



The peak body and leading voice for sonographers

## **Position Statement:**

### **Registration of sonographers**

Regulation of all health practitioners providing diagnostic and interventional ultrasound examinations, including sonographers, should be a priority. In addition to ensuring the quality of diagnostic studies, such regulation assists with the maintenance of safety standards.

Over 5.8 million ultrasound examinations were funded through Medicare in 2008/09. A further unquantifiable number of examinations were provided through the public health system or conducted as self-referred examinations not attracting a rebate. Whilst there is enforceable Medicare regulation for diagnostic medical sonographers, this is based solely on qualifications and continuing professional development. A sonographer's "fitness for practice" is regulated through their affiliation with a professional association. In addition a number of other professions utilise ultrasound technology for non-rebateable diagnostic or interventional procedures without needing to meet any minimum standards, including participation in formal training.

Rapidly evolving and more affordable ultrasound technology is encouraging unregulated use by a wider range of professions. This presents unique challenges in terms of achieving and maintaining standards across a growing number and diversity of practitioners in a broad range of workplace settings.

We support the transition of regulation for all practitioners performing ultrasound examinations to a robust model. Such regulation however must be able to appropriately acknowledge the significant variation in the scope of practice and background of health professionals utilising ultrasound and enforce minimum standards. The demands of this multi-disciplinary environment strongly support the formation of a dedicated registration board under the Australian Health Professionals Regulation Agency tasked with maintaining standards and ensuring the safety of all patients undergoing ultrasound examinations.

Ratified by the Board of Directors

4 March 2010

---

Australian Sonographers Association Ltd

PO Box 709 Moorabbin VIC 3189