



The Psychologists Board of Queensland administers the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* and the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* for the benefit and protection of the community.

From the Chairperson

In this issue, registrants are informed about the composition of the new Board, growth in registration numbers since 1993, and the introduction of a fee for review of probationary conditions. Registrants are reminded about requirements for registration renewal as well as forewarned about an increase in registration fee.

The Board policy on how registrants with probationary conditions should describe themselves is made explicit by use of the phrase "psychologist in training" to indicate that the registrant is in the process of being trained.

The Consortium providing the Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP) provided a report to the Board in March on the first three workshops. The ratings and comments are summarised below. In relation to the STAP, registrants are alerted to the "Recency of Practice" discussion paper. Successful completion of the STAP will be considered as one form of evidence of Recency of Practice by the Board.

Professor Gina Geffen

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

On 21 December 2004 the following persons were appointed to the Psychologists Board for a term of four years:

Registrant Members

Professor Gina Geffen
as Chairperson
Associate Professor
Robert Schweitzer
as Deputy Chairperson

Associate Professor
Grace Pretty

Ms Narelle Dickinson

Associate Professor
Kenneth Pakenham

Ms Elsa Germain

Ms Karen Nixon

Mr Des Coates

Public Members

Mr John Sharp

Mr Kingsley Bedwell

Lawyer

Ms Kerri Mellifont

INTRODUCTION OF FEE FOR REVIEW OF PROBATIONARY CONDITIONS

Section 95 of the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* provides for a probationary registrant to notify the Board of the completion of the Supervised Practice Program (or partial program) and to pay the prescribed fee. The Queensland Government through the Executive Council has now approved, effective from 22 April 2005, an amendment to the *Psychologists Registration Regulation 2002* to prescribe a fee of \$189.00 to cover the Board's costs to review the probationary conditions on a registrant's general registration. Registrants with probationary conditions, who are applying to have the probationary conditions removed from their general registration from 22 April 2005, will be required to submit a fee of \$189 with their application.

The Board has developed a new form, Application for Review of Probationary Conditions (Form J), for probationary

registrants to notify the Board of completion of the Supervised Practice Program and request that the Board review the probationary conditions of their general registration. Form J will be available on the Board's website from 27 April 2005 or a copy may be requested from the Board.

REGENCY OF PRACTICE

The "Recency of Practice Discussion Paper" was released in February 2005. The Discussion Paper is the first stage in the consultation process. It is the Board's intention that recency of practice, when defined through this consultation process, will be directly linked to the annual renewal of registration, as the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* requires the Board, when deciding an application for renewal of registration, to have regard to the extent the applicant has satisfied "recency of practice requirements" that have been prescribed under a regulation.

Submissions to the Discussion Paper are to be in writing and submitted to the Board by 29 April 2005. The Discussion Paper is available on the Board's website:

www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au
Any enquiries concerning this project should be directed to Mr K Hudson by email:
hudsonk@healthregboards.qld.gov.au

UPDATE OF GUIDELINES FOR THE SUPERVISED PRACTICE PROGRAM

Updated versions of the documents Supervised Practice Program - Guidelines for Probationary

Registrants and Supervisors (the Guidelines) and Supervised Practice Program – Requirements for Student Probationary Registrants will be available on the Board's website from 27 April 2005 or copies may be requested from the Board. The updated Guidelines include the new Form J Application for Review of Probationary Conditions and the revised Form H(ii), Assessment of Competence Form 2 – Psychological Assessment. Probationary registrants currently undertaking the Supervised Practice Program may follow either the new guidelines for Competency 2, Psychological Assessment, and use the revised Form H(ii) or use the previous guidelines and Form.

Following a review of the interim Guidelines for the Supervised Practice Program the Board had intended to publish revised Guidelines in September last year. However, a number of matters have taken precedence to the development and publishing of the revised Guidelines, (eg introduction of the Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program (STAP), audit of the administrative processes for the Supervised Practice Program etc), and these matters have informed the review process. Once the review process is complete the revised Guidelines will be published on the Board's website.

Please check the website regularly for updates on the Supervised Practice Program including revision of the Guidelines.

