

# Speech Pathologists Board of Queensland

February 2008

## R E G I S T R A N T S   U P D A T E

### From the Chair

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Welcome to this edition of the newsletter of the Speech Pathologists Board of Queensland. There is important information for speech pathologists in this newsletter. Please contact the Office if you require any assistance or clarification on any aspect of the newsletter.

Recently the Board welcomed Ms Barbara Kent as the new legal member. Ms Kent has extensive experience in administrative law and as a Board member in other organisations.

My appreciation is extended to all members of the Board and its committees for their efforts during the 2007 year. The current Board members' term of appointment expires this year on 11 July 2008.

Meredith Kilminster

Chairperson

### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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The Board members are:

#### Speech pathologists

Meredith Kilminster (Chairperson)

Elizabeth Ward (Deputy Chairperson)

Lynette Hodgson

Julie Marinac

Sandra McMahon

Alison Smith

#### Public members

Valerie Cocksedge

Max Howard

#### Legal member

Barbara Kent

The current term of office for Board members is due to expire on 11 July 2008 when a new Board will be appointed and ratified by the minister.

### REGENCY OF PRACTICE POLICY

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The Speech Pathologists 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 administered by the Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards (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 1996. This is available on the Board's website ([www.speechpathboard.qld.gov.au/publications](http://www.speechpathboard.qld.gov.au/publications)) with particular emphasis on the 'recent practice' and continuing professional development requirements.

### ENHANCING CLINICAL PRACTICE GRANTS

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In 2006, the Board commenced a new initiative to provide annual grant funding intended to contribute to the advancement of the speech pathology profession at an individual or professional level within Queensland.

At the conclusion of the 2006 grants processes, the committee had met to revise application forms and reconsider criteria for selection. These formed the basis of the process for 2007. Initially the incorrect application forms were presented on the website and this may have had an impact on the number of applications.

A total of six applications was received for the Enhancing Clinical Practice Grants in 2007. The committee read all applications independently and then met to determine recipients.

Applications of most merit had detailed explanations of the enhancements proposed for clinical practice and were generally of impact for a group of speech pathologists. Two grants have been awarded in 2007.

The first grant was awarded to Anne McSweeney, Senior Speech Language Pathologist for the External Therapy Program, CHILD

Association, the Glenleighden School, Fig Tree Pocket to purchase Earobics by Cognitive Concepts Programs (Step 1 & 2) to facilitate phonological awareness, auditory processing and phonics training in clients with primary language disorders. The application was presented in a professional and comprehensive manner with explanation into the engagement and training of staff and the benefits of the programs across the state.

The second grant was awarded to Mrs Adele Wallis, Disability Services Maroochydore to provide a mentoring opportunity and a project to develop a set of outcome measures for speech language pathologists working in the Child Safety Behaviour Support Teams.

## 2006 GRANT RECIPIENT REPORT

Early in 2006 I completed the re-entry process and returned to practice in a remote speech pathology clinic in Longreach, western Queensland. Confidence in my abilities and developing a professional network were the two biggest challenges I faced as I re-entered the profession. The *Enhancing Clinical Practice* grant to attend the Speech Pathology Australia National Conference 2007 in Sydney enabled me to update my knowledge in recent evidence based practice across a wide range of areas, whilst confirming that my clinical practice was current and appropriate to my caseload.

The opportunities to participate in the Rural and Remote Practice Group and Community of Practice in Education meetings and to network during conference breaks were valuable in establishing professional support with colleagues from both city and rural based practices. The extensive trade displays enabled me to evaluate a vast array of resources.

Attendance at the conference has facilitated the review of a wide range of clinical skills which are required in my generalist practice. I attended presentations that focused on a range of client populations and types of impairment. The sessions included paediatric speech and language impairments, school aged language and literacy, indigenous and rural issues and language outcomes in children with a hearing impairment. Of most interest to me were the sessions on family centred intervention and working with the elderly focusing on communication, oral hygiene and mealtime management.

Following the conference I set myself a goal to up-skill in dysphagia by securing a work-shadow placement in a tertiary hospital, which I have recently completed. This up-skilling has facilitated an expansion in the available speech pathology services I am able to provide in the community, particularly in the area of primary health care.

I am most grateful to have been a recipient of the *Enhancing Clinical Practice* grant to support my remote based practice.

