

Onboard

Newsletter of the Social Workers Registration Board

CODE 'FOR' CONDUCT IS HERE

The Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) launched its Code of Conduct on the 25th of August at the Turnbull Library in Wellington.

When the SWRB was established in November 2003 it was responsible for setting up the standards for registration of New Zealand and overseas-qualified Social Workers. It had to establish the policies and procedures for complaints and discipline, set up the registration database, and also develop a code of conduct.

Speakers at the launch were Robyn Corrigan, Chairperson of the Social Workers Registration Board; Paula Tyler, Chief Executive for Child, Youth and Family; and Rae Lamb, the new Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner.

"The Board actively promotes the benefits of registration. We promote and encourage high standards of practice and professional conduct among registered Social Workers, and employers of Social Workers," said Robyn Corrigan.



Robyn Corrigan, Chairperson, SWRB.

"Social work is the art of building hope and creating opportunities for sustainable change in often difficult circumstances. Respectful client/worker relationships are critical. The Code of Conduct provides a framework to guide professional behaviour in the midst of uncertainty," said Vaughan Milner. "The code will be useful both to Social Workers and to the SWRB Complaints and Disciplinary Tribunal in determining whether or not a Social Worker has conducted themselves well. The launch of the code marks a significant step in the regulatory arena, in the profession's development of accountability processes and in taking responsibility for protecting the safety of the public," he said.

The Health and Disability Commission also welcomed the Code of Conduct.

"It is an important milestone because it sets out the minimum standards of conduct the public can expect from social workers, and it gives social workers some clear guidance on avoiding and dealing with situations which are professionally and ethically difficult," said Rae Lamb, Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner.

For more information about the Code of Conduct or general information on the SWRB and registration visit the Social Workers Registration Board website www.swrb.org.nz

"The Code of Conduct provides a framework to guide professional behaviour in the midst of uncertainty."

*Vaughan Milner, Chair
Complaints and Discipline Tribunal*

"The Board was required to issue and maintain a code of conduct covering minimum standards of integrity and conduct expected of Social Workers. A code that would set standards for social work that can assist and promote the development of professionalism in the sector. We've done that, and we've also provided a benchmark for disciplinary action against which a registered social worker can be assessed," she said.

The Board has also established the Complaints and Discipline Tribunal. The Chair of the Tribunal, Vaughan Milner, will appoint Complaints Assessment Committees in consultation with the Board in relation to particular cases when required.

News Inside:

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A warm welcome to *Onboard!*

REGISTRATION UPDATE

In the first three months of registration being made available, over 1800 applications were received and almost another 700 social workers have applied so far this year. *More inside...*

FROM THE SWRB CHAIRPERSON

Advancing the social work profession even further beyond the progress made over the past two years. *More inside...*

SWRB COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee's key tasks and areas of responsibility.

SOCIAL WORKERS CELEBRATE SPECIAL DAY

Celebrating National Social Work Day throughout the country on 28 September. *More inside...*

UPCOMING EVENTS

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE:



Welcome to *Onboard*, the new quarterly newsletter of the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB).

Communication is a vital aspect of your job, where everyday the people you work with and support expect you to communicate clearly and with insight. So it only seemed practical that the SWRB also have regular, clear, and knowledgeable communication to the people we work with – social workers, both registered and unregistered.

Through *Onboard* I hope you'll be able to see the clear advantages to registration and also we hope to pass on news of the Board itself, profiles of social workers and also features from events and information of interest. I hope you enjoy the first edition of *Onboard* and we welcome any feedback, comments and story ideas you may have. Please email these to onboard@swrb.org.nz. Have a great and well-deserved break with family, friends and whanau over the summer.

Regards

Sean McKinley

Chief Executive and Registrar
Social Workers Registration Board

REGISTRATION UPDATE

Since the introduction of statutory registration for social workers in October 2004 it's been an extremely busy, but exciting time, for the SWRB office.

In the first three months of registration being made available, over 1800 applications were received and almost another 700 social workers have applied so far this year. The SWRB will have approved the registration of approximately 500 social workers in 2005 and many more will be approved once they have completed the competence assessment required as part of their application.

CONSIDERING APPLYING FOR REGISTRATION?

