

Policy on ultrasound in relation to CPD and for Recency of Practice

Purpose

This policy guides and provides information to medical radiation practitioners undertaking ultrasound examinations or procedures.

Introduction

The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia (Board) recognises that ultrasound examinations and procedures are an area of practice for medical radiation practitioners.

The Board's registration requirements – including registration standards, codes and guidelines - apply to all registered medical radiation practitioners, regardless of their scope of practice. The Board recognises that ultrasound is a feature of practice for medical radiation practitioners, as well as some other registered health practitioners, and some unregulated practitioners.

There are only three restricted practices in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (National Law) as in force in each state and territory: restricted dental acts (defined), manipulation of the cervical spine and prescription of an optical appliance. Practice that involves the use of ultrasound is not restricted in the National Law.

Continuing Professional Development

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) registration standard and guidelines provide guidance for registered medical radiation practitioners about their ongoing obligation relating to professional learning and development.

The CPD registration standard requires that a registered medical radiation practitioner undertakes 60 hours of CPD over three years, with a minimum of 10 hours each year.

CPD may be undertaken as an individual activity or as part of an approved program.

Ultrasound is a recognised activity of medical radiation practice. Therefore, learning and development activities relating to ultrasound may contribute towards meeting the CPD requirements. A CPD activity that has a significant intellectual or practical content primarily directed to a practitioner's practice or expansion of practice may be eligible as a substantive CPD activity.

A practitioner undertaking CPD activities that relate to ultrasound must appropriately record the activity and provide a level of reflection. A template for recording CPD activities can be found on the Board's website at

www.medicalradiationpracticeboard.gov.au/Registration/CPD-logbook.aspx

Recency of Practice

The recency of practice registration standard requires practitioners to ensure they are competent and fit to practise in the profession. It requires practitioners to make an annual

declaration that their practice is current and in keeping with contemporary practice. The standard identifies the amount of time a practitioner may spend away from practice before their fitness and competence to practise needs to be considered by the Board.

Before being issued with a certificate of registration, registered medical radiation practitioners who have not worked in the profession for at least three years will be required to demonstrate that they are competent to practice, or that they are updating their skills to ensure they are competent,

Ultrasound may form part of practice in the profession. Practitioners who are eligible and apply for registration or apply to renew their registration, whose primary practice is in the area of ultrasound, may meet the requirements of the recency of practice standard.

Practitioners have a duty to make the care of patients or clients their first concern and to practise safely and effectively. In meeting this duty of care, practitioners have a responsibility to recognise and work within the limits of their competence and scope of practice.

Good practice involves

- a. recognising and working within the limits of a practitioner's competence and scope of practice
- b. ensuring that practitioners maintain adequate knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care
- c. when moving into a new area of practice, ensuring that a practitioner has undertaken sufficient training and/or qualifications to achieve competency in that area
- d. practising in accordance with the current and accepted evidence base of the health profession, including clinical outcomes.

All registered medical radiation practitioners must ensure they have the necessary knowledge, skills and recent experience to practise safely.

Definition of Practice

Practice *means* any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct nonclinical relationship with clients; working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles; and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use their professional skills.

Guidance for medical radiation practitioners undertaking ultrasound

The Board's Code of Conduct applies all registered medical radiation practitioners. Practitioners have a duty to make the care of patients or clients their first concern and to practise safely and effectively. Maintaining a high level of professional competence and conduct is essential for good care.

Areas of practice vary according to different roles; for example, practitioners, researchers and managers will all have quite different competence and scopes of practice. Even within clinical practice a practitioner may have, or move into a different role that has a different area of

practice. It is important that practitioners ensure that they have the appropriate qualifications, contemporary skills and experience to provide safe and effective care.

Review of registration standards

The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia is currently reviewing its approved registration standards relating to continuing professional development, recency of practice and professional indemnity insurance. This review is expected to be complete in 2014.

This policy on ultrasound in relation to the Board's CPD and recency of practice registration standard takes effect on 1 January 2014 and will be reviewed three years (3) from the date of effect.