USE OF TITLE 'PSYCHOLOGIST' BY PROBATIONARY REGISTRANTS

The Board at its meeting on 21 October 2004 agreed that registrants who hold General Registration with Probationary Conditions may use the title and qualifier "**Psychologist in Training**". The qualifier must be

used whenever the title is used, (eg on letterhead; business cards; identity badges; under the registrant's name or signature on reports, letters etc).

Section 141 of the Act states: A registrant who is registered on conditions, including, for example, probationary conditions, must not –

- (a) *claim, or hold himself or herself out, to be registered without the conditions or any conditions; or*
- (b) *allow himself or herself to be held out as being registered without the conditions or any conditions.*

The maximum penalty is \$75,000.

REMINDER: A registrant who holds General Registration with Probationary Conditions, must not hold himself or herself out to be registered without the conditions.

UPDATE ON THE SUPERVISOR TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (STAP)

The first report from the Consortium providing the STAP program was considered by the Board at its meeting on 17 March 2005. Key points from this report are provided below.

Feedback from Workshops

A total of 71 registrants attended Workshops in Brisbane in November and December 2004 and on the Sunshine Coast in March 2005. Participants provided overall satisfaction ratings in the very good to excellent range for the Workshop and for the evaluated components of the Workshop, (range of 4-5 on the Consortium's Workshop evaluation form). The overall ratings were:

The Workshop content:
4.2/5.0 (86.1%)

The Trainer:
4.5/5.0 (93.8%)

The Workbook:
4.7/5.0 (94.4%)

The venue plus administration:
4.5/5.0 (90%)

The Workshop overall:
4.4/5.0 (87.2%)

Following is a selection of participants' quotes gathered from the Workshop evaluation:

Positive feedback:

- *Useful for clarifying and validating my own experience. Glad I came.*
- *Simply providing a process for "supervising the supervisor" is a quantum leap in protecting and enhancing our profession. YES!*
- *Excellent for first round and a good initiative by the Board. Good to compare own practice with recommended practice and address gaps.*
- *Great! Well worth the two days – will recommend it to others.*
- *Very useful videos; generated excellent discussion.*
- *Learning process stimulating and thought provoking opportunity – much more valuable than I expected; provided challenges to reflect and consider improvements in own practice.*
- *Excellent workshop that provides skills and knowledge.*
- *A must for all supervisors. It can only enhance the quality of professional skills in psychologists who undertake supervision.*

Group discussions were overall seen as invaluable, making information "come alive". Many participants commented that the opportunity to meet other psychologists was a particularly positive aspect.

Suggestions for improvement:

- *More time for skills development would have been great.*
- *Less content – refer to major points/regulation; more discussion re problems in*



supervision.

- *Focused too much on SPP and not enough on the skills and techniques for effectively implementing good supervisor practices; More interactive session practising skills.*
- *Need electronic copies of evaluation forms.*
- *Need to record outcome of group discussions.*
- *Could give participants their own copy of Code of Ethics.*

The main issue raised by participants related to the balance between content and practice. Many participants indicated that they would like more small group discussion and skills training and practice. The team has adapted the workshop in response to this feedback.

Evaluation Markers

All 14 additional markers for specialist areas will be trained by the end of April 2005. Based on feedback from markers and participants, the Consortium has changed the marking system for the video and essay assessment tasks from percentage grading to "satisfactory/not satisfactory". Furthermore, each participant will receive a list of markers and may indicate if they would prefer not to be marked by certain individuals.

Accredited Supervisors

The Board congratulates the following registrants who were accredited as supervisors at the March Board meeting:

Dr Paul Bramston
Ms Donna Goodman
Dr Manuela Habicht
Ms Susan Hutchinson-Phillips
Dr Andrea Quinn
Ms Jude Robb
Dr Roslyn Smart

Frequently Asked Questions about the STAP.

The Board receives many enquiries from registrants about the STAP. Information addressing a number of these enquiries was provided in the Board's STAP Newsletter distributed to registrants in mid-April 2005. In addition, the Board is currently developing a document on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) about the STAP which will be available on the Board's website from May 2005. Please check the website regularly for updates on STAP and the Supervised Practice Program.

