

Visiting psychotherapist presenters/educators position statement

The Board had been approached by several groups who invite psychotherapists to present in New Zealand. These groups were concerned that, in describing themselves as psychotherapists but not being registered in New Zealand, visitors would be breaking the law under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 and be subject to the prosecution by the Ministry of Health.

Initially, the Board sought to allow visiting psychotherapist registration based on a declaration by the group issuing the invitation. Legal advice was that this amounted to a delegation of the Board's regulatory powers and was therefore not possible. The Board then sought legal advice on the minimum registration requirements for visiting psychotherapist presenters/educators who would not be conducting practice with the public. These were then drawn up and circulated to the profession and stakeholders through consultation. The consultation response from the profession and stakeholders indicated that they were too complex and could dissuade people from teaching or presenting in New Zealand.

In an attempt to protect both the general public and visiting presenters, the Board has prepared a position statement on visiting psychotherapist presenters/educators along with a declaration template. During the preparation of this statement, the Board consulted with Mr Phil Knipe (Chief Legal Advisor to the Ministry of Health) who has confirmed that he believes the statement is acceptable from a Ministry point of view.

The Board's purpose is *'to protect the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that health practitioners are competent and fit to practise their professions.'*

The Board accepts that, from time to time, overseas practitioners travel to New Zealand to present and/or educate. At this time, the Board does not have a Visiting Psychotherapist Presenter/Educator Scope of Practice. However, a scope will be implemented if the need arises.

It is possible that this need can be minimised by the visiting psychotherapist presenter/educator and/or their host contacting the Board and providing the following:

- The name, qualifications and topic of the visiting presenter.
- Confirmation that the visiting psychotherapist presenter/educator will be presenting to audiences in New Zealand for a limited period that is less than 30 days.
- Confirmation that there will be no clinical work undertaken with members of the public. In this context, someone who is a registered health professional or a student enrolled in a psychotherapy course that would, on successful completion, lead to eligibility for registration is not regarded as a member of the public.
- Confirmation that the visiting psychotherapist presenter/educator is not registered in New Zealand as a psychotherapist and that they do not and will not advertise, claim, state or do anything that is calculated to suggest that they practise or are willing to practise as a psychotherapist in New Zealand beyond their function as a visiting educator/presenter.

Approved by the Board September 2012