



### From the Chair

Another busy year draws to a close for the Board with momentous changes to national professional governance awaiting the approval of the incoming Federal Government. The contents of this newsletter draw the attention of registrants to several developments.

In the area of policy development, the Board has modified several of its policies dealing with English language proficiency, descriptors for areas of expertise, requirements for Supervised Practice Program trainees following **both pathways**, additional guidelines for psychological assessment training, and the Draft Recency of Practice Policy.

We also draw your attention to the reminders about approval of assistant supervisors and the maximum period for the Supervised Practice Program

We report on the Workshop on Professional Ethics held on 12 July 2007 and the Board's endorsement of the new APS *Code of Ethics* and *Ethical Guidelines*.

We also report on the progress of what has been the Board's single most significant achievement in raising standards of training to date - the highly successful **Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP)**. **Queensland leads the nation in this regard**. Thirty-five statewide workshops have been held with 742 psychologists attending. Over 500 supervisors have been accredited with several hundred more in the pipeline.

Finally, a comment on registration statistics which show 4369 registrants (21% probationary), a rise of 7% from 2006. The most striking demographics are: 75% are females; 78% are in the age bracket 25-54; and 78% located in South East Queensland, 16.5% in regional/rural areas and 5.5% outside Queensland.

Emeritus Professor Gina Geffen AM

### Policy amendments

Full details of the following updated policies are available on the Board's website: [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/publications.htm](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/publications.htm) or as indicated.

#### ■ English Language Proficiency Policy

Under the current policy, approved from 15 November 2007, the grounds for exemption have been amended to include:

- *the applicant can provide evidence (eg reference/s) of at least three years practice of the profession as a registered psychologist (or equivalent) using English as the primary means of communication. This practice must be undertaken in a country where English is an official language; OR*
- *all components of the applicant's academic qualification for registration were completed in a country where English is an official language at a tertiary institution where programs and assessments are conducted in English and the applicant can provide evidence of completion of secondary education in English in a country where English is an official language. Applicants requesting this exemption must provide a certified copy of their Year 12 secondary (high) school certificate, demonstrating a satisfactory pass in English.*

#### ■ Policy on descriptors in front of the word "psychologist" to denote areas of expertise

The policy was amended by the Board on 16 August 2007 to specify the standard of supervision required for a psychologist to use a descriptor title such as Clinical Psychologist. The following is now included in the policy:

*At least two years of supervised, full-time practice, or the equivalent supervised, part-time practice, in the area(s) designated by the descriptor(s). This supervised practice is to be undertaken with a supervisor qualified and experienced in the relevant specialty area who meets criterion (1) or (2) of this policy for use of a descriptor title in the relevant specialty area. The supervision processes are to be documented.*

## ■ New requirements for Supervised Practice Program following both pathways

The Board has noted some confusion among probationary registrants and supervisors regarding the reporting requirements for student probationary registrants who also undertake supervised practice of the profession external to and independent of their university program. For example, there is uncertainty regarding the particular responsibilities of the student's Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 supervisors, and who should sign the declaration of "sufficient competence" on the Assessment of Competence forms.

To clarify these issues the Board has amended the requirements for probationary registrants who follow both pathways. **From 15 November 2007, the following policy applies:**

- Probationary registrants following both pathways must have an approved supervisor and a Supervised Practice Plan for **each pathway**. Each pathway's Plan will only include the supervision, professional development, practice of the profession and competency tasks to be addressed under that pathway. The probationary registrant must arrange for review of their Supervised Practice Plans every six months with the relevant supervisor.
- It is the responsibility of the probationary registrant following both pathways to keep each supervisor informed of what they are doing with respect to the Supervised Practice Program under each pathway. Some flexibility is required on the part of supervisors as competency assessment tasks may be addressed under either pathway and signed off by either supervisor or by an approved assistant supervisor.
- For a probationary registrant following both pathways at the time of completion of the Supervised Practice Program, the "declaration of sufficient competence" section on each of the six Assessment of Competency forms is to be signed by **both supervisors**. The forms are to be re-designed to allow for comments in the declaration section. This would allow one supervisor to state, for example, that they have not signed the declaration section of a particular competency form as this competency was not included in the Plan with that supervisor or the supervisor does not have sufficient knowledge of the probationary registrant's practice in that area of competency. If supervisors disagree over the signing of competency forms, the probationary registrant or a supervisor should notify the Board, who will assist in resolving the matter.
- Probationary registrants following either pathway or both pathways must submit a Statement of Incomplete Supervision (Form E), and the Supervisor's Statement of Cessation of Supervision (Form F) and a Progress Report (if requested) within 28 days of cessation of supervision with a particular