Contact Details for STAP

For information on upcoming Workshops, enrolment forms etc please contact:

Supervisor Training and Accreditation Program

**Suite 82, Silverton Place
101 Wickham Terrace
BRISBANE QLD 4000**

Email Address:

supervision-program@griffith.edu.au

Location	Dates of Workshops in 2005	Register by
Toowoomba	17 + 18 June 2005	3 May 2005
Brisbane	22 + 23 July 2005	6 June 2005
Gold Coast	26 + 27 August 2005	11 July 2005

GROWTH IN REGISTRANT NUMBERS

The Board maintains a Register of Psychologists pursuant to section 11(d) of the Act.

As at 30 June 2004, the Register contained a total of 3,579 names representing a net increase of 277 (approximately 8%) over the June 2003 figure. The 3,579 registrants comprised 2,725 general registrants, 829 general registrants with probationary conditions and 25 provisional general registrants.

The following bar chart illustrates the growth since 1993 in the number of registered Psychologists at 30 June each year.



Gender of Queensland Psychologists

- 27% of registrants were male;
73% were female.

Age Groupings of Queensland Psychologists

Age Grouping	% of Registrants
Under 25 years	5%
25 - 34 years	31%
35 - 44 years	23%
45 - 54 years	25%
55 years and over	16%
Total	100%



FROM THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND HEALTH MONITORING COMMITTEE

The Board receives an average of approximately 4 new complaints per month, with the most common source of complaints relating to report writing. In the period 2003 to 2004, the Board received 13 complaints about medico-legal reports that resulted in 9 disciplinary hearings. Psychological reports are likely to be read by critical readers such as parents, lawyers and judges, medical practitioners and other fellow practitioners. All of these are critical readers and have expectations that the author of the report will be meticulous and competent in the process of assessment, the collation of relevant information, and in communicating his/her findings.

The most common sources of concern before the Board when a complaint is received about a poorly written report include:

- Failure to verify critical information obtained during assessment (e.g. client's date of birth, occupation, social history);
- Failure to establish the nature and purpose of the assessment framed within the parameters of a sound clinical formulation and hypotheses testing;
- Not explaining the purpose of the assessment to the client in a manner responsive to the needs and rights of the client;
- Not identifying sources of information perused in the preparation of the report;
- Failure to include a full and comprehensive history (including medical, psycho-social, and educational information);
- Failure to integrate the client's clinical history with assessment results;
- Engaging in assessment and making recommendations that

go beyond the expertise of the practitioner;

- Utilising inappropriate instruments for the purpose of the assessment.

Complaints about poorly prepared reports and complaints in general are taken very seriously by the Board and, if substantiated, result in disciplinary action. Registrants always have an opportunity to comment before any action is taken by the Board, whose primary function is to protect the public. It is important to highlight that complaints in the period 2003-2004 involved only about 1.2% (45) of all registrants (3,579).

There are a number of excellent references and resources currently available that provide advice for practitioners on how to structure and furnish a psychological report. Conferring with experienced fellow psychologists when in doubt about either psychological assessment or report writing is another way of minimising the risk of having a complaint made against one's work.

RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

Registrants are required to apply for renewal of registration prior to 30 June each year by completing the Application for Renewal of Registration Form and paying the prescribed fee. The renewal of registration fee for 2005-2006 has been increased from \$199 to \$249. This increase was approved by Cabinet to enable the Board to have sufficient income to meet its financial commitments in administering the *Psychologists Registration Act 2001* and the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999*.

REMINDER: Registrants must complete the mandatory disclosure on the renewal of registration form stating whether they suffer from any ongoing medical condition, of which they are aware, or know or ought reasonably to know

adversely affects their ability to competently and safely practise the profession. If such a condition is notified to the Board, registration is renewed, but the Board may deal with the matter under Part 7 of the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999*.



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:

Level 19, Forestry House
160 Mary Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Executive Officer:

Mr J O'Dempsey
Psychology Coordinator

Ms Helen Ross
(Supervision)

Assistant Registrar:

Mrs Pauline Portier

Phone: 61 7 3234 1164

Fax: 61 7 3225 2527

Email:

psychology@healthregboards.qld.gov.au

Website:

www.psychologyboard.qld.gov.au

Correspondence should be addressed to:

Executive Officer
Psychologists Board of Queensland
GPO Box 2438
BRISBANE QLD 4001

