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The Profession Welcomes Entry into a New Era

The Australian Pharmacy Liaison Forum (APLF) is an independent coalition of representatives from eight leading pharmacy organisations who work together on issues of national importance to the pharmacy profession and the public.

The APLF welcomes the Government's initiative to improve the pharmacists' renewal of registration process by introducing the requirement to demonstrate that continuing professional development (CPD) has taken place.

Specifically, the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) to commence on 1 July 2010 contains a requirement for registrants to have participated in continuing professional development (CPD) programs.

The guide to the exposure draft of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009* states:

"There will be a requirement that, for annual renewal of registration, a registrant must demonstrate that they have participated in a continuing professional development program as approved by their national board (refer clauses 101, 124 and 125).

Each profession's requirements will be set by the relevant board. A board may use its accrediting body [for pharmacy, this is the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC)] to set standards for programs and approve providers of such programs ... where that is the best arrangement for the profession (refer clause 101)."

At the last meeting of the APLF it was decided to set up a working party to consider the current varying approaches to continuing professional development (CPD) and to identify a set of common principles for consideration by the national board. The terms of reference for the working party are:

- Determine what evidence of CPD is required for a pharmacist to renew registration when using CPD as an indicator of ongoing competency
- Determine the amount to be evidenced over a predetermined period
- Develop a common framework for determining the weighting (i.e. points/hours value) that is placed on APC authorised accredited activities
- Determine how other material will be managed

The Pharmacy Board of Australia, due to be established under the NRAS by September/October 2009, will determine the CPD requirements for the pharmacy profession after 1 July 2010. The APLF will make the findings of the Working Party available to the Pharmacy Board of Australia to assist with that determination.

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