

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To work together on issues of national and international importance to the regulated health professions.
- 1.2 To identify areas of common interest and concern in relation to the regulated health professions.
- 1.3 To work toward a position of consensus on identified issues and concerns.
- 1.4 To take joint action in areas of importance to the regulated health professions.
- 1.5 To develop joint position statements which provide recommended policy directions for governments and other relevant stakeholders.

### 2. Principles

- 2.1 To be inclusive and involve all member Councils in decision making.
- 2.2 To be cooperative and work together towards the agreed goals.
- 2.3 To be flexible, innovative and determined in order to achieve the objectives of the Forum.
- 2.4 To be committed and contribute to meeting the objectives of the Forum.
- 2.5 To ensure that there is transparency in all decision making processes.
- 2.6 To respect the right of each member Council to act separately with or without consensus within the Forum, while supporting endeavours to achieve consensus in areas of mutual interest.

### 3. Membership

- 3.1 Member Councils: the Forum of Australian Health Professions Councils is a coalition of the external accreditation authorities appointed by the Ministerial Council\* and external accreditation entities\*\* comprising the following as the member Councils:

- Australian Dental Council
- Australian Medical Council
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council
- Australian Pharmacy Council
- Australian Physiotherapy Council
- Australian Psychology Accreditation Council
- Australian and New Zealand Osteopathic Council
- Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council
- Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia Inc
- Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand.

- 3.1.1 For an accreditation entity to be considered for membership it should be an independent legal entity appointed by the National Board as the external accreditation entity for the profession.

\*For a period after the commencement of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act*.

\*\*As defined under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act*, as in force in each state and territory.

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3.1.2 An application for membership from an external accreditation entity will be considered by a meeting of the Forum.

3.2 Members: Two nominees for each member Council will normally be the Members of the Forum and attend the meetings of the Forum.

3.2.1 A Member will continue as Member of the Forum while the nominee of the member Council, with the exception of the Chair and the Deputy Chair who will remain a Member of the Forum while holding this Office, whether or not a nominee of the member Council.

3.2.2 A Member may be represented at a meeting by another representative of the member Council.

## **4. Office Bearers**

4.1 There will be a Chair and a Deputy Chair, who at the time of election will each be a Member of the Forum and a nominee of a different member Council.

4.2 The Chair and Deputy Chair will be elected by the Members.

4.3 Any Member of the Forum may be elected as the Chair or the Deputy Chair.

4.4 The term of appointment will be for two years, with the opportunity for re-election for a further two years, whether or not during the term of office or at the time of re-election the person remains the nominee of a member Council.

## **5. Secretariat and Communication**

5.1 There will be a Secretariat for the Forum provided by a member Council.

5.2 Members will agree that all communication regarding Forum business will be conducted through the Forum Secretariat, or where this is not applicable copies of communication provided in a timely manner to the Secretariat.

5.3 The Forum will have a dedicated website to provide information about the Forum, its activities and Position Statements. Members and member Councils will provide content as required and link member Councils' websites and the Forum website as appropriate.

## **6. Meetings**

6.1 A minimum of two face to face meetings will be held annually at an agreed location. Additional meetings will be held at times and by means agreed by the Members.

6.2 A member Council will host a face to face meeting (i.e. organise the venue and catering).

6.3 Attendance at all meetings will be self funded by each member Council.

6.4 Other meeting costs (e.g. catering, tele/videoconference facilities and service) will be borne by the member Council hosting the meeting.

6.5 Additional costs will be shared between member Councils on an agreed basis.

## **7. Processes**

7.1 The Forum will provide an opportunity for all Members to speak in an open and frank manner about issues and concerns regarding the regulated health professions. Such discussions will be confidential to the Forum.

7.2 All meeting Reports, decisions, agreed Papers and Statements will be open to member Councils.

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- 7.3 Members will commit to working toward agreement on positions and actions to be taken in relation to an issue or concern.
- 7.4 In general, communications arising from meetings will be confirmed by Members at the completion of the meetings or by teleconference or email exchange.
- 7.5 Members (or representatives) with a conflict of interest regarding an issue or a planned action should notify the Chair as soon as they become aware of the conflict or potential conflict. During a meeting the Members will determine the course of action and this will be recorded in the Report of the meeting.
- 7.6 Guidelines, processes and procedures for the functioning of the Forum will be developed as required and by the agreement of Members.

## **8. Position Papers**

- 8.1 A Position Paper may be developed by the Forum; or developed by a member Council and adopted and endorsed by the Forum, or developed by an external body and adopted and endorsed by the Forum.
- 8.2 Where the development of a Position Paper, or other activity of the Forum, requires funding the Members will determine the process and allocation of resources at a meeting.

## **9. Stakeholder Consultations and Discussions**

- 9.1 Where appropriate, external stakeholder discussions will be held within the meetings of the Forum, by inviting external organisations to meet with the Forum.
- 9.2 Other requests from external stakeholders for meetings with the Forum or briefings from the Forum will be dealt with as follows:
- the Chair or Deputy Chair will normally represent the Forum in external meetings and consultations
  - as far as is possible the Forum Secretariat will advise all Members of the request for an external meeting
  - if appropriate, other Members will be invited to express interest in attending external meetings
  - in order to keep a record and deal with any follow up action, the Forum Secretariat will normally provide a secretariat presence for external meetings, or the attendee will provide a written briefing for Members.

## **10. Representation on External Bodies**

- 10.1 Forum representation on external bodies will generally be by the agreement of Members.
- 10.2 Forum representatives on external bodies will provide Members with a timely update of their representation of the Forum at a meeting of the Forum, or by email exchange if more appropriate.

## **11. Review**

- 11.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years or as required.

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**Approved 30 May 2008**

**Amendments made 2009 – to include the Podiatry Council and to reflect a name change for the Osteopathic Council**

**Amended and Approved 2 December 2011**