

# Policy Statement 3.9 – Recency of Practice

## Position Summary

Requirements for dental practitioners to provide evidence of competency to practice should be self-assessed using self-reflective practice. Any formal requirements for recency of practice should only be placed where there is clearly a risk to public safety.

## 1. Background

- 1.1. The Australian Dental Association (ADA) provides information, continuing professional development and other services to assist its members to meet professional standards.
- 1.2. The Board is responsible under the National Law for establishing registration standards on such matters as recency of practice
- 1.3. The National Law requires that applicants for registration must be suitably qualified and fit to practice.
- 1.4. There are minimum requirements for all registered dental practitioners and applicants applying to be dental practitioners who have not practised in the previous five years.
- 1.5. The practice of dentistry includes any role in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a dental practitioner such as clinical dentistry, clinical specialist practice, administration in the field of dentistry, study, teaching and research in the field of dentistry.
- 1.6. The Board expects practising dental practitioners to use self-reflective practice to understand their scope of practice and to not practise beyond the range of their training, qualifications, experience and competence.
- 1.7. Research undertaken and previous reviews of the Recency of Practice registration standards did not provide a definitive answer to the question of how much recent practise a health practitioner needs to maintain their skills and knowledge.

### Definitions

- 1.8. BOARD is the Dental Board of Australia.
- 1.9. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency via the Board to provide dental care.
- 1.10. NATIONAL LAW is the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Acts 2009 as in force in each state and territory.
- 1.11. RECENCY OF PRACTICE means that a practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practise in the profession since qualifying or obtaining registration.
- 1.12. RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION is the process of re-registering a person already registered.

## 2. Position

### Requirements must address real risks

- 2.1. Where possible, dental practitioners should self-assess their individual competence for practice.
- 2.2. Dental Practitioners should be aware of the Board's registration standard on recency of practice.
- 2.3. There should be unequivocal evidence that any measure being introduced as a requirement for recency of practice must be effective in protecting the public.

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- 2.4. The recency of practice requirements for renewal of registration should not be more onerous than the fitness to practice requirements for registration.
  - 2.5. Each individual case should be assessed on its merits for requirements placed on recency of practice.
  - 2.6. Only applicants for registration where there is clearly a risk to public safety should be subject to examination or conditions on registration.
  - 2.7. Recency of practice assessment should include consideration of the following:
    - 2.7.1. the nature, extent and period of practice;
    - 2.7.2. any continuing professional development undertaken;
    - 2.7.3. any research, study or teaching relating to dentistry;
    - 2.7.4. administrative work relating to dentistry, including management, regulatory or policy development roles, and
    - 2.7.5. absences from practice
    - 2.7.6. connection with the profession
  - 2.8. Pathways should be provided for returning practitioners who are required to demonstrate competency.

### **Policy Statement 3.9**

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