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Chair's message

Welcome to the ninth newsletter from the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia (the Board). In this edition we hear about the experience of being audited by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) from a medical radiation practitioner who has gone through the process. We also bring you the latest snapshot of the profession, news on accreditation, supervised practice and the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This month we speak with Gold Coast practitioner Brett Jackson about his experience being audited for compliance with the Board's recency of practice, continuing professional development (CPD) and criminal history registration standards. 'It's fairly painless if you maintain accurate up-to-date records,' Brett said.

The Board's new supervised practice program has been successfully implemented during the first half of 2015, with 550 practitioners undertaking supervised practice to gain the necessary skills and experience to carry out safe, independent practice. There are also supervisor training sessions happening in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and potentially regional NSW.

The Board is calling for applications from experienced medical radiation practitioners interested in being on a list of approved persons for appointment to panels to assist the Board in its primary role of protecting the public. If you are from South Australia, Tasmania or Western Australia, please consider applying.

Neil Hicks

Chair, Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia

Snapshot of the profession

The Board has analysed its registration data and produced a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants to share with the profession and community. The Board shares these breakdowns regularly.

The latest update shows there are 14,782 registered medical radiation practitioners in Australia as at March 2015. This is a decrease of 223 practitioners since December 2014.

Of the total number, 696 have provisional registration, 252 have non-practising registration, two have limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice and one practitioner has limited registration in the public interest.

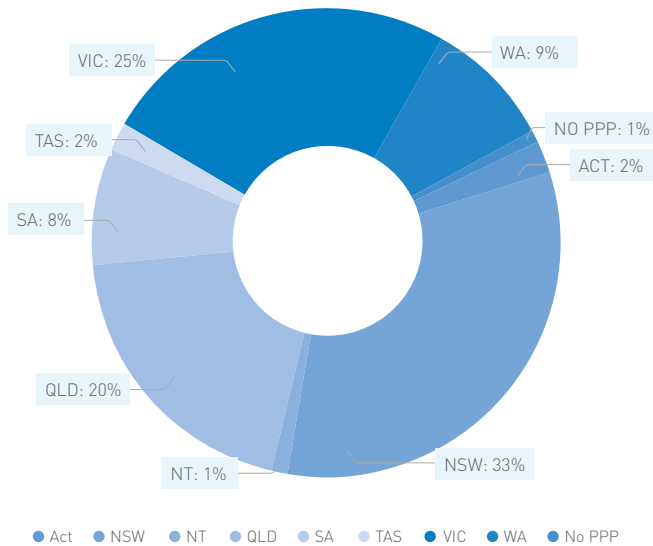
The largest numbers by division are diagnostic radiographers (11,414), followed by radiation therapists (2,312) and nuclear medicine technologists (1,039). See the table below.

State	Divisions					Total Count
	Diagnostic radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer and nuclear medicine technologist	Diagnostic radiographer and radiation therapist	Nuclear medicine technologist	Radiation therapist	
ACT	170	-	-	19	62	251
NSW	3,769	1	-	427	746	4,943
NT	96	-	-	3	9	108
QLD	2,326	10	1	135	465	2,937
SA	916	1	-	72	153	1,142
TAS	226	1	-	20	59	306
VIC	2,741	1	1	293	618	3,654
WA	1,052	1	-	65	177	1,295
NO PPP*	118	-	-	5	23	146
Total	11,414	15	2	1,039	2,312	14,782

* Principal place of practice

The largest number of practitioners are based in NSW (33%), followed by Victoria (25%) and Queensland (20%). See the chart below.

Medical radiation practitioners – percentage by principal place of practice (March 2015)



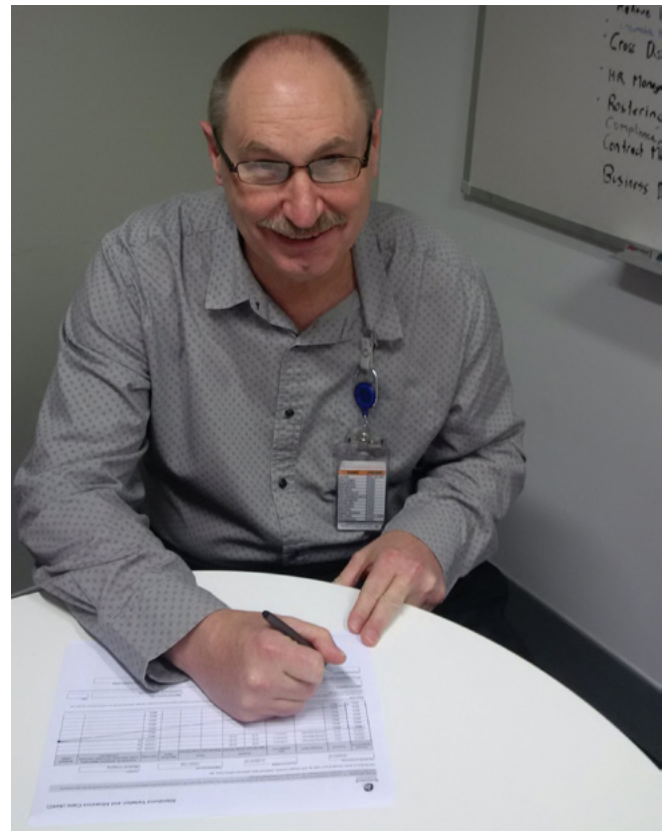
Practitioners between the ages of 25 and 34 make up the largest age group.