Visit our website www.swrb.org.nz for detailed information on the registration process or else contact our office via email office@swrb.org.nz or telephone (04) 931 2650 to request a registration pack. Be sure to advise the SWRB staff of whether or not you hold a qualification and if you do whether you obtained this in New Zealand or overseas.

APPLIED BUT YET TO BE REGISTERED?

Contact our office by post PO Box 10-150 Wellington or email info@swrb.org.nz or telephone (04) 931 2650 if you have any questions or are unsure of where your application is at in the process. Either one of the assessors or myself will be able to help you to ensure that you meet the requirements for registration.

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENTS

Many applicants have yet to provide their completed competence assessment certificate that is required if you are to be provisionally or fully registered under the Social Workers Registration Act 2003.

Social Workers who are currently seeking registration or intend to in the near future are advised to contact one of the two competence assessment providers who will provide them with information on the competence assessment process.

THE CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE TWO PROVIDERS ARE:

ANZASW

PO Box 1072
Dunedin

Phone: +64 3 477 5793

Fax: +64 3 479 0571

Email: natoffice@anzasw.org.nz

Website: www.anzasw.org.nz

Te Ara Aromatawai

C/- Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi
– the Training Organisation
for Social Services
PO Box 2637, Wellington

Phone: 0800 558 558

Email: justinet@tkaito.co.nz

Website: www.tkaito.co.nz

FROM THE BOARD:

IN NOVEMBER 2005 the Social Workers Registration Board reached the two-year milestone since being appointed by the Hon. Steve Maharey, the then Minister for Social Development. The Hon. David Benson-Pope is the newly appointed Minister for Social Development and we look forward to working with the Minister, and the Ministry, to advance the social work profession even further beyond the progress made over the past two years.

The Board's work-plan for the past two years has been very much focused on ensuring that the structure and procedures required to operate a robust registration process were complete, and that it was able to receive applications for registration from 1 October 2004.

The Board has successfully:

- published policy documents covering Qualifications, Competence to Practice, "Fit and Proper" and Practical Experience;
- developed the forms and guidance notes required for New Zealand Qualified, Overseas Qualified and Section 13 registration applications;
- implemented SWRB business processes;
- launched a website informing both the public and the profession on the requirements for the registration of social workers;
- activated a database capable of storing the information collected from applicants;
- launched the SWRB "identity" via electronic and hard copy media;
- formalised working relationships with key stakeholders;
- developed a Code of Conduct for registered social workers.

As required by the Social Workers Registration Act 2003, the SWRB has established committees of the Board to focus on the specific functions of the Board. An outline of these committees is shown right. The Board will be meeting in January 2006 to review the committee structure, membership and strategic direction of the Social Workers Registration Board and will provide you with an update in the next edition of *Onboard*.

A season's greetings and have a great holiday with loved ones. I look forward to using *Onboard* to introduce SWRB Board members and hearing your feedback.

Regards



Robyn Corrigan
Chairperson, SWRB



2004-2005 Board Members (back row from left): Buster Curson, John Dunlop, Jan Duke, Ian Calder, Robyn Corrigan (Chairperson), Yvonne Crichton-Hill, Liz Beddoe; (front row from left) Shannon Pakura, Paul Curry and Sonya Hunt.

SWRB Committee Update:

REGISTRATION

The Registration Committee's key tasks and areas of responsibility include:

The review of applications for registration and verification of

- NZ Qualifications
- Overseas Qualifications
- Fit and Proper status
- Practical Experience
- Competence
- English Language proficiency (if required)
- Competence to work with Maori and different ethnic and cultural groups.

The committee is also responsible for reviewing Practising Certificates and verification of

- Continuing Professional Development
- Conditions and Restrictions

In developing its advice the committee may consider:

- Practices and processes adopted by other professional bodies
- Precedents and case law relevant to social work practitioner's actions
- National and international models of measuring competent practice
- Research regarding the value and impact of registration
- Any other issues impacting on the Registration functions of the Board

EDUCATION AND PRACTICE STANDARDS

The Education and Practice Standards Committee's key tasks and areas of responsibility include:

- Recognition of New Zealand education in social work (Section 99(f))
- Liaison with key stakeholders about the establishment of standards for social work education (Section 99(i))
- Review of the competence assessment process
- Review of training and assessment programmes for competence to practice social work with Maori and different ethnic and cultural groups (Section 6(c) & 7(c)).
- Consultation with providers of social work education and training and other relevant standard setting organisations (Section 99(i))
- Collaboration with relevant professional bodies and employers to promote high standards of practice for registered social workers (Section 99(n)).

