

The *Practice Standards* review process

The new *Standards* were developed following a review of the *Practice Standards for Social Workers: Achieving Outcomes* (2003) over an 18 month period.

The review included a thorough literature review, research of other relevant standards documents, review of the 2003 practice standards document and NPSRC member input/suggestions.

In November 2012, a first draft of the revised standards was sent out for public consultation. Consultation was open for a 6 week period. Approximately 50 responses were received, some from individuals (mainly AASW members), some by state and territory focus groups and some from external stakeholders such as organisations.

The prominent themes arising from the feedback on the first draft were that it was too minimalist and general, did not differentiate social work from other professions and did not adequately describe what social workers do, therefore providing limited means of measuring whether required standards had been met.

The NPSRC began working on the development of a new framework and revised content in January 2013, informed by this feedback and from undertaking a further in-depth review and analysis of other international standards documents for social work and other Australian registered allied health profession's standards documents. There was also feedback that some characteristics of the 2003 standards were useful and had been lost in the first draft of the revised standards, so the committee revisited the 2003 standards and ensured that useful elements of this document were retained in the second draft. For example, the use of standards with a series of indicators was retained as well as other relevant content from the 2003 standards.

A second draft was subsequently developed which went out for consultation in April 2013. Consultations were open for a two week period. Approximately 25 responses were received – many from individuals, organisations and AASW committees who had provided feedback during the first round of consultation.

The new framework and content was widely accepted and supported by those who provided feedback. The feedback was constructive and focused on the specific detail of the content in contrast to a critique of the overall framework – which is what characterised the feedback arising from the first round of consultation.

All final feedback was considered by NPSRC and final changes were made to the revised *Practice Standards*. The *Practice Standards* 2013 were accepted by the Board at the June 2013 Board meeting and are now available for use.