



DIETITIANS BOARD

P O Box 10-140, Wellington
Telephone 04 474 0746

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2005

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ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report is posted on the Board's website. Please take time to read this important document, which summarises the year 2003/2004.

THE HEALTH PRACTITIONERS COMPETENCE ASSURANCE ACT 2003

This Act came into force on 18 September 2004. It has replaced the Dietitians Act 1950, along with similar legislation covering numerous other health professions, and ushered in a new era of practice for the dietetic profession. The new Act has a strong emphasis on public health and safety. The Board has been focussing on getting systems into place in time for the change-over. The Board sets standards of education and training, grants registration, and issues Annual Practising Certificates to those who meet the required standards. In addition, the Board may exercise disciplinary powers over practitioners, and may advise Government on issues affecting the profession.

POLICY for OVERSEAS APPLICANTS SEEKING REGISTRATION in NZ - UPDATE

At the Board meeting on 2 December, the Board approved the following additions to the Overseas Applicants' policy:

d) Granted Conditional Registration and issued an Interim Practising Certificate if the intention is to practice as a locum or to undertake an exchange in dietetics for a period of 1 year or less.

In New Zealand for a period of less than 1 year

Overseas trained dietitians who are visiting New Zealand on a temporary basis, for a period of up to one year, to undertake a dietetic work exchange or practice as a locum dietitian, need to apply for registration. Applicants must submit their papers for assessment. If the applicant is deemed to have equivalency or near equivalency, he/she may be registered by the Board on specified conditions and issued an Interim Practising Certificate prescribing these specified conditions. These conditions would include the granting of Conditional Registration for a specified time and for a specified dietetic position. The dietitian will not be able to act as a mentor or supervisor.

If the applicant exceeds the specified time limit, and he/she intends to continue practising dietetics, he/she will be required to sit OCRE.

DIETETIC TRAINING COURSE CURRICULUM CHANGES

(Includes extracts from the Director of Dietetic Training's Report to the Board)

2005 Course

The recent update of the Statement of Registration Competency Requirements (ELC) and the Board's accreditation review of the University of Otago's Dietetic Education Programmes, created an opportunity for a reflective examination of the Dietetic course curriculum.

The Dietetic Training Programme staff considered in depth the implications of the revised ELC's and the recommendations of the accreditation panel and made changes to the programme's curriculum for the 2005 academic year. The University of Otago's academic regulation committees have been advised of these changes and are supportive.

The plan for addressing these issues is to:

- a) Start the course early Feb instead of late Jan and finish mid November instead of early December. This four-week reduction in course length will be achieved by revising the lecture programme to reflect the entry-level competencies only. A parallel revision of the practical experience programme to reflect only the areas where the ELC document indicates that students need to have skills to manage situations.
- b) Instigate a two-week clinical block for the students after their exams in November to consolidate the integration of their knowledge with clinical skills.
- c) Plan Semester one for 2005 to allow the students to complete as many as possible of their 15 clinical practical weeks within the 22-week semester.
This part of the plan will provide hospital clinical dietitians a 'student free' semester two.
- d) Include new learning sessions for the students on culturally appropriate practice, to build on their undergraduate knowledge and experiences in working with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- e) Request that senior dietitians in each training center provide service management 'cases' for the students to consider and make recommendations on. The service case appraisal and recommendations would replace the current small business plan project.

Post Entry Education

A consequence of reducing the amount of curriculum time devoted to specialty areas is the need to address these topics for practicing dietitians as part of their continuing education. A number of dietitians have expressed interest in short courses and / or workshops on specialty 'advanced clinical nutrition' topics. Such courses would add to the range of post entry courses already offered. NZDA are working with the Dietetic Programme to conduct needs analyses on both content and format of future courses.

The Dietitians Board accepted this proposal at the December Board meeting.

CONTINUING COMPETENCY

- The first **audit** has now finished and all dietitians successfully completed their audit and have been notified their results.
- Dietitians required to submit their **audit** by 30 April 2005, have been notified. Please ensure you confirm receipt now.
- The Dietitians Board strongly recommend that you find a **Mentor**.
- Dietitians now need to participate in the Continuing Competency programme, and gain a **minimum** of ten credits per year, so you should be ensuring you attend courses & workshops etc. Save your evidence of participation.
- Please notify the Board if you intend to be **overseas** for an extended period of time.
- NB: there is a revised credit summary form on the website for use for audits. E-mail dietitians@regboards.co.nz if you would like a set posted to you.
- We remind you that if you are intending to **change your area of practice**, you are required to notify the Board.

CODE OF ETHICS

Following concerns from members of the profession in regards to Clause 4 and in particular 4.c

"Dietitians do not allow their professional standing to be used in the direct endorsement of products in advertising", the Code of Ethics committee has been reconvened and is meeting late January to discuss the issues raised. In the first instance, the result of this meeting will be posted on the website and forwarded to NZDA.

BOARD CHANGES / PERSONNEL

Congratulations to our new Board member - **Vicki Robinson**, Dietitian, Wellington. Vicki has replaced **Gwenda Kingsland** who completed her term after 9 years on the Board, most recently as Deputy Chair.

Mary McNab has been recently elected Deputy Chair.

The **Board** currently comprises Barbara Ryan (Chair), Mary McNab (Deputy Chair), Avis McIntosh, Makuini McKerchar, Winsome Parnell, Vicki Robinson and Vernon Tile.

Jane de Lisle has been appointed as the full-time Registrar and as Executive Officer to service the requirements of the Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal (HPDT) in relation to the Dietitians Board.

WEBSITE (www.dietitiansboard.org.nz)

The website is updated on a regular basis, please access this from time to time and yes we would like feedback.