Medical radiation practitioners – by age group (March 2015)

Age group	Number of registrants
U-25	1,191
25-29	2,986
25-29	2,634
35-39	1,843
40-44	1,626
45-49	1,195
50-54	1,089
55-59	1,134
60-64	715
65-69	289
70-74	61
75-79	18
80+	1
Total	14,782

For further information, visit the [Statistics](#) page on the Board's website.

Audit notice 'no surprise' – practitioner profile



Above image: Brett Jackson

When an audit notice recently appeared in Brett Jackson's mailbox he was confident of meeting its requirements.

Auditing health practitioners' compliance with mandatory registration standards is an important part of the way National Boards and AHPRA can better protect the public. The Board conducts an audit on a random sample of practitioners every year.

If you are selected for audit, you will receive an audit notice in the mail from AHPRA. It includes a checklist that outlines what supporting documentation is required to demonstrate that you meet the standard(s) being audited.

'I got the trifecta – recency of practice, continuing professional development (CPD) and criminal history,' Brett said.

'I was confident that I had complied with the standards but I had some recent record keeping to tidy up.'

Brett, who is Acting Service Director Medical Imaging at Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, said it was no 'great surprise' to receive notification of the intent to audit.

'The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia has clearly articulated its intent to audit up to 10 per cent of practitioners annually and several members of my department have been audited previously.'

The Board recently presented a [webinar about the audit process](#) at which many participants took the opportunity to ask questions.

'I joined the webinar and found the content useful as a number of my queries were addressed,' Brett said.

'The audit notice and checklist were easy to understand so I didn't need to contact AHPRA's audit team or refer to the [Board's audit webpage](#) for more information.'

Upon receipt of an audit notice you must provide evidence, within 28 days, that you meet the registration standards, as declared in your previous annual statement. Your annual statement is made when you apply to renew your registration. It is supported by a declaration confirming that it is 'true and correct'.

Thanks to his record keeping, Brett wasn't challenged by the submission deadline and was impressed with the turnaround time from submission to audit result.

'My records were good to go but I suspect it wouldn't be much fun preparing the audit material in the time provided from a zero starting point,' he said.

Brett acknowledged the importance of keeping a current record of CPD activities and reflections on the learning associated with those activities.

'It's always tempting to skip the reflections on the assumption that you will revisit this later but that's not always a good move given audits have a fairly short lead time.'

Brett said medical radiation practitioners shouldn't be wary of the audit process.

'It's fairly painless if you maintain accurate up-to-date records,' he said.

'Enter your CPD learning reflections at the time and it's okay to provide honest reflection on the learning value.'

'Store your attendance certificates carefully as getting these issued retrospectively can be problematic on short notice.'

'Also regularly update your CV as you may need it if you are audited for recency of practice.'

Visit the [Registration](#) page for tip sheets on:

- [Preparing yourself for audit](#), and
- [Staying on top of your CPD](#).

Call for applicants for appointment to the Medical Radiation Practice Board health, performance and professional standards hearing panels

The Board invites applications from experienced medical radiation practitioners interested in being included on a list of approved persons for appointment to panels to assist the Board in its primary role of protecting the public.

The Board is seeking applications from general registered medical radiation practitioners with a minimum of three years current and recent experience, in the divisions of radiation therapy, diagnostic radiography and nuclear medicine who reside in the following states and territories:

- South Australia
- Tasmania, and
- Western Australia.

Under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law), a board convenes health panels and performance and professional standards panels when required to hold hearings into specific health, performance or conduct matters for individual registered health professionals. Such panels consist of members chosen from a board's list of approved person for appointment to panels.

For more information, please see the Board's [website](#).

Accreditation

The Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee (the committee) recently accredited the Bachelor of Medical Imaging degree offered by Central Queensland University and the Bachelor of Applied Science (Diagnostic Radiography) (Pass and Honours) program by University of Sydney.

The Board considered the accreditation reports and approved the programs of study as providing qualifications for the purposes of general registration in the division of diagnostic radiography.

The Board's approval takes effect when the programs of study are included on the Board's list of [approved programs of study](#), which is published on the AHPRA website.

Under the National Law, the committee must monitor each approved program of study to make sure it continues to be satisfied the program and provider meet the accreditation standards.

For more information on accreditation processes and approved programs of study please see the [Accreditation](#) section of the Board's website.

