

DAA Accreditation and Recognition Services Synopsis

Background

The need for improved structures for DAA's accreditation and recognition services was identified by the DAA Board in 2007 in response to a number of emerging issues: the impending National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professions by the Australian Government; the dramatically increasing number of dietetic programs (from 7 programs to 16 in the past decade) and a desire to improve the sustainability and ongoing quality of these DAA services.

The new structure outlined in this Synopsis sees the introduction of the **Australian Dietetics Council (ADC)**, a new Council for accreditation and recognition services that will provide high level advice to the DAA Board on issues relating to accreditation and recognition services.

Consultation Framework

Extensive consultation and engagement of stakeholders was critical in the restructure of DAA's accreditation and recognition services. The consultation framework undertaken by DAA is illustrated below.

1. Nerida Bellis, Professional Services Director and Dr Catherine Itsiopoulos, Registrar Accreditation and Recognition Services prepared an initial background paper on a proposed new structure for accreditation and recognition services in response to issues and priorities addressed by the DAA Board.
2. The proposed new structure was discussed with key stakeholders at face to face and teleconference meetings in 2008 namely the Council on Dietetic Skills Recognition (CODSR) and the Dietetic Standards and Accreditation Advisory Committee (DSAAC).
3. At the February 2009 Board meeting the Board ratified the new governance structure for accreditation and recognition services.

Implications of new Organisational Structure

The following points illustrate how the new structure will operate:

- The ultimate responsibility for decisions on accreditation and recognition services will remain with the DAA Board.
- The ADC will be responsible for providing high level advice on accreditation and recognition issues and will appoint the accreditation review teams and DSR examiners from a pool of reviewers and examiners (as per the published selection criteria).

- The ADC will sit within the DAA organisational structure but will not have a Director Responsible like other DAA committees. This difference is to enhance the independence of the Council and is consistent with the requirements made of DAA by the Australian Government when dietetic skills recognition services devolved to DAA.
- The ADC will report to the DAA Board via the Chair.
- The ADC will have a communication link with relevant DAA committees with activities of interest to the Council. For example, the Accredited Practising Dietitian Advisory Committee (APDAC) that is responsible for the APD Program, and the Membership Assessment and Reinstatement Advisory Committee (MARAC) that is responsible for Associate membership, development of the Accredited Nutritionist credential, and for member reinstatement.
- CODSR and DSAAC, as they currently exist, will be disbanded and the high level strategic and policy roles and responsibilities of CODSR and DSAAC will be assumed by the ADC utilising the expertise of Council members for high level functions.
- The ADC will appoint reference groups to inform policy development and support other key projects within the accreditation and recognition services on an ‘ad hoc’ basis (or as required).
- The ADC and all relevant reference groups appointed by the ADC will be supported by the DAA National Office Business Unit for all administrative and policy and process implementation matters.

Operational Support to the Council

The ADC and the ‘ad hoc’ reference groups appointed by the ADC will be supported by staff from the DAA National Office Business Unit. The Registrar (Catherine Itsiopoulos) and the Recognition and Accreditation Coordinator (Fiona Engeler) will be responsible for the day to day operational aspects of accreditation and recognition services. The Registrar will brief the Council regularly and prepare quarterly (or as required) Board reports as directed by the Council. The Registrar and Recognition and Accreditation Coordinator will report to the Professional Services Director.

Australian Dietetics Council Guiding Principles

1. Aligned with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) direction for the National Registration and Accreditation of Health Professions scheme.
2. Enables transparency for members, clients, health services and the Government.
3. Enables separation of policy and operational functions.
4. Enables broader representation.
5. Enables greater independence thus reducing potential conflict of interest.
6. Supports a move to a business model ensuring a more sustainable service.
7. Supports corporate governance principles and enables greater accountability.
8. Links across other related DAA committees, such as Accredited Practising Dietitian Advisory Committee (APDAC) and Membership Assessment and Reinstatement Advisory Committee (MARAC).