supervisor. For example, a Pathway 2 probationary registrant who ceases enrolment in an approved coursework postgraduate program for any reason must submit these forms signed by their course supervisor.

These changes and revised competency forms are included in the updated Supervision Guidelines and the Student Guidelines posted on the Board's website at [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/supervisionprogram](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/supervisionprogram).

## ■ Additional guidelines for Competency 2 (Psychological Assessment)

In developing a training plan for this competency, both supervisor and probationary registrant should refer and adhere to the *APS Code of Ethics*, *Ethical Guidelines for the use of Psychological Tests* and the *Supplement to the Guidelines for the use of Psychological Tests*. These publications are available from the APS ([www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au)). As advised in the *APS Supplement to the Guidelines for the use of Psychological Tests*, familiarity and practice are essential to gaining proficiency in using individually administered tests and "instruments such as IQ tests should never be used with 'real clients' without gaining familiarity with the mechanics of administration through extensive rehearsal and numerous dummy runs".

Probationary registrants may gain familiarity with particular assessment tools through administering the tests on other probationary registrants, students and friends. However, this practice must be undertaken in strict accordance with the *APS Code of Ethics* and *Ethical Guidelines*. A probationary registrant may refuse to allow another probationary registrant to use them to practise administration of a psychological test.

Training can also occur through attendance at workshops, discussions during supervision, set reading and supervisor feedback on the probationary registrant's reports. Training should also include observation by the supervisee of experienced practitioners conducting psychological assessments and observation by the supervisor or an assistant supervisor of the probationary registrant's practice in conducting psychological assessments.

In order to demonstrate competency on a particular psychological test, it is preferable that the probationary registrant administers the test to a client.

## ■ Approved practice of the profession for the Supervised Practice Program – hours that may be credited from research and/or teaching in psychology

The Board recently reviewed the current policy that allows a probationary registrant to accrue a maximum of 800 of the required 1600 hours practice of the profession for the Supervised Practice Program from research and/or academic teaching. This policy was considered to be inconsistent with the Board's requirements for student probationary registrants completing the Supervised Practice Program through an



accredited coursework Masters program in psychology. Such students have to complete their program and be eligible for the degree to be awarded in order to apply to the Board for review of the probationary conditions of their registration. These students complete a minimum of 1000 hours of applied practice of the profession through practicums (internships and externships) and, on passing the thesis component of their program, the Board credits the student with 600 hours practice of the profession from research in psychology.

**From November 2007, the following policy applies:**

- A maximum 600 of the required 1600 hours of practice of the profession for the Supervised Practice Program can be credited from academic teaching in psychology in an accredited tertiary academic setting and/or approved psychological research activities. A minimum of 1000 hours of applied practice of the profession must be completed. This applied practice includes client contact hours and hours spent in client-related activities (such as case consultation, resource development, report writing and case notes). Refer to the Supervision Guidelines at [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/supervisionprogram](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/supervisionprogram) for further information on approved practice of the profession for the Program.
- Applicants for registration, who have completed a research Masters degree or research PhD degree in psychology, may receive credit for a maximum of 600 hours practice of the profession from academic teaching in psychology and/or psychological research towards the hours of practice of the profession required under the Supervised Practice Program.