Yours sincerely

Jenny .....(name supplied)

## RURAL AND REGIONAL CLINICAL PLACEMENT BURSARIES

Students from The University of Queensland, and now from James Cook University, continue to receive bursaries to support rural clinical block placements. On completion of the placement, students at UQ are asked to forward a report to the board. One of the latest received comes from a third year student and reads as follows:

*To the Speech Pathology Board of Queensland*

*Thank you so much for the contribution of \$300 that you made to me for my placement. During the past 6 weeks, I have been involved in a rural placement in Bundaberg. I have been at Thabeban State School; Literacy and Learning Development Centre, however each day I have travelled to various schools which we service in the Bundaberg and Bagara areas. I have also attended Speech Pathology district meetings, Individual Education Plan meetings, teleconferences regarding special needs students, and also school special needs meetings.*

*The clientele I have serviced has been very diverse, ranging from prep to year 7. I have been involved in the assessment and treatment of children with speech, language auditory processing, literacy, phonological awareness and pragmatic difficulties. I have also visited the Special Education Unit's preschool classes on a few occasions, and have thus had the chance to work with a number of children with various special needs who communicate with AAC devices. Finally, each Thursday afternoon, I have been spending 2 hours at a private speech pathology clinic in Bundaberg, which has given me further opportunity to treat early primary children with literacy difficulties, and to participate in Primary Literacy Groups.*

*Your money helped me to pay for transport, both to and from Bundaberg and the Sunshine Coast when I needed to get home, and to and from work each day during the 6 weeks. I also used about \$50 of the money to cover stationery needs during the placement.*

*I would like to add that it is really important to give similar assistance to speech students who are given rural placements in the future, as many of us are not only covering the living costs of where we are placed but are also in share housing in Brisbane for university, and become trapped into paying dead rent and bills while we are not there. Being sent away from home also means that we can't pick up the casual work hours we would usually do to cover costs. I think that a lot of us would not be able to suggest we could do rural placements at all if we didn't think we could receive some kind of financial help.*

*Thank you again for helping make this placement possible, as I have had such a fantastic time up here, and have learnt so much being in a place where you have to "do it all". It has been a wonderful experience!!*

*Thank you again*

*Regards,  
(name supplied, 3rd year UQ student).*



## CONFIDENTIALITY

There is now a comprehensive privacy law covering the private sector. In an amendment to the *Privacy Act 1988*, private sector organisations now have an obligation to protect the privacy of individuals' personal information.

This amendment applies to all health service providers in the private sector, regardless of size, from 21 December 2001. For more information on the new guidelines please refer to the website [www.privacy.gov.au/health/guidelines/](http://www.privacy.gov.au/health/guidelines/)

The guidelines will answer the following questions:

- Are these guidelines relevant to my organisation?
- I am collecting information from an individual. What must I tell the individual?
- There are a number of professionals treating an individual. Are there any constraints on the sharing of information in this situation?
- A research body has asked for health information. How can I respond while safeguarding privacy?
- The police have asked me for information about an individual. Do I have to disclose the information?
- A relative asks for health information about a family member who is not able to consent to the disclosure. What does the Privacy Act require?
- A parent has asked for information about a child and I have concerns about disclosing to the parent. What does the Privacy Act require?
- What is a Privacy Policy? Does my organisation need one?
- An individual asks me for access to their records. How should I respond?
- An individual asks for a copy of their health records, but I am concerned that this may present a risk to their health. Do I need to provide access to records?

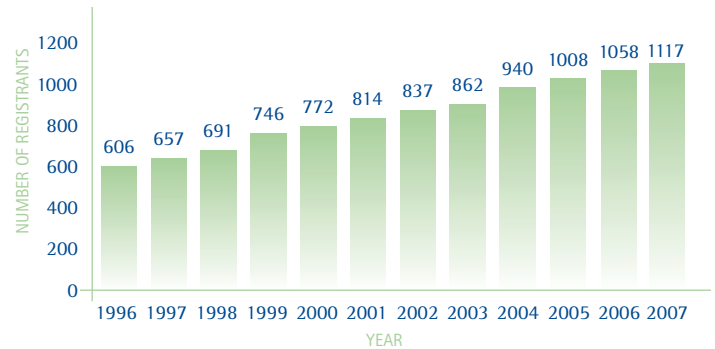
All registrants practising in the private sector must be aware of their duties under the *Privacy Act 1988* and comply with this legislation. A breach of privacy may be the subject of a complaint to the Federal Privacy Commissioner, the Health Quality and Complaints Commission or to the Board and provides grounds for disciplinary action against the registrant concerned.

