

Submission

From: Australian Dental Prosthetists Association Queensland
On Behalf of: Mr Bruce Menzies, President
Written by: Dimitti Huxley, CEO

a) *The impact of the scheme on state and territory health services;*

Dental Prosthetists here in Queensland and across Australia take great pride in the ability to offer to the public expert services in the manufacture of dental appliances and we don't see this altering or being impacted by the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

b) *The impact of the scheme on patient care and safety;*

The Australian Dental Prosthetists Association Queensland is of the belief that the major impact of the scheme to our profession is in the question as to the registration of Dental Technicians. At present Dental Technicians is one of the partially registered professions that are not entering the scheme in this initial round.

Dental Technicians are regulated in Queensland and therefore the level of accountability as to the safety of the public is governed by legislation, we are concerned this high standard may not continue if there is the removal of registration of this section of the dental profession.

c) *The effect of the scheme on standards of training and qualification of relevant health professionals;*

The Dental Prosthetist profession has endeavoured to develop training that allows for an individual to be proficient in both their theoretical knowledge and practical skills. For this reason there are a number of institutions across Australia whose method of delivery may change but the basis for their curriculum is the National Health Training package developed in consultation with the National Skills Council in 2007.

The Council of Regulating Authorities for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists, CORA, is the body that accredits the training and qualification of these two dental professions. This body is made up of members from all teaching institutions as well as members from each State and Territory Board. Dental Prosthetists who are registered overseas and wish to practice in Australia must first sit an examination, the process of which has been approved through the council meetings, and there have been two chief examiners appointed who offer their services to ensure equity across the exams no matter where they are held geographically.

The scheme may have some effect due to the amalgamation of Dental Technician and Prosthetist Boards, which are independent at present, into the one Dental Board and this may result in the merging of CORA into the Australian Dental Council, however it is the belief of the ADPAQ that these changes whilst not minor will allow a strengthening of the position of Dental Prosthetists within the Dental Team as the training of dentists

in this field decreases and their evolving acceptance of the right of Dental Prosthetists to independent practice continues.

d) *How the scheme will affect complaints management and disciplinary processes within particular streams;*

At present in Queensland the Health Quality and Complaints Commission, HQCC, act to arbitrate any concerns amongst the general public as to the practice of a health professional. The ADPAQ have a very well established and comfortable working relationship with the HQCC and are of the belief that these processes will not alter greatly. The state boards certainly play a role in resolving the concerns of the public, as does the Association, but the HQCC is the body that was established by the Queensland Government to be a principal player in this role.

e) *The appropriate role, if any, in the scheme for state and territory registration boards;*

The role of the State and Territory Boards is to ensure the ongoing commitment of all health professionals to practice to the benefit of the general public. The administrative role of Registration etc can certainly be centralised but it is the initiatives of the local boards that would be lost if administered nationally, ie the Dental Board Research Grants.

f) *Alternative models for implementation of the scheme;*

The draft model for the implementation of the scheme and the structure for Administration, Professional National Boards and State Committees appears to offer a clear path for both the general public and health professionals as to who is responsible for each aspect of a professionals life, one concern of the ADPAQ would be that there exist confusion amongst boards and committees as to the role they play for the registered health professional and that this confusion leads to inaction and inefficiencies.

The detail behind this draft model is also yet to be released so there remain some issues that are yet to be addressed but we would ask that they take into account the following in relation to the dental profession;

- On all National Boards and State Committees there be equal representation of all members of the dental team
- That the present state boards be disbanded and new boards/committees be established, as the moving of the present board into this new structure would give the appearance of little if any forward steps
- That the regulations for the scope of practice of an individual be taken from the state that has the most up to date legislation taking into account that each state ensures public safety, best practice etc..