



## SELECTION CRITERIA FOR BOARD POSITIONS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN REGISTER OF NATUROPATHS AND HERBALISTS

### A GUIDE FOR POTENTIAL APPLICANTS AND THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

#### Background

The Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists (ARONAH) is currently in the process of being established and will provide minimum standards of education and practice for naturopathy and herbal medicine. A Steering Committee has been set up to develop an objective process to establish the first Board. The Board will develop this independent register which aims to mirror government requirements for the regulation of health practitioners. There will be a public call for nominations for Board positions – to be advertised on the ARONAH website – and the Board will be chosen by an independent body of eminent Australians from these nominations.

Other health professions in Australia are currently undergoing a national registration process, details of which can be found at the National Health Workforce Taskforce website (<http://www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp>). Naturopaths and herbalists are not part of this process despite a strong recommendation by the seminal review on the issue initiated by the Victorian government (*Lin et al 2005*). The proposed independent register is expected to mirror the national regulation process and afford the public a similar level of protection regarding professional standards of practitioners and complaint handling processes. Currently no fixed standards, policies or procedures have been developed by ARONAH and we wish to seek your input on these issues. Should statutory regulation of naturopaths and herbalists be enacted it is expected the ARONAH register will be subsumed by a statutory registration board.

In November 2008, the [Health Practitioner Regulation \(Administrative Arrangements\) National Law Act 2008](#) (the Act) was enacted to establish the structures for the national registration and accreditation scheme with powers to facilitate the development and implementation of the scheme.

The new legislation established the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency Management Committee and the national boards. The functions of the national boards under the Act are set out in Appendix 1.

#### ARONAH board membership

After a public call for nominations and expressions of interest for Board positions, the Board membership will be selected by the Selection Committee, an independent body of eminent Australians chosen for their expertise in governance and appointing high-level positions.

The Selection Committee will select Board members by reviewing the credentials; in relation both to the skills and experience of the nominee, and their suitability to adequately perform the functions of the Board (see Appendix 1).

- At least half, but not more than two-thirds, of the members of a national board must be persons appointed as practitioner members.
- At least two of the members of a national board must be persons appointed as community members.
- One of the practitioner members of the national board is to be appointed as Chairperson of the board by the Selection Committee.

The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council has agreed that national boards under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme must contain at least one practitioner member from each of the five larger jurisdictions: Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, and at least one other practitioner member drawn from the three smaller States and Territories: Tasmania, Australian

Capital Territory and Northern Territory. It is also agreed that each national board will contain at least one regional and rural member from among the membership described here.

In accordance with these guidelines the Board will be made up of nine (9) members: six (6) practitioner members and three (3) community members. This structure is the simplest allowed under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and is analogous to the recently created Chiropractic Board of Australia, the Optometry Board of Australia, the Osteopathy Board of Australia and the Podiatry Board of Australia.

The Board should be representative of practitioners in as many respects as possible. Whilst quotas will not be set, demographic factors such as: 75-80% of the naturopathic and western herbal medicine workforce is female; the average practitioner age is 44; one third of practitioners practise in rural areas; degree level education in naturopathy and herbal medicine is a new phenomenon and up to 31% may have trained when no formal qualifications were available to them and that less than half (and possibly as few as 20%) may currently have Bachelor degree level qualifications should be taken into consideration when selecting Board members. However, demographic factors alone are not enough to secure successful application and nominees and applicants will be chosen on their individual merit and suitability for Board positions.

The members of the Board are required to act impartially in the public interest in their exercising Board functions. Members are required to place the public interest before any particular health practitioner or any organisation or entity that represents health practitioners.

### **Practitioner appointments**

A person is eligible to be appointed as a practitioner member of the Board only if the person is eligible to be a registered health practitioner in the health profession for which the board is established, i.e. that the person has membership of a currently recognised professional association as a naturopath or herbalist. A recognised professional association is taken to mean a professional association recognised by the Therapeutic Goods Administration with a Schedule 1 Certificate of Exemption (see Appendix 2 or also available at <http://www.tga.gov.au/docs/html/advsch1.htm>).

In addition:

- At least one practitioner member will have education and training expertise, and
- At least two will be in current clinical practice.

### **Community members**

A person is eligible to be appointed as a community member of the Board only if the person is not a registered health practitioner in the health profession for which the board is established and has not previously been a registered health practitioner in that health profession. *Anyone* who is not, or has not been, a practising naturopath or herbalist is eligible for this position.

A community member can only serve on the national board of one health profession at any given time. Therefore those currently serving on other health profession boards are ineligible.

### **Terms and conditions**

Individuals may express interest directly in the roles or may be nominated by another individual or group. Any individual nominated for appointment by a third party must agree to that nomination.

The length of appointment may be for up to three years.

Members of the Board cannot be provided with appropriate statutory immunities as ARONAH is not a statutory organisation, though Director's insurance will be sought by the register to protect them against personal litigation.

This will be an unpaid and voluntary position. Reimbursement for expenses for board members are to be determined and will be in line with those set by the Ministerial Council for other national Boards under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

## Application process

If you are **nominating** a candidate please use either:

- Form 1: Practitioner Member Nomination, or
- Form 2: Community Member Nomination.

For practitioners or community members **expressing an interest** on their own behalf please use either:

- Form 3: Practitioner Member Expression of Interest, or
- Form 4: Community Member Expression of Interest.

### Note

All sections of the form must be completed.

The person who fills in the application form must complete the declaration in Section 8.

Nomination and application forms have been provided on the ARONAH website ([www.aronah.org](http://www.aronah.org)). Please save as a .doc file in position, last name, first name format (i.e. Practitioner\_Smith\_John.doc).

