:** [physiotherapy@healthregboards.qld.gov.au](mailto:physiotherapy@healthregboards.qld.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.physioboard.qld.gov.au](http://www.physioboard.qld.gov.au)

### Correspondence should be addressed to:

Executive Officer

Physiotherapists Board of Queensland

GPO Box 2438

BRISBANE QLD 4001

