AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE LTD.

Submission for Registration Standards proposed by the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia

Submitted by:

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine Ltd. (ANZSNM)

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PREAMBLE:

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine Ltd. (hereafter known as ANZSNM) is the national professional organisation representing professionals from all disciplines involved in the field of Nuclear Medicine, and was inaugurated in May 1969.

The first officially recognized course in Nuclear Medicine was established in 1964 by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and was of three years duration. The qualification was known as "The Radioisotope Technician Certificate" and was the first of its type in the world. The ANZSNM began to be involved in training and course accreditation in 1971 and is the gazetted body authorised by AEI-NOOSR to assess the overseas qualifications in Nuclear Medicine Technology for applicants wishing to practice as a Nuclear Medicine Scientist/Technologist.

The ANZSNM is the current professional body representing the vast majority of Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists in Australia, with approximately 80% of working practitioners being members of the Society. The ANZSNM is the peak body consulted by other health organisations and legislative bodies for issues relating to the Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists, including such areas as workforce, training, education, accreditation and continuing professional development (CPD). The Accreditation Board is a sub-committee of the ANZSNM and is responsible for setting standards for the education and training of Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists as well as accreditation of university programs for the study of Nuclear Medicine Technology.

The ANZSNM welcomes and supports the introduction of national registration under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) for Medical Radiation Practitioners and Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists. The standards proposed in your documentation is very similar to our Society's standards, and we have made comment on each section, as below:

PROPOSED REGISTRATION STANDARDS:

1) Continuing professional development

The proposed hourly based system is an excellent system to follow. As the ANZSNM is the peak professional organisation for Nuclear Medicine activities across Australia, we would recommend that it is specified that any activity run by the ANZSNM should be considered suitable for CPD.

2) Criminal history

This is standard for all health professions and we agree with the recommendations.

3) English language skills

This is comparable to what the ANZSNM applies to the OQA applicants, and the increased specifications of relevant non-English speaking countries is supported.

4) Professional indemnity insurance

Nuclear Medicine Scientists/Technologists use and administer radioactive substances

daily and the potential biological effects may not manifest for many years perhaps even decades. Therefore, we recommend a minimum of $10 million dollars of cover so that members have a good level of coverage in the advent of a patient seeking damages either now or into the future. Consistent with this, is the nature of run-off cover (item 4.2). As individuals or as a profession, we are unable to provide a specific time frame for adverse radiation induced biological effects to manifiest, we recommend a continuous run-off cover as the standard norm. Further discussion with relevant insurance companies would be beneficial and is encouraged.

5) Recency of practice

This current standard is non-specific, and there are no clear statements regarding timelines for return to practice with too much emphasis put onto the practitioner to suggest their plan to return to work. We would prefer a more specific model, like the one which is currently used for our profession, which is the ANZSNM model of "Resumption of Professional Practice Program Nuclear Medicine Technology". In summary, this is as follows:

- < 576 Hours in 3 years - 3 months EFTE CPP
- 3-9 years absence from clinical practice - 6 months EFTE CPP
- 10 years - 12 months EFTE. These individuals will be required to sit and pass an exam equivalent to the OQA exam as well as apply for entry in the ANZSNM Accreditation Board's PDY/Mentor Program.

6) Grand parenting & General Registration

The ANZSNM has a "Scope of Practice Standard", where the most pertinent points are stated below:

The practice of nuclear medicine is carried out by a registrant who perform procedures involving the use of unsealed and sealed radioactive sources, ionising radiation apparatus and other medical imaging modalities for the purpose of diagnosis and therapy to provide images and interpret data to assist in the diagnosis, treatment and management of disease or injury while maintaining duty of care and radiation safety.

Registrants have responsibility for a wide range clinical and non- clinical procedures and roles, including but not limited to the preparation and quality control of radiopharmaceuticals, patient scanning, data analysis, diagnostic and therapeutic radionuclide procedures, hybrid imaging (including computerised tomography, sonography, magnetic resonance imaging), bone mineral density, radiation safety, PACS management, other instrumentation/IT roles, research, continuing professional development and clinical teaching.

Due to technological advances within this field, the range of clinical procedures will expand and evolve and are seen as an extension of practice. Advanced practice and extended practice is within the Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists' scope of practice where appropriate credentialing/local policy exists. There is already a clearly established pathway for Nuclear Medicine Technologists/Scientists to extend their role and professional practice in the various courses for hybrid CT. More specific information can be supplied by the ANZSNM if required.