

# SECOND READING SPEECH

## *Pharmacists Registration Amendment Bill 2010*

Mr Speaker

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health professionals commenced on 1 July 2010.

The legislation establishing the national scheme in Tasmania, the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) Bill 2010*, was passed by the House in June. During debate on that Bill, I foreshadowed that I would soon be tabling legislation for the ongoing regulation of pharmacy ownership and premises registration in Tasmania.

These matters sit outside of the national scheme and are the domain of each of the participating States and Territories. They are currently regulated by the *Pharmacists Registration Act 2001*, overseen by the Pharmacy Board of Tasmania.

Many of the functions previously vested in the Board have now transferred to the new, national Pharmacy Board of Australia. Accordingly, the *Pharmacists Registration Amendment Bill 2010* has been prepared to ensure that the Tasmanian legislation properly reflects pharmacy regulation going forward.

On 8 September 2009, the Department of Health and Human Services in Tasmania released the '*Pharmacy Regulation Consultation Paper*' to canvass stakeholder support for ongoing pharmacy regulation. The paper proposed that the existing Board be replaced by a new Tasmanian Pharmacy Authority. The TPA was to perform functions with respect to:

- approving the holding of an interest in pharmacy businesses
- registering pharmacy business premises and
- inspecting pharmacy premises to ensure that pharmacy services are being carried out in a manner that provides the public with the highest possible standard of pharmacy care.

The paper was developed in collaboration with the Pharmacy Board. It proposed that any new legislation legitimise practises that had been undertaken by the former Board, often without explicit legislative provision.

Feedback on the consultation paper led to the development of the Bill in its present form.

The Bill will ultimately lead to the renaming of the *Pharmacists Registration Act 2001* so that it will henceforth be known as the *Pharmacy Control Act*. The Act will no longer be concerned with the registration of pharmacists, but will, as I have said, regulate ownership of pharmacy businesses and the registration of pharmacy business premises.

The Bill will abolish the former Board and replace it with a new Tasmanian Pharmacy Authority to ensure that there is no confusion between it and the newly established national Board.

The Bill streamlines and improves the mechanisms for appointing members to the TPA and decreases its size in recognition of the reduction in functions ascribed to it. It maintains provisions relating to auditing and reporting by the TPA to ensure proper scrutiny of its functions.

The Bill strengthens provisions around who may hold interests in pharmacies. It ensures that anyone who proposes to hold an interest in a pharmacy business is subject to scrutiny by the new TPA. It also ensures that there is a nexus between the individual proposing to hold an interest and a registered pharmacist.

Specific powers of inspection of pharmacy premises are included in the Bill. These powers will enable the TPA to detect and investigate circumstances where scheduled medicines are being offered for sale from unsuitable premises. The TPA will have the power to issue work orders for premises to be brought up to appropriate standards.

The Bill makes some minor, consequential changes to provisions in the current Act relating to premises registration. It provides for annual renewal of registration and allows for public inspection of the register of premises.

The Bill also prescribes a number of transitional provisions to enable a smooth transfer of functions from the current Board to the new TPA.

The development of the Bill has been undertaken in consultation with that Board and with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and ensures that pharmacy services in Tasmania will continue to be of the highest standard.

I commend the Bill to the House.