

SECOND READING SPEECH

Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration (Repeal) Bill 2011

Mr Speaker

As foreshadowed in the second reading speech for the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) Bill 2010*, this Bill is one in a series of legislative amendments that follow from the ongoing development of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professionals.

The Bill repeals the *Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Act 2000* on 1 July 2012, enables the smooth transition of the medical radiation profession to the national scheme and makes statute law corrections to the *Health Complaints Act 1995*.

The *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) Act 2010* commenced on 1 July 2010 and applies the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law in Tasmania. From that date the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme applies to ten health practitioner groups - nursing and midwifery; medicine; physiotherapy; psychology; optometry; chiropractic care; dental care; osteopathy; podiatry and pharmacy.

From 1 July 2012 the Scheme and the National Law will also apply to four partially regulated professions, being medical radiation practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners, occupational therapists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners.

The Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, through the National Registration and Accreditation Subcommittee, and AHPRA are progressing the transition of the four partially regulated professions to the Scheme.

Of these four professions, only medical radiation practitioners are regulated in Tasmania by the Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Board of Tasmania established under the *Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Act 2000*.

In order to effect the transition and to avoid confusion with competing laws, the *Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Act 2000* will therefore be repealed.

As was the case with the other professions when they entered the National Scheme, the Bill amends the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) Act 2010* to describe the *Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Act 2000* as a 'former health practitioner registration Act' for the purposes of the scheme. This amendment triggers two important powers in the national law:

- transitional and savings provisions in the national law will be triggered to ensure that any complaints or disciplinary proceedings that are current at the transition day of 1 July 2012 will be continue to be dealt with appropriately; and
- the provision at section 11 of that Act is also triggered so that the Minister may direct the Medical Radiation Science Professionals Registration Board of Tasmania to take the necessary actions (such as the provision of information to AHPRA or signing documents) prior to 1 July 2012 to enable the transition to the Scheme to occur.

For health professionals, joining the national scheme has meant they only need to register once to be able to practise throughout Australia, reducing red tape and enabling health professionals to move around the country more easily.

For the public, the Scheme provides greater safeguards while promoting a more flexible, responsive and sustainable health workforce. It also maintains a public national register for each health profession that ensures professionals banned from practising in one place are unable to practise elsewhere in Australia.

Including medical radiation therapists, Chinese medicine practitioners, occupational therapists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners in the list of practitioners within the scheme further protects the public's health, interest and safety by having one single national quality assurance process for these professions.

Whilst this Bill only addresses medical radiation scientists, AHPRA is undertaking a staged implementation project for all four professions entering the Scheme on 1 July 2012.

There has been a state-wide information forum and expressions of interest were called for appointments to the new National Boards. The new National Boards will be tasked with progressing Phase 2 of the project, with support from AHPRA and a smaller project team. Phase 2 involves the National Boards:

- implementing the transition from State and Territory registration to national registration for the professions which are already regulated locally
- commencing registration of practitioners for the professions where they are not currently regulated
- developing mandatory registration standards and any other necessary instruments to support the registration of eligible practitioners commencing in the national registration by 1 July 2012.

I commend the Bill to the House.