Fact sheets about the new privacy rules and the *Health Privacy Guidelines* can be obtained from [www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au). Queries regarding the new privacy rules may be directed to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner on 1300 363 992.

## REGISTRATIONS

At 30 June 2007, the register of speech pathologists which the Board maintains contained a total of 1,117 names – representing a net increase of 59 (approximately 5.5%) over 30 June 2006 figure. The 1,117 registrants comprised 1,108 general registrants, 8 provisional general registrants and one (1) short term registrant.

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



During the 2006-07 year, 111 new registrations were processed by the Board and a further 38 former registrants who were restored to the Register.

An analysis of the registration database as at 30 June 2007 provides the following information.

### Gender

97.4% of registrants were female; and  
2.6% of registrants were male.

### Age groupings

Age grouping	% of registrants
Under 25 years	10%
25 – 34 years	42%
35 – 44 years	22%
45 – 54 years	19%
55 years and over	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Geographical distribution

79% of registrants gave their addresses on the Register as within south east Queensland (postcodes 4000 to 4399 and 4500 to 4581), comprising 52% within Brisbane and 27% elsewhere in south east Queensland;



17% of registrants had Queensland addresses outside south east Queensland; and

4% of registrants had addresses outside Queensland.

During 2005-06, 141 new registrations were processed by the Board. These comprised 104 new registrants and 37 former registrants who were restored to the Register.

## HEALTH QUALITY AND COMPLAINTS COMMISSION STANDARDS

The Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC) (formerly the Health Rights Commission) is an independent body dedicated to improving the quality and safety of health services in Queensland. The HQCC has developed the following standards to assist health service providers understand their responsibilities to improve the quality of health services pursuant to section 20 of the *Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006*:

*Review of Hospital-related Deaths*

*Management of Acute Myocardial Infarction on and following Discharge*

*Surgical Safety*

*Hand Hygiene*

*Credentiailling and Scope of Clinical Practice*

*Complaints Management*

*Providers Duty to Improve the Quality of Health Services*

Standards were selected after consideration of factors determining the health and well-being of users of health services and the processes necessary to protect their health and well-being. The basis of consideration was: burden of disease; severity of impact on users; frequency of occurrence; major process/system failings in patient safeguards; and, legislated mandate.

The HQCC has produced a manual about the Standards which is available at [www.hqcc.qld.gov.au](http://www.hqcc.qld.gov.au). All registrants need to be aware of these standards and ensure compliance.

## THE LIDCOMBE PROGRAM

For the past year, the Australian Stuttering Research Centre (ASRC) at the University of Sydney has been running a study to find out how speech pathologists in the Australian community use the Lidcombe Program to treat preschoolers who stutter. We are still looking for more clinicians to be involved. Participation is simple and mainly involves collecting some information before you start treatment. For further details, or to obtain

an information pack, please contact Lisa Iverach or Amanda Siebers at ASRC: (02) 9351 9061, [l.iverach@usyd.edu.au](mailto:l.iverach@usyd.edu.au), [a.siebers@usyd.edu.au](mailto:a.siebers@usyd.edu.au), [www3.fhs.usyd.edu.au/asrcwww/](http://www3.fhs.usyd.edu.au/asrcwww/).

*(While the Speech Pathologists Board is including this information in a newsletter, it should not be assumed that the Board is involved in this research or endorsing it in any way. The Board has not disclosed your name, address or any other information in providing this service.)*

## CONTACT DETAILS

Location

Level 8, Forestry House,  
160 Mary Street,  
BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND

Registration Services Program 07 3225 2508

Board Support and Advisory Program 07 3247 4866

Facsimile 07 3225 2527

Email

[speechpathology@healthregboards.qld.gov.au](mailto:speechpathology@healthregboards.qld.gov.au)

Website:

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

Correspondence to the Board should be addressed to:

Executive Officer

Speech Pathologists Board of Queensland

GPO Box 2438

BRISBANE QLD 4000

