

HYPNOTHERAPY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA - PART 1

Welcome – this information is from one of the five Symposium's that HCA (Hypnotherapy's Peak Body) is held around the country in February.

PURPOSE:

- Discuss current state of our profession with practicing hypnotherapists
- Expand on the differing roles and responsibilities of the three components that make up our profession:
 - HCA
 - Its member entities - Associations + Training Organisations
 - Clinicians
- Outline what the HCA has done, is doing and plans to do to strengthen the profession and support its members and hypnotherapists

CONTEXT & HISTORY

Oldest association in Australia is AHA formed in 1949, others formed in later years as need arose. At that time the use of hypnosis was regulated in Australia at that time by acts of state parliaments to:

- Dentists
- Medical Doctors
- Psychologists
- Other Persons "As Approved by The States Psychology Boards"

By 1998 the situation began to change and restrictions on the practice of hypnosis were lifted with South Australia the last to reregulate in 2010.

The use of hypnosis is now unrestricted, unregulated government decree self-regulated. There is no longer any restriction or recognised qualification that allows a person to practice hypnosis in Australia – anyone can call themselves a clinical hypnotherapist.

In 2010 a system of regulation under **AHPRA** (Australian Health Practitioners' Regulation Authority) and 15 national boards came under the AHPRA umbrella, these include, psychologists, dentists, acupuncturists, naturopaths etc.

Hypnotherapy was deemed too small to warrant attention by AHPRA and the profession to organise and self-regulate.

WHAT IS SELF-REGULATION?

The government's stated intention was that peak bodies made up of all stakeholders should be established and take responsibility for regulating their own modalities. This is the reason for the establishment of HCA on 2011.

In practice there is no over-arching self-regulation of hypnosis as a whole modality:

Any regulation is carried out under the rules and requirements of various associations and bodies who have no legal rights outside of their own constitution.

The federal government does not consult with any one hypnotherapy association with regard to hypnosis, the expectation is that there should be a peak body representing the profession.

Pros and cons of self-regulation

The benefits of deregulation

- no risk of prosecution for hypnotherapists
- educational institutions free to teach hypnosis
- practitioners free to advertise within various codes of ethics and the law

Challenges of deregulation

- opened the way for unqualified to practice as a clinical hypnotherapist
- it has reduced the number of health funds rebating for hypnotherapy as there is no nationwide standard, training or core competence to evaluate
- it has allowed for very short or poor training to be advertised and delivered

THE CURRENT MAKEUP OF THE PROFESSION

- Peak Body – HCA
- Associations
- Training Organisations
- Therapists

Peak Body - HCA set up by the profession to comply with the government of the time's requirements. Made up of stakeholders, funded by moderate contributions.

How effective has HCA been?

With a budget of less than \$5000/PA HCA has been limited in what it could achieve apart from organising an Annual General Meeting. Despite this HCA has, with the agreement of the associations;

1. Developed a national set of minimum standards for clinical hypnotherapists
2. Developed a national set of ethical standards for clinical hypnotherapists
3. As the professions peak body built, developed and managed a website with a focus towards government and other health professionals
4. Run an educational standards sub-committee
5. Built a website for HCA as touchstone for other professional organisations and government
6. Built a National Register of Hypnotherapists

Current HCA Members are

1. 5 Associations of varying size, strength and influence funded by membership fees
2. 12 training organisations of varying size, strength and influence who funded by student course fees

2018 - 2019 AGM'S ROAD MAP FOR THE FUTURE

2018 AGM proved to be a turning point for HCA planning. It was noted by the delegates that:

- the government had asked the profession to self-regulate and this wasn't happening very effectively
- the profession was less than cohesively with multiple associations for small numbers of therapists – all with same reporting requirements
- what therapists expected from an association has changed substantially over the last 10 years
- some training was happening in less than optimal fashion

The leaders of the associations the educational institutions and the HCA Board agreed on a forward plan for the next 7 – 10 years to consolidate hypnotherapy as a separate profession, to strengthen it and make it a cohesive independent force in the world of therapy in Australia.

THE ROADMAP

2018 - Single National Register

Mandatory registration of all eligible association members with immediate effect. Branding of « HCA Registered Hypnotherapist » to be promoted.

HCA able to communicate directly with therapists.

2018 - Self-Regulation

Investigate self-regulation & what HCA needs to do in this regard and to be seen as active in self-regulating.

2019 - Funding

Confirm funding arrangements with associations regarding \$50 registration fee starting with all 2019 renewals – pushed back to 2020.

2019 - Joint CPD Association Workshops

Symposium in each state

2019 AGM reaffirmed this position

SINGLE NATIONAL REGISTER

As a part of self-regulation When HCA investigated what government expected of a peak body the **first thing** HCA were told is that there should be a **Single National Register of Hypnotherapists** who met the Peak Body's standards and belonged to its member associations. This was the starting point.

