



MEDICAL RADIATION TECHNOLOGISTS BOARD OF QUEENSLAND

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NEWSLETTER MAY 2004

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of important items contained in this edition of the newsletter which will affect different categories of registrants and potential registrants.

In late November 2003 the inaugural Australian and New Zealand Conference of Regulating Authorities (CORA) of Medical Radiation Technologists Boards (Queensland, New Zealand, Victoria and Tasmania) was held. The President, Secretary and representatives of the Australian Institute of Radiography (AIR), and representatives of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine (ANZSNM), New Zealand Institute of Medical Radiation Technology and New South Wales Radiation Licensing also attended.

After initial presentations to understand the legislation in each jurisdiction, areas of common interest were discussed. These areas included Resumption of Professional Practice after some years out of the profession, Competency Based Assessment for those returning to work, Continuing Professional Development, the Supervised Practice Programme and its relationship with the AIR's and ANZSNM's Professional Development Year (PDY) and the Mutual Recognition Principle between the respective jurisdictions.

The Mutual Recognition Principle was explored in some depth with the result that legal opinion was provided by NSW and subsequently sought by Qld to clarify the issue. The outcome of advice received from the Qld Crown Law Office is that for the purposes of registration in Qld the Mutual Recognition Principle will apply for applicants who are registered in Victoria, Tasmania, Northern Territory and New Zealand. It will not apply for applicants who are licensed from NSW, South Australia and West Australia. A further CORA will be held in Cairns on the day after the AIR National Conference to progress some of the issues mentioned above.

Since the inaugural CORA conference the MRTBQ has put together a draft document on Registration policies for feedback from registrants.

We would particularly ask for feedback on the enclosed proposed policies on Resumption of Professional Practice after extended periods of absence that are contained within this newsletter. Closing date for receipt of feedback is 30th June 2004.

A copy of the full registration policies of the Board will be posted on the Board's website for comment in mid - May 2004. www.mrtboard.qld.gov.au

PRACTISING UNREGISTERED

The Board has in the past 6 months been forced to formally warn 4 employers and 15 members of the profession for failing to register with the Board prior to commencing work. It has also been noted that many employers were unaware of their obligations under the legislation although it had been brought to their attention through letters from the Board to employers in September 2002 and has been reiterated in newsletters since. The Board is now issuing a general warning to both members of the profession and employers that it will no longer tolerate breaches of the legislation in this regard.

SUPERVISED PRACTICE PROGRAM

The SPP Committee has met several times since the last newsletter. The committee is now seeking feedback by 30 June 2004 on the following definitions:

Trauma

This is defined as the referral for acute imaging examinations from an Accident & Emergency Site where the production of diagnostic images require the adaptation of medical imaging techniques.

Theatre and Mobiles

A period of time is required for the graduate to become proficient in these areas. *It is suggested that a total period of 10 weeks cumulative be allocated for Trauma, Theatre and Mobiles with a minimum of 3 weeks in any one area.*

Supervision

Crown Law advice received late in 2003 will be implemented with the 2004 SPP participants. On call and shiftwork will be permitted after a successful 24 week report. Access to supervisors somewhere in the practice whilst on call or working shifts will be required.

Observation

The graduate must attend a procedure a number of times to observe and gain knowledge and an understanding of the procedure. This observation period shall be determined by the primary supervisor.

Assist with

The graduate must attend a procedure and participate in this procedure under direct supervision to gain a knowledge and understanding as determined by the primary supervisor.

Brachytherapy

It was agreed that this is a specialist procedure and should be removed from the Regulations. However until that is done, participants of the SPP must observe at least one procedure including the planning and radiation safety aspects to gain a knowledge and understanding of that procedure.

The above criteria must be undertaken by the respective graduates in the SPP year. Failure to complete this will result in the graduate not completing the SPP. An extension to their time will need to be sought and the commencement date of the next year's graduates may be compromised.