### ■ Draft Recency of Practice Policy (at renewal)

The Psychologists Board is now in the final stage of completing its recency of practice policy. The Board would like to thank all those who participated in the two rounds of consultation undertaken to develop this policy.

All 12 Boards supported by the OHPRB are expecting to refer their final policies to the government early in 2008 for conversion into Regulations that bring recency of practice into operation. It is the Boards' expectation that these Regulations will take effect for the renewal period in 2008.

The Board will not be able to release its final recency of practice policy until the government has been fully briefed on its contents. Until this time, the Board strongly advises registrants to ensure that they comply with the requirements as set out in the Recency of Practice Draft Policy paper from October 2006, (available on the Board's website: [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au)), with particular emphasis on the 'recent practice' and continuing professional development requirements.

## Approval of Assistant Supervisors

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Probationary registrants are reminded that they must undertake at least 75 of their required 100 hours of supervision with a **STAP accredited supervisor or assistant supervisor**. Your supervisor can approve the addition to your Plan of a STAP accredited registrant as an assistant supervisor. There is no need to notify the Board of this addition. The remaining 25 hours may be undertaken with non-STAP accredited assistant supervisor/s **approved by the Board on an individual basis for each probationary registrant**. You must apply to the Board to add a non-STAP accredited assistant supervisor to your plan. (Note that, for student probationary registrants following Pathway 2, their course supervisor will request approval from the Board for any non-STAP accredited assistant supervisors required for students in their course.)

## Maximum period for the Supervised Practice Program

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Probationary registrants please take note that under the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* (the Act) and section 11 of the *Psychologists Registration Regulation 2002* you must complete the requirements of the Supervised Practice Program and apply to the Board for a review of your probationary conditions within five years of your date of registration and commencement of the Program. Any breaks, (for example to travel overseas or for family reasons) you take from the Supervised Practice Program are included in (and not additional to) this five year period.

Under the Act, a probationary registrant's registration may be cancelled for failure to complete the Supervised Practice Program within the legislated five year period. If you become aware that you will not complete the Supervised Practice Program within the required time frame you should apply to the Board, six months prior to the date of expiry of your five year period, for an extension of time to complete the Program. This request should include your reasons for requiring the extension and the approximate date that you believe your Program will be completed and be accompanied by supporting documentation (such as a current Academic Record for a student probationary registrant). At its discretion and in special circumstances, the Board may approve an extension past the five year limit.

## Report on the Workshop on Professional Ethics

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The Workshop on Professional Ethics held on 12 July 2007 was well attended and the feedback has been very positive. The workshop took the form of a "hypothetical" format to look at the most common issues which present to the Board in terms of complaints, such as:

- Who is the client?;
- Practising outside areas of competence;

- Boundary issues (including privacy and confidentiality);
- The impaired practitioner.

The workshop was recorded and CDs have been made available to registrants who attended as well as to those who were not able to be present.

## Update on the proposed National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

Representatives from the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards (CPRB) and the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) have continued to consult with the COAG Health Working Group on the proposed national registration and accreditation scheme. The scheme which involves nine professions (chiropractors, dental care, medicine, nursing, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy and psychology) was expected to be established by 1 July 2008. However, protracted consultations, the fact that the InterGovernment Agreement between the States has not been signed and the federal election has delayed the establishing of the scheme.

The Board will continue to inform registrants of the progress of this proposal.

## New APS Code of Ethics

The Australian Psychological Society has reviewed its *Code of Ethics*. The Board has endorsed the APS *Code of Ethics* and *Ethical Guidelines* to provide guidance to its registrants about appropriate professional conduct or practice. The new *Code of Ethics*, approved by APS on 27 September 2007, may be accessed via the Board's website: [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/publications](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au/publications).

## From the Professional Standards and Health Assessment Monitoring Committee

We would like to bring three issues to the attention of registrants.