So, we built one:

<https://hcaaustralianhypnotherapistsregister.com.au>

The HCA Board determined that the new register wouldn't simply be a list of names and addresses, the goal was to meet government expectations and help therapists be successful and grow the profession. It was decided to build the register in the following way:

1. There should be a separate page for every eligible hypnotherapist and requested information from the associations about eligibility
2. HCA / associations emailed all of the eligible therapists asking them to send us details of their practice
3. HCA allowed wide leeway for them to promote their practice and worked effectively giving each therapist an optimised web presence
4. HCA the optimised all of the pages for Google (94% of all online searches)

Register

- Cross-Associations National Register of Hypnotherapists for the first time
- Adheres to what Government wants as a peak body
- There is now a single register where public, professionals, health funds and government can find qualified, supervised, hypnotherapist who gets CPE

What HCA needs from therapists: information.

Correct Name, practice, email, website, association, qualifications - + 300 words about your practice.

This National Register is the first step in HCA and the profession having an effective peak body, it's also what the profession has been asked to do in self-regulation.

Branding

One of the key issues HCA delegates identified as a key issue was branding. The public, government, health funds no-one can identify a hypnotherapist by a recognisable brand. Why is this important?

1. Branding improves recognition

One of the major components of a brand is a logo because, as the "face" of a business, it's what people instantly recognise. A professional logo design is simple enough to be memorable, but powerful enough to give the desired impression of your company.

2. Branding creates trust

People are more likely to purchase from a business that appears professional, recognised and legitimate.

3. Brands create difference

We are competing in a market with a questionable level of expertise, branding makes you stand apart.

4. Brands provide safety / peace of mind

Consumers want comfort, happiness, and satisfaction in their lives, and they get it in part through the products they buy and the services they consume. If the brands they use consistently deliver a positive experience, consumers form an opinion that the brand is trustworthy, which gives them peace of mind when buying.

5. Brands add value

Perception is everything and brands provide perception.

6. Branding supports advertising

Brand logos make advertising 'safe'

7. Branding generates new customers

More likely to attract customers to a known brand

8. Brands express who we are

The brands we use make a statement about who we are and who we want to be. People become emotionally attached to the brands they use and view them as part of their self-image.

All of our member associations have the same core values, the same standards, the same training, same supervision requirements, so we can have unified branding which is cross-association.

HCA & the associations are creating a brand which is tied into the **Register “HCA Registered Hypnotherapist”**.

How therapists can use it : website, business cards, advertising, clinic. We all need to do is push the branding that sets us apart. Material has been provided.

2020 – PR & Marketing

HCA has engaged with McGown Creative who are going to manage PR to promote and 'defend our brand'. This has already started, and this is part is how the register fee will be used.

McGown Creative have a partner marketing company that HCA is meeting with to find ways to promote 'HCA Registered Hypnotherapist'. It will be low key but hopefully effective.

Functions of a self-regulating peak body as required by government:

- A single National Register of Qualified Hypnotherapists that is effective
- A branding strategy across our profession
- A minimum set of educational standards across our profession
- A minimum code of ethics across our profession

What's left to do:

- Industry certification of training
- Industry minimum standards for those teaching hypnotherapy
- Unified profession

We are not there yet but as a profession we are moving forward

We have for the first time a sense of unity and purpose coupled with a roadmap forward that if applied will help to safeguard our profession into the future.

RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL 21CENTURY PRACTICE

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE AT A PERSONAL LEVEL AND A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL?

DEFINING SUCCESS

Break into 2 parts: personal success & professional success

What does it take at a personal level to be successful hypnotherapist?

1. **Passion and a love for helping people:** Success requires a strong personal foundation, conviction, integrity, and, most of all, compassion. It can't be just a job or a way to pay the bills or make money. If it is, it's almost guaranteed not to succeed.
2. **An ability to connect with people:** Studies have proven time and again that the ability to connect with a client is the #1 indicator of successful work with them.
3. **An ability to talk about hypnosis and what you do:** need to be able to talk about what hypnosis is, explain how it works, and explain the benefits. The better you can tell a compelling story about the healing and powerful aspects of hypnosis, the more people will connect with your message and want to work with you. This is done on the phone, over coffee, over lunch, on your website, and online with social media. People talk about their work. In other words, have to have an ability to normalise what you do. Make hypnosis part of the mainstream conversation because that's where 80% of people live their lives and they are/should be our clients.
4. **Confidence:** Being confident in your sessions with clients is extremely important. Good hypnotists model for their clients what they want them to do by doing it themselves first. This means confidently and compassionately working with clients to achieve desired outcomes.