**Both the application form and a CV must be lodged by email to [submissions@aronah.org](mailto:submissions@aronah.org) by Close of Business on 26 March 2010.**

Candidates will be assessed by the Selection Committee for suitability for appointment and shortlisted candidates may be interviewed.

Selected candidates must also consent to and may be subject to a National Criminal History Records Check, Proof of Identity, Australian Securities and Investment Commission and Insolvency and Trustee Service Australia checks and be required to make a statement on conflict of interest. Practitioner candidates must provide proof of current registration with a recognised professional association listed on the Therapeutics Goods Register as eligible for a Schedule 1 Certificate of Exemption (see Appendix 2).

**Functions of National Boards (Amended from *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008* (Queensland))**

The functions of a Board are clearly proscribed under clause 49 of the Exposure Draft 2009:

- a) To develop or approve standards, codes and guidelines for the health profession. These may include: approval of accreditation standards developed and submitted to it by an accreditation authority; the development of registration standards for approval by the Ministerial Council; the development and approval of codes and guidelines that provide guidance to health practitioners registered in the profession.
- b) To register suitably qualified and competent persons in the health profession and, if necessary, to impose conditions on the registration of persons in the profession
- c) To approve accredited programs of study as providing qualifications for registration or endorsement in the health profession
- d) To oversee the assessment of the knowledge and clinical skills of overseas trained applicants for registration in the health profession whose qualifications are not approved qualifications for the profession, and to determine the suitability of the applicants for registration in Australia,
- e) To decide the requirements for registration or endorsement of registration in the health profession, including the arrangements for supervised practice required for general registration or specialist registration in the profession
- f) To negotiate in good faith with, and attempt to come to an agreement with, the National Agency or similar body on the terms of a health profession agreement for the health profession
- g) To oversee the receipt, assessment and investigation of complaints about persons who are or were registered as health practitioners in the health profession, or are students in the health profession
- h) To establish panels to conduct hearings about professional standards and health matters in relation to persons who are or were registered in the health profession and health matters in relation to students registered by the Board,
- i) To refer complaints about health practitioners who are or were registered to responsible tribunals for participating jurisdictions,
- j) To oversee the management of health practitioners and students registered in the health profession who have an impairment, including monitoring conditions and suspensions imposed on the registration of the practitioners or students,
- k) To make recommendations to the Ministerial Council or similar body about the operation of specialist recognition in the health profession and the approval of specialities for the profession,
- l) In conjunction with the National Agency (*or in the case of ARONAH, the direct responsibility of the register*) to keep an up-to-date and publicly accessible national register of registered health practitioners for the health profession
- m) In conjunction with the National Agency (*or in the case of ARONAH, the direct responsibility of the register*) to keep an up-to-date national register of students for the health profession,

- n) At the Board's discretion, to provide financial or other support for health programs for health practitioners and students registered in the health profession who have an impairment,
- o) To give advice to the Ministerial Council or similar body on issues relating to the national registration and accreditation scheme for the health profession,
- p) If asked by the Ministerial Council, to give to the Ministerial Council or similar body the assistance or information reasonably required by the Ministerial Council or similar body in connection with the national registration and accreditation scheme,
- q) To do anything else necessary or convenient for the effective and efficient operation of the national registration and accreditation scheme,
- r) Any other function given to the Board at a later date.

\*NOTE: AS ARONAH IS NOT A STATUTORY BODY IT DOES NOT CURRENTLY HAVE ACCESS TO THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL. EFFORTS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH A SIMILAR, PREFERABLY GOVERNMENTAL, AGENCY IN ORDER TO ENSURE EQUITABLE OVERSIGHT.

For more information go to

[Health Practitioner Regulation \(Administrative Arrangements\) National Law Act 2008.](#)

**Note** – The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council announced, following its meeting on 8 May 2009:

*Handling of complaints*

Given the diversity of arrangements in Australia at this time, Ministers have agreed to a flexible model for the administrative arrangements for handling complaints.

The National Law and/or State or Territory law, depending on each jurisdiction's choice, will provide the legislative framework for investigations and prosecutions and the definitions of offences and contraventions and outcomes will be recorded as part of a single national framework.

Where the national legislative framework is adopted, it will also be up to each State and Territory to decide whether the prosecution and investigation functions remain with the national boards or be undertaken by an existing State or Territory health complaints arrangement.

## APPENDIX 2

### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR NATUROPATHS AND WESTERN HERBALISTS LISTED ON THE THERAPEUTIC GOODS REGISTER FOR SCHEDULE 1 CERTIFICATES OF EXEMPTION.

List also available at: <http://www.tga.gov.au/docs/html/advsch1.htm>

- 2A Association of Natural Health Practitioners Limited
- 3 Association of Traditional Health Practitioners Incorporated
- 3B Australasian Federation of Natural Therapists Inc.
- 5 Australasian Association of Ayurveda Incorporated
- 7 Australian Committee of Natural Therapies Inc. (SA)
- 10 Australian Natural Therapists Association Ltd
- 11 Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association
- 13 Australian Traditional Chinese Medicine Association Inc.
- 14 Australian Traditional Medicine Society
- 16 Complementary Medicine Association
- 17B International Christian Association of Natural Therapists Ltd (ICANT)
- 18 National Herbalists Association of Australia
- 18A Naturopathic Physicians Association of Australia Inc.
- 19 Queensland Naturopathic Association
- 21 Society of Natural Therapists and Researchers [SNTR] Inc.
- 25 Naturopathic Practitioners Association Inc.
- 26A The Alumni Association of Natural Medicine Practitioners Inc.
- 26AA The Australian Association of Homotoxicology Incorporated