



4 September 2009

The Secretary  
House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

EMAILED  
4/9/09

**Submission No. 9**  
(Impotence)

7/09/09.

### Round Table Forum on Impotence Medications

This submission by the New South Wales Medical Board<sup>1</sup> is addressed to the following term of reference:

*"... The Committee also has concerns that medical advice in respect of these medications is being offered to consumers over the telephone in lieu of a face-to-face consultation with a medical practitioner".*

The Board recognises the practical reality that a medical practitioner's consultations with patients may not always occur face-to-face. However the Board is firmly of the view that the general principles that underpin good standards of medical practice remain, regardless of the form of a consultation.

Please find attached for the Committee's information copies of:

1. **National policy on technology-based patient consultation** (which is a policy that has been agreed to by all Australian State and Territory Medical Boards and which specifically addresses your Committee's term of reference); and
2. **The Code of Professional Conduct Good Medical Practice** (established under section 99A of the *Medical Practice Act*, 1992 which sets out guidelines that should be observed by all registered medical practitioners in the conduct of their professional practice);

<sup>1</sup> The New South Wales Medical Board has a statutory responsibility to protect the health and safety of the people of NSW. It does this by providing a range of programs and services aimed at ensuring that all doctors registered in NSW are fit to practise medicine at the high standard the public is entitled to expect.

Our Ref: H08/007 : 09/34787

The Board expects all registered medical practitioners to abide by the standards in the attached documents and these documents are frequently relied on by the various bodies that conduct disciplinary hearings under the *Medical Practice Act 1992* (Medical Tribunal hearings, Professional Standards Committee Inquiries, Performance review Panels, and Board proceedings convened under section 66 of the Act to take urgent interim action where appropriate).

Complaints have been received by the Board in relation to practitioners working in this area, and subject to confidential requirements under the Medical Practice Act (s.190), the Board would be prepared to discuss them with your Committee.

The Committee should be aware that any one may lodge a complaint about a medical practitioner. This process may provide an avenue for scrutiny of particular instances of the Committee's concerns. Information about making complaints is available on the Board's website at [www.nswmb.org.au](http://www.nswmb.org.au)

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



**A E Dix**  
Registrar - Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures:

1. The Code of Professional Conduct
2. National Policy on technology-based patient consultation