



Private Healthcare Australia
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Response to the Proposed change to the protected title for the specialty of podiatric surgery

November 2024

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About Private Healthcare Australia

Private Healthcare Australia (PHA) is the Australian private health insurance industry’s peak representative body. We have over 20 registered health funds throughout Australia as members and collectively represent 98% of people covered by private health insurance. PHA member funds provide healthcare benefits for more than 14 million Australians.

Response

Private health insurers have a strong vested interest in ensuring that quality standards are firmly in place for any practitioner offering podiatric procedures.

The community’s confusion around qualifications means that health funds are often criticised for not covering the costs of procedures provided by people calling themselves surgeons without a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons or equivalent. For funds that currently do not cover surgery by podiatrists, it can be difficult to explain to consumers the difference between an accredited medical surgeon and a practitioner using the protected title.

For this reason, PHA supports title protection be restricted to medical practitioners using the title surgeon. We suggest the Podiatry Board consider changing the protected title to ‘podiatric proceduralists’ rather than using the phrase “surgeon” to describe the endorsement of a person who does not hold a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons or equivalent.