The first has to do with the fact that the Committee does at times receive reports on the mental health of registrants which are a cause of concern. These are dealt with sensitively and hopefully they are seen in terms of the person making the report expressing their concern, not only for consumers of psychological services but also for the welfare of a colleague. The intent of Health Assessment and Monitoring is support and taking the least restrictive steps necessary to assess and support a psychologist who is undergoing problems of a personal nature.

Secondly, we sometimes get enquiries concerning the potential legal implications of reporting a practitioner to the Board; namely, is the person making the report placing himself/herself in a vulnerable position in terms of legal

action relating to defamation? It should be noted that the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* provides protection for informants who are acting in good faith.

Thirdly, the Board is seeing a new category of complaint; that is, where there is a discrepancy between what a supervisor signs off on in terms of supervisory practice, and what actually happens in relation to supervision. All supervisory reports need to be accurate reflections of the supervision experience.

## Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP)

### Progress to Date

At a recent meeting with the Board the STAP Consortium provided a progress report. From November 2004 to October 2007, 35 workshops have been held with 742 psychologists attending. Many of these workshop attendees are currently completing the assessment, evaluation and feedback component of the STAP. It can take several months from the date of workshop attendance to the date of completion of the STAP and accreditation by the Board as an approved supervisor. STAP has 26 trained evaluators available.

To 7 November 2007, the Board has accredited 507 supervisors on completion of the STAP. Approximate numbers of approved supervisors available across Queensland are:

Brisbane and Logan City	282
Gold Coast	54
Caboolture and the Sunshine Coast	24
Ipswich and West Moreton	19
Toowoomba, Darling Downs, Southern Downs and South West	42
Hervey Bay, Maryborough and Gympie	9
Rockhampton and Gladstone	23
Central West and Mt Isa	4
Mackay and Townsville areas	40
Cairns area	21

The above figures are **approximate only**, as some supervisors indicate their availability to supervise in more than one of the regional areas listed above. A further 38 approved supervisors have not yet notified the Board of the location/s where they are available to supervise.

The STAP Consortium coordinated a Professional Forum on "Supervision for Psychologists in Training" at the APS Conference in Brisbane in September 2007. The Forum was received with strong interest, particularly from interstate delegates.



## ■ Evaluation of the STAP

**Internal.** The Consortium continually monitors the STAP through internal evaluation measures including measuring participants' satisfaction and conducting pre and post test of participants' knowledge of supervision. Evaluation of the workshops has resulted in an overall satisfaction rating of 88%. This year the Consortium engaged a project officer to conduct an evaluation of outcomes for supervisees based on data collected from supervisees to determine whether the training has made a practical difference to the effectiveness of the supervision they are receiving. The results of this evaluation will be reported in a future newsletter.

**External.** The Board's agreement with the STAP Consortium was for an initial period of three years to be extended for a further two years, subject to the satisfactory performance of the Consortium. In June 2007 the Board contracted an independent expert to conduct a review of the services provided by the STAP Consortium. The aim of the review was to determine if the Consortium had satisfactorily met the STAP objectives of the agreement. The objectives were the development, implementation and continuous improvement of a high quality supervisor training and accreditation program for supervisors of probationary registrants undertaking the Supervised Practice Program. The review concluded that the STAP Consortium has met the objectives with a quality of service that sets high benchmarks for professional psychology. The review report stated that "the Consortium has provided a well articulated training program based on research and expert opinion about what constitutes evidence based practice". The review report may be accessed on the Board's website: [www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au](http://www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au).

## ■ Correction from the Chair on STAP review

On Table 4 of the review report (page 11) the following was noted as a weakness:

No specific feedback is available about the individual assessment pieces.

My experience of STAP was that the feedback I received contained written comments on each item of assessment as well as verbal feedback from the assessor during an arranged telephone call.

Registrants who have not yet submitted their work for accreditation are urged to do so. I found it helpful to complete one component per session. The relief of posting the materials was as rewarding as being informed that I had succeeded!

## ■ Future workshops

The Consortium has two workshops planned for late 2007 and early 2008. Workshops are scheduled by the

Consortium on the basis of demand from registrants. **If you wish to attend a STAP workshop please register an expression of interest with the Consortium.** A workshop will be arranged as soon as there are sufficient numbers to run a workshop in your region.