Incomplete Report Forms

As some registrants are aware, further documentation was required by the Board at the end of 2003 for a number of Probationary Registrant following incomplete 48 week reports. Most of these were in relation to the

undertaking of Trauma and Brachytherapy. In some cases graduates may need to be rotated to various sites for exposure in these areas. Some private sites may need to negotiate with accredited public or private hospital to enable this to occur. Should this be necessary it is important for the numbers of graduates at any one site to not exceed the centre's accredited positions.

Information for Supervisors

Supervisors and Probationary Registrants are reminded that the 48 week report is a report for the whole 48 weeks not just for the last 24 weeks. Collaboration with staff at other sites may be required in order to complete the final report. The 48 week Report was designed to be a report for the total SPP experience. The 24 week report is an interim report to assess the progress of the graduate and identify areas needing attention in order to maximize an individual's entry into the profession.

Date on Certificate

There were some concerns from employers as to the date Probationary Graduates could be employed as General Registrants and therefore be paid at the higher pay scale. The date on the Certificate will be the date when the SPP Committee approves the 48 week reports and endorses the removal of conditions. This will be dependent on the arrival of the 48 week reports. The SPP committee meeting at the end of the year is scheduled for the return of a majority of 48 week reports (ie. 28 days after the reports are sent out). It was difficult in 2003 to schedule this meeting as reports were very late in being returned. Some graduates took leave during the year and this then held up the return of their reports. Consequently some centres have decided that leave will not be encouraged during the 48 week SPP.

48 week Reports

The committee is investigating alternative arrangement for the return of the 48 week reports to further streamline the process. The return of the majority of the 2003 48 weeks reports was unacceptable. Whilst it is understood that graduates took leave during their SPP it became very difficult for members of the SPP Committee to schedule meetings to approve the reports and remove conditions. It is the responsibility of the graduate to ensure that the reports (24 and 48 weeks) are returned by the appropriate dates. Supervisors may take on this responsibility for graduates. Employers are reminded that new graduates can not commence the SPP until the current graduates have completed their time and had their conditions removed.

REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES

Registrants should ensure that they retain copies of the receipts and certificates supplied by the Office when they initially register and then consequently renew their registration. It has come to the attention of the Board that many people have failed to keep these documents. The Office cannot reissue these documents but can supply a "Statement of Fees Paid".

REFUNDS

Under the legislation the Board can only refund registrations fees to practitioners if they surrender their registration within 3 months of initially registering with the Board or within 3 months of renewal of registration. Please note that if registrants surrender their registration they will need to reapply for general registration when they return to Queensland.

**DRAFT POLICY ON
RESUMPTION OF
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

Background

This document is prepared to outline the registration policies of the Board which will provide pathways to registration after absences from the profession.

Applicants for registration where:

A – They have Period/s of practice during the past 5 years but a total amount less than 1 year (FTE)

The registration decision / process will be:

1. General registration granted with restricted practice and / or supervisory conditions until the amount of hours of work equates to 1 year (fte) in the last 5 years.
2. When a Supervisor is appointed, the completion of a supervisory report /s showing satisfactory completion of supervision is required for conditions to be removed. This will be Form 502.
3. A CBA (Competency Based Assessment) can be sat as an option in place of the supervision period.

B - No practice within the last 5 years but some practice in the last 10 years.

1. Undertake a Return to Work Assessment (RTW) which will involve successful completion of ;
 - a. Written test
 - b. Practical test
 - c. Period of supervised clinical practice - Workplace
 - d. Clinical assessment – Independent assessor

2. If successful general registration granted.
3. If unsuccessful in any stage they can re-sit each stage.

Supervision of examinations will be by an independent assessor/s. Appeal rights for applicants will exist.

C - No practice within the last 10 years or more

1. Undertake Clinical based Resumption of Professional Practice Program (RPP) and upon successful completion be granted general registration with supervisory conditions for 1 year (fte).
2. If unsuccessful with RPP program they will be required to undertake a CBA to determine what course of study (retraining or university) they need to undertake to further their application for registration

CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to respond to:

1. The definitions supplied on Supervised Practice Program or
2. The Board's draft policy on Resumption of Professional Practice.

This can be done by emailing mrt@healthregboards.qld.gov.au or writing to:

Executive Officer
Medical Radiation Technologists
Board of Queensland
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