Supervised practice

The Board's new supervised practice program has been successfully implemented during the first half of 2015, with 550 practitioners undertaking supervised practice to gain the necessary skills and experience to carry out safe, independent practice and be eligible for general registration. Another 12 practitioners are doing supervised practice as part of their return to practice plan.

Implementation of the processes for full online submission of assessments has been completed, allowing principal supervisors to log into our [online services](#) and complete online forms that are automatically submitted to AHPRA. Feedback from supervisors has been positive, particularly as the changes are increasingly understood by supervisors.

The Board has also provided supervisor training in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney, with more sessions planned in Brisbane and potentially regional NSW. Supervisors in the relevant jurisdictions will be emailed when further sessions are confirmed. If you, or another member of your team, are providing supervision and wish to attend a free one day training session, please express your interest by emailing mrpsupervisedpractice@ahpra.gov.au.

For more information, visit the [Supervisor training](#) page on the Board's website.

Tribunal reprimands practitioner over unsatisfactory professional conduct

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal found Ms Devorah Lindberg acted in a way that constituted unsatisfactory professional conduct, by omitting information about her work history when applying for registration as a medical radiation practitioner.

In January 2012, Ms Lindberg applied for general registration with the former Medical Radiation Technologists Board of Queensland, which regulated medical radiation practitioners before the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia was established on 1 July 2012.

Ms Lindberg stated in her application that between 2006 and 2010 she had been employed by the Dubai Hospital in Zabeel, Dubai UAE, describing the facility as a government hospital.

Shortly afterwards, a member of the former board discovered that the hospital Ms Lindberg had been employed at was the Dubai Equine Hospital, where she had worked as a radiographer, providing MRIs to animals, in particular horses, as well as individuals with horse-inflicted injuries.

At the time, the former Board's recency of practice policy required general registration applicants to demonstrate at least one year full-time experience in clinical practice (on humans) in the last five years. Ms Lindberg didn't meet this requirement as her experience had primarily been with horses, and the former board granted general registration with conditions requiring supervision.

The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia referred the matter to the tribunal in October 2014, alleging that Ms Lindberg had engaged in unsatisfactory professional conduct under the former Disciplinary Proceedings Act 1999 (Qld). The Board alleged that Ms Lindberg had omitted all references to equine treatment in her application for registration with the Board and that this was false, misleading and incorrect.

Ms Lindberg disputed the allegation, stating it wasn't her intention to mislead the Board and that during her time at the hospital, she had used the MRI equipment to x-ray veterinarians, trainers and other staff. Ms Lindberg said she had omitted references to equine treatment as it was not relevant to her application.

The tribunal found that while it may not have been Ms Lindberg's intention to deliberately mislead the Board, omitting information about her equine experience meant that she had not provided full and complete disclosure of her work history.

The tribunal found Ms Lindberg had acted in a way that constituted unsatisfactory professional conduct, reprimanding her and ordering her to pay the Board's costs.

Reasons for the tribunal's decision are on AustLII.

National Scheme news

Criminal history and English language skills registration standards have been revised

The registration standards for criminal history and English language skills have been revised following consultation

and have been approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council. Both registration standards take effect from 1 July 2015.

Criminal history

The new criminal history registration standard makes minor amendments to the old standard, which is expected to have minimal impact on practitioners.

When a practitioner first applies for registration, the National Board requires the applicant to declare their criminal history in all countries, including Australia. All registered health practitioners must inform their National Board if they are:

- charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or
- convicted or found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment in Australia and/or overseas.

When practitioners renew their registration they must disclose any changes to their criminal history.

The new registration standard is published on the [Board's website](#).

English language skills

The new registration standard for English language skills applies to all applicants for initial registration, regardless of whether they qualified in Australia or overseas.

The new standard introduces additional pathways for applicants to demonstrate evidence of their English language skills.

The new standard was developed after a review of the existing standard, which included a public consultation. All National Boards, except the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Health Practice Board of Australia, consulted on and revised their English languages skills standard. The standards are now largely common across professions.

The new registration standard is published on the [Board's website](#).

AHPRA welcomes ministers' response to NRAS review report

The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council met on 7 August 2015 at the COAG Health Council meeting to consider the final report of the independent review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

The purpose of the independent review was to identify what is working well in the National Scheme and the opportunities to improve and strengthen the operation of the scheme to regulate health professions to protect the public.

Ministers expressed strong support for the work of the National Scheme, noted that it was now embedded in the health system and was among the most significant and effective reforms of health profession regulation in Australia and internationally.

More information about the review can be found on the [COAG Health Council](#) website and on [AHPRA's](#) website.

Keep in touch with the Board

- Visit www.medicalradiationpracticeboard.gov.au for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines and FAQ. Visiting the website regularly is the best way to stay in touch with news and updates from the Board.
- Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [enquiries](#) link on every web page under Contact us.
- For registration enquiries, call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 9275 9009 (for overseas callers).
- To update your contact details for important registration renewal emails and other Board updates, go to the AHPRA website: [Update contact details](#).
- Address mail correspondence to: Neil Hicks, Chair, Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne, VIC 3001.