

# Health Professions Registration Act 2005

## Overview

### What regulation system do we have now for the health professions?

Following the department's Review of the Regulation of the Health Professions conducted between 2002-05, the *Health Professions Registration Act 2005* ('the Act') was passed by the Victorian Parliament in November 2005 and came into operation on 1 July 2007. It repealed the eleven separate health practitioner registration Acts and section 108AL of the *Health Act 1958* relating to medical radiation practitioners.

The Act covers people wanting to be registered as Chinese medicine practitioners, chiropractors, dental care providers, medical practitioners, medical radiation practitioners, nurses, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists and psychologists.

The Department of Human Services consulted extensively with registration boards, unions and health services to come up with a regulatory scheme that works for everyone.

### Why did we need to change?

In the future, the world will be vastly different to the way it is today. By 2030, for example, the Victorian population will have increased by 20 per cent and most of us will be over forty. For the first time ever in our society the number of deaths will outnumber births, and there will be unprecedented numbers of Victorians needing healthcare.

This forecast means that there will be a significant shift in how our health services are delivered. The health workforce of the future will be characterised by broadly skilled health practitioners who are the front line providers of primary health care. They will work as multi-disciplinary teams ensuring that individual health needs are thoroughly assessed at the community level, and that patients are not inappropriately admitted or retained in public hospitals.

The changes to practitioner regulation brought about by the Act are part of the Government's broader strategy to make sure our health services are changing to meet future demand. Its key reforms, such as the transfer of the 'formal hearing' function from the registration boards to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, are consistent with the direction of national reform proposals being developed under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), to establish national registration and accreditation schemes for the health professions from 1 July 2008.

### What has changed?

The Act maintains the best elements of the previous Victorian model of regulation that was in place for some 14 years, and builds on this to create a regulatory scheme that is more accountable and fair for health practitioners, registration boards, patients and staff. The key changes of the Act means that there is:

- More flexibility in service delivery.
- A faster and more streamlined system for managing complaints against practitioners.
- More openness in board decisions.

- The chance for some professional groups to broaden their skills and scope of practice.
- Better quality of care for patients.
- A tougher stance on practitioners who are deregistered for serious unprofessional conduct.

**For further information**

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/pracreg/index.htm>