

01 August, 2011

## **Submission to Physiotherapy Board Australia with respect to:**

### *Draft Registration standard and guidelines on limited registration*

The Council of Physiotherapy Deans Australia and New Zealand Inc. (CPDANZ) is the representative body for the academic leaders of physiotherapy education programs in Australia and New Zealand. Membership of CPDANZ comprises the following Universities:

Auckland University of Technology	Australian Catholic University	Bond University
Charles Sturt University	Curtin University	Edith Cowan University
Griffith University	James Cook University	La Trobe University
Monash University	The University of Melbourne	The University of Newcastle
The University of Notre Dame Australia	The University of Queensland	The University of Sydney
University of Canberra	University of Otago	University of South Australia
University of Western Sydney		

The CPDANZ welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Consultation document *Draft Registration standard and guidelines on limited registration* setting out the requirements that would apply to physiotherapists seeking limited registration: for postgraduate training or supervised practice; in the public interest; for teaching or research.

The Consultation Draft provides clear delineation of requirements and conditions for limited registration providing also for those occasions where extension of limited registration is required eg. for supplementary examination or where repeating of a component of a training program is required.

The CPDANZ does acknowledge that the limited registration for teaching or research does allow the appointment of overseas-trained physiotherapists to be appointed as academics to a University to teach and/or conduct research. The CPDANZ acknowledges that the National Law restricts this limited registration to 12 months with renewal up to three (3) times, with then a new application for limited registration required. The CPDANZ does acknowledge that these Draft guidelines cannot change the National Law. However, CPDANZ does draw to the Board's attention its concern that these restrictions may limit the appointment of high level international academics to physiotherapy programs in Australian universities.

As previously notified to the state-based Physiotherapy Registration Boards (19<sup>th</sup> September, 2008), the appointment of high level international academics to physiotherapy programs in Australian universities is desirable for a number of reasons. It would increase the pool of available staff for the growing number of physiotherapy programs as well as provide important cross-fertilisation in our global profession. Such appointments have the potential to enhance major research collaborations involving sites in other countries and to increase the profile of Australian physiotherapy on the world stage.

Physiotherapy academics who apply to teach at universities will, typically, have focussed on one particular sub-discipline of physiotherapy to the exclusion of other areas. In order to achieve general registration, overseas trained physiotherapists are required to undertake an examination process which tests their theoretical and practical competencies in all the major fields of physiotherapy practice. We submit that this creates a significant problem for overseas academics whose practice has concentrated on specific topic areas for some substantial period. Universities have no expectation that international academics would teach, research or practise in areas outside their area of expertise. Nevertheless, the present requirements insist on demonstration of practical skills in areas that may not have been part of such academics' clinical or academic repertoires for many years. One of the consequences of this is that Australia is not able to benefit from a potentially rich source of academic and scholarly input in educating our future colleagues, who are facing issues of an increasingly global nature.

The CPDANZ does acknowledge that this issue is beyond the remit of the current Draft guidelines for limited registration but would welcome further discussion on this matter for any future review of the National Law. The CPDANZ contends that limited registration for teaching and research could be extended in term for university appointed academics.

The CPDANZ thanks the Physiotherapy Board of Australia for the opportunity to provide comments.



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