In developing its advice, the committee may consider:

- Any issues that may impact on the education and practice standards of the profession
- Co-ordinated strategies or co-operative approaches to achieve necessary changes in education, training, recruitment and retention, and occupational regulation.

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SWRB Committee Update: (Continued)

PROMOTION AND CONSULTATION

The Promotion and Consultation committee's key tasks and areas of responsibility include:

- Promoting the Benefits of Registration
- Enhancing the Professionalism of Social Work
- Consultation with Maori
- Consultation with Pacific and other Ethnic and Cultural Groups
- Links with Employers
- Links with ANZASW
- Publications, newsletters and website development
- Public education and consultation
- Consultation with funders of social service agencies

In developing its advice, the committee may consider:

- The development of press releases
- The development of brochures advising of what you can expect from a Registered Social Worker
- Appointing Maori and Pacific Nations Advisors

- Consultation and Information provision to key stakeholders
- Promotion opportunities relevant to the responsibilities of the board in National and International forums

FINANCE, AUDIT AND REPORTING

The Finance, Audit and Reporting Committee's key tasks and areas of responsibility include:

- Parliamentary and Ministerial reporting
- Board and Tribunal Servicing
- Employees, Advisors and Contractors
- Database Administration
- Fees
- Budgets
- Financial Reports
- Audits

In developing its advice, the committee may consider:

- Any issues impacting on the Financial, Audit or Reporting functions of the Board
- Such other matters as the Social Workers Registration Board specifies by notice to the Committee.

News Inbrief

10th AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE ON
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
14-16 February 2006, Wellington

This is the first time this conference will be held in New Zealand. The conference theme is *Kia Puawai Nga Tamariki, Blossoming of Our Children – Resilience, Rights, Responsibilities*. The programme features an exciting range of presentations from international, New Zealand and Pacific speakers, including several keynote addresses from young people. For further information visit www.nzfvc.org.nz/acan

IFSW WORLD CONFERENCE 2006
– A WORLD OF BALANCE – WORKING FOR
A SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM
30 July - 3 August 2006, Munich, Germany

For further information visit
www.socialwork2006.de

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTRE
ON FAMILY VIOLENCE AND VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
22-24 October 2006, Montreal, Canada
For further information visit www.criviff.qc.ca

SOCIAL WORKERS CELEBRATE SPECIAL DAY

New Zealand social workers and their colleagues celebrated National Social Work Day throughout the country on 28 September.

This was the second year to remember a group of people that the Social Workers Registration Board felt was long overdue.

"We promote high values and professionalism among social workers," said SWRB Chief Executive Sean McKinley. "And part of that is also acknowledging all their hard work and valuing their contribution by celebrating with social workers during National Social Work Day."

Activities being held throughout the country to commemorate National Social Work Day included seminars, panel speakers and networking opportunities. At the University of Auckland they held an event to celebrate the career of social work

with the opportunity to be 'inspired, motivated, captivated and fulfilled'.

According to event organiser and Programme Leader, Centre for Social Work, Hanuere Jann Tofi, "a panel of inspiring speakers, fine food, information stands, Social Work registration forums and the chance to mix, mingle and network to music made it an exciting and successful occasion."

Social workers, community and health support workers, community educators, whanau and youth workers and all others interested to celebrate National Social Work Day in Auckland were invited to attend. Highlights of the event included panel speakers, information stands and the NGO Awards.

In Hanuere Jann Tofi's welcoming speech to more than 200 current and potential colleagues, she asked the audience to remember why they became and continue to be involved, in this often difficult, but highly rewarding work. "Every day you each give energy, commitment and time in pursuit of better

outcomes for children, young people, families and communities. National Social Work Day gives us the opportunity to acknowledge the valuable job we do, and to reflect on the challenges and rewards of being social workers, community and health support workers, community educators, whanau and youth workers in Aotearoa New Zealand today."

The SWRB believe it is a day when New Zealand should take the opportunity to pay tribute to social workers' achievements and congratulate them for their huge, and often forgotten, involvement in its communities.