STAP refresher courses are due to commence in March – June 2008. If it is nearing three years since you gained accreditation as a supervisor, please register an expression of interest in a refresher course with the Consortium.

**Contact details for STAP are:**

Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program  
Suite 82, Silverton Place

101 Wickham Terrace

BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email Address: [supervision-program@griffith.edu.au](mailto:supervision-program@griffith.edu.au)

Telephone: 07 3831 4163

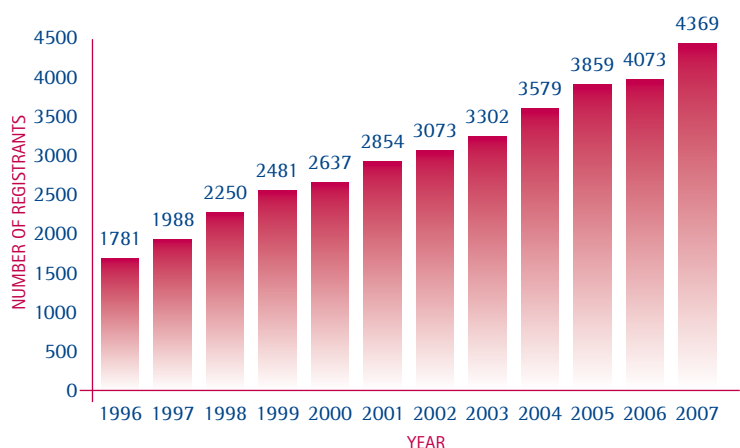
## Registration Statistics

As at 30 June 2007, the Register contained a total of 4,369 names, representing a net increase of 296 (approximately 7%) over the 30 June 2006 figure. The 4,369 registrants comprised:

- 3,416 general registrants
- 929 general registrants with probationary conditions
- 24 provisional general registrants with probationary conditions

The following bar chart illustrates the growth since 1996 in the number of registered psychologists at 30 June each year.

Registered psychologists



## Gender

- 25.5% of registrants were male; and
- 74.5% of registrants were female.

## Age groupings

Age grouping	% of registrants
Under 25 years	4%
25 – 34 years	30%
35 – 44 years	25%
45 – 54 years	23%
55 years and over	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Blue Card

Information regarding the need for a “Blue Card” is available from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian on:

[www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)

Freecall: 1800 113 611 (Blue Card Contact Centre)

Email: [bluecard@ccypcg.qld.gov.au](mailto:bluecard@ccypcg.qld.gov.au)

## Code of Health Rights and Responsibilities - Consultation Draft

Have your say!

The Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC) has released a consultation draft of a Code of Health Rights and Responsibilities.

The consultation draft articulates the rights of health service users. It describes the responsibilities of health service users and health service providers when accessing and providing health services. The consultation draft Code aims to foster positive working partnerships between health service users and health service providers and strengthen the important role that health service users play in managing their health.

The HQCC is keen to hear your views on the consultation draft Code. In particular:

1. Do you support the need for a Code of Health Rights and Responsibilities?
2. How should the Code be used?
3. What should be included or deleted from this draft?
4. What do you think should be considered when implementing the Code?
5. Other comments.

**Consultation closes on Friday 29 February 2008.**

Please visit the HQCC website [www.hqcc.qld.gov.au](http://www.hqcc.qld.gov.au). Alternatively, you may wish to provide your comments by:

Telephone: (07) 3120 5999

Queensland Toll Free: 1800 077 308  
(outside Brisbane area)

Fax: (07) 3120 5998

Email: [standards@hqcc.qld.gov.au](mailto:standards@hqcc.qld.gov.au)

Mail: Code Consultation  
HQCC  
Reply Paid  
PO Box 3089  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

## OFFICE CONTACTS

The Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards (OHPRB) is open to the public between 9.00 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday and is located at:

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BRISBANE QLD 4000

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