

**MEDIA RELEASE
PHARMACY PRACTICE ACT COMMENCEMENT**

Her Excellency the Governor has confirmed that the *Pharmacy Practice Act 2006*, which received assent in September 2006, will commence on 25 February 2008. The new Act replaces the *Pharmacy Act 1964*. The object of the Act is to protect the health and safety of members of the public in relation to the practice of pharmacy including by providing mechanisms to ensure that pharmacists are fit to practise.

President of the Pharmacy Board of New South Wales, Gerry McInerney says "*the Board welcomes the commencement of the new Act. This legislation confirms the Board's responsibility to protect public health and safety by promoting and maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics in the pharmacy profession.*"

The Board's public protection focus is reinforced by the addition under the Act of a second consumer representative to the Board. These are non-pharmacist members nominated by the Minister for Health and appointed by the Governor to represent the community. The terms of office for all other elected and appointed Board members are continued under the new Act. "*The consumer representatives bring a vitally important perspective to the Board's decision making. We are delighted to welcome Sandra Everett as a new member of the Board and look forward to her contribution, together with that of our long-standing consumer member, Mr Ron Greenstein,*" Mr McInerney said.

Sandra Everett is a former Secretary/Registrar of various health professional registration boards. She has been an appointed member of the Physiotherapists Registration Board since 2005 and has been a member of a panel of lay persons for Professional Standards Committees and Tribunals under various health professional registration Acts since 2002.

The new Act gives the Board a wider range of options to assure the competence of registered pharmacists and to deal with any conduct which falls short of the standard reasonably expected of a pharmacist. "*We are particularly pleased with the introduction of a number of requirements that confirm the Board's expectations of appropriate professional conduct. The legislation confirms that part of every pharmacy's premises must be suitable for consultations that are not reasonably likely to be overheard by another person. Dispensary barcode scanners, which have been demonstrated to minimise the possibility of selection errors in dispensing, will be mandatory in every dispensary. In providing information to the public, pharmacists will be required to comply with the TGA's Price Information Code of Practice*", Mr McInerney said.

The development of this legislation involved considerable input from the Board, the Department of Health, professional organisations and other pharmacy stakeholders. Mr McInerney said: "*The Board's constant challenge is to ensure systems are in place to meet public expectations of pharmacists conduct. With the functions conferred on the Board under the new Act, we will continue working with the profession to ensure we meet that challenge.*"

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For further information, please contact the Registrar, Ms Kym Ayscough on (02) 9281 7736 or kyma@pbnsw.org.au