



The Australian College of Specialist Psychologists Inc.
PO Box 447, South Fremantle WA 6162
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7th March, 2012

Professor Alfred Alan
WA representative to the National Psychology Board of Australia
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
GPO Box 9958
Perth WA 6001

Dear Professor Alan,

Re: Specialist title for WA postgraduates who started post graduate supervision prior to National Registration

The Australian College of Specialist Psychologists (ACSP) is currently chairing this issue, however it was initiated by the Australian Clinical Psychology Association (WA) in 2011 and has the full support of the Colleges and Associations listed below. We also recently asked the APS specialist colleges to support our concerns and are aware that the executive director of the APS (Professor Lynn Littlefield) has sent an independent letter of support directly to Professor Grenyer, on behalf of the APS Colleges and the APS Board of Directors.

We are aware that during the transition from State Registrations Boards to a National Registration Board for Psychology, many adjustments had to be considered. There were a number of transitions programs the Board had to put in place to help accommodate, fairly and evenly, the needs of individuals in different states. During this difficult process of transition however, a group of WA post graduates appear to have been overlooked. We would like to bring your attention to this significant and outstanding issue which has been raised with us by a considerable number of these individuals in WA.

WA postgraduates (across all specialities), who had started their supervision for specialist titles prior to WA entering the National Registration Scheme, are very upset that the national registration body have not honoured their right to use their specialist titles. They all entered into and commenced Psychologist Board of Western Australia – Board approved supervision contracts towards specialist title. They started their supervision in good faith and held the belief that they would be entitled to use their specialist title after completing the supervision period of two years with their respective supervisors. We are aware that many of these



individuals have also provided their own submissions to the Board however their concerns have not been addressed.

As a result of the high volume of concerns being raised, a survey was conducted in Western Australia in 2011. This was completed by relevant post graduates, newly endorsed practitioners and supervisors. A brief summary of responses are outlined below.

- Responses were received from 69 people, 48 of whom were relevant post graduates or newly endorsed practitioners.
- 63% of respondents had completed an MPsyCh, with the remainder being a mix of MPsyCh/PhD, PhD, or DPsyCh from a range of specialities.
- 88% of respondents who commenced their registration period under the WA Specialist Title arrangement expected to receive specialist title acknowledgement on the AHPRA register upon completion of their requirements, when the transition arrangements were made.
- 92% of the respondents also would have preferred to have a specialist title rather than endorsement.
- Respondents support recognition of specialist titles on an ongoing basis and the need for education of government and the public about our specialist skills.

It is the shared view of the organisations below and the respondents to the survey, that the Psychology Board of Australia should continue to honour all the terms and conditions that were initially set out in the formal contract with the Western Australian Board prior to National registration, which allowed the use of specialist title.

As a result we would like to request that the Board adds specialist titles to the registration certificates of this group of WA practitioners and allow them to use their specialist titles. The ACSP has requested information regarding the numbers of WA registrars this may be applicable to, but unfortunately, Ms Frith indicated the statistics from the Board could not be disseminated. We anticipate that the Board could readily obtain the numbers and identification of those in question from the WA Board archives and correct this most unfortunate situation.

Given that this issue has already been long standing and has raised considerable annoyance for registrars and new practitioners in WA, we would ask the Psychology Board of Australia to give this matter prompt attention and let us know of the outcome as soon as possible.



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Yours sincerely,

Dr. Jillian Horton
President of the Australian College of Specialist Psychologists

Dr. Judy Hyde
Director of the Australian Clinical Psychology Association

Dr. Darryl Menaglio
President of the Institute of Clinical Psychologists WA

Cc Professor Brin Grenyer