What does it take at a professional level to be successful hypnotherapist?

1. **Training:** Excellent training and on-going professional development in the fields of hypnotherapy and people.
2. **Skills to run a business**
3. **Life experience**
4. **Strong, ongoing support of trusted colleagues:** we often work on our own. Team up with people more experienced.

You need two sets of skills, both personal and professional to run a successful practice. If only have one set of skills, it's going to be difficult.

UNIVERSAL FACTORS OF A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE

How do personal and professional skills break down into practical application?

What is common to all successful practices? 6 Universal Factors

1. **The things we just outlined** – personal and professional values that bring success.

2. **A clear business plan and strategy:**
 - a. **Without a plan, a business is a doomed business:** A written-down business strategy will provide a basis for a rock-solid practice. You should create a detailed business plan and ensure that every decision you make is evaluated according to that plan. Is it going to help you get where you want to be? Needs to be spoken about, tested, evaluated. This will help everyone involved see and understand the vision and motive of the practice while increasing the chances of success and profitability.

 - b. **The plan should include at least:**
 - i. Market research
 - ii. Workforce demands
 - iii. Forecasting
 - iv. Business description
 - v. Vision, goals and keys to achieving them
 - vi. Competition analysis and monitoring
 - vii. Financial specifications: assets and liabilities, cash flow, income projections, etc

3. **Not having a why?** see TED Talk on “What's Your Why” by Simon Sinek for insights on finding and communicating your why.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeClfXpxw>

No-one wants to buy hypnotherapy or counselling, they are searching for answers to the problems they have. They want to buy the why – they have to believe in you and in your story.

4. **Don't start a business to make money:** While money is the core of your business, it should not be the driving force for you to succeed. Don't think about marketing as selling something, marketing is simply connecting with your community. Stop selling and start connecting.
5. **Commitment to the practice and the financial resources to market, establish and fund a practice:** New York therapist Lori Gottlieb said

"I fully assumed, in what now seems like an astounding fit of naïveté, that I'd send out an e-mail announcement and network with doctors, and to paraphrase 'Field of Dreams,' if I built it, they would come. Except that they didn't."

Stop selling, start connecting.

6. **Define your market – to specialise or not?** You can't expect to sell your therapy services to just anyone. **First**, not everyone needs therapy. **Second**, you may be more or less adept or more or less interested in serving particular communities or helping with specific issues.

The right marketing strategies + The right target audience = A growing practice

LOCAL FACTORS OF A SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE

1. **Community - Staying in the same place:** become a part of your community – be the "go-to" person. Community is about relationship. The main local factor in building a successful practice has been genuinely engaging with the community with no agenda.
2. **Create A Localised Brand:** brands don't have to be multinational. New Farm Hypnotherapy – it does what's on the box, everyone knows us and who we are and what we do.
3. **Specialisation:** specialisation is important. There is an expectation or **public perception** that generalists are out of favour and specialists provide a "better and more comprehensive service".
If you're going to specialise need to:
 - follow a passion – no point doing something you don't enjoy
 - make sure you actually are an expert and can help people resolve the issues you've specialised in
 - ensured that there is a market
 - know who your competitors are

4. **Programs:** offer programs not sessions for these reasons:
 - a. gives clients realistic expectations
 - b. client knows what they are committing to in terms of time and cost
 - c. takes a lot of pressure off the therapists
 - d. fills the diary ahead

5. **Having a minute for business as well as therapy:** most of us get so busy we don't work on the business plan. Make time to consider questions like -
 - a. Where are we, phone calls, bookings v where should we be?
 - b. Is there anyone in the community I need to meet with?
 - c. Are my ideas developing?
 - d. Have I got any new ones?
 - e. What are we doing well?
 - f. What could we do better?

20 ESSENTIALS FOR GETTING YOUR WEBSITE SEEN IN 2020

THE ONLY SHOW IN TOWN IS GOOGLE

2019 Statistics : Google has 90.46% (94% Australia) of the search engine market share worldwide. Google receives over 63,000 searches per second on any given day. Nothing else matters.

WHAT ARE THE 10 MOST IMPORTANT SEO RANKING FACTORS?

If Google receives 90.46% of search queries our businesses have to be represented and they have to be able to be found. Important factors are:

- Security (SSL), Accessibility, Mobile Friendliness
- Page Speed (Including Mobile Page Speed)
- Domain Age, URL, and Authority
- Optimized Content
- Content Length
- Video
- Technical SEO
- Links
- User Experience
- Real Business Information – Google My Business (smart phone) – Local Search

HOW TO MAKE YOUR WEBSITE WORK

SEO requirements keep changing, and it can be hard to keep up with the latest developments. But if you want your site to get traffic, you have constantly adapt and work on the site or pay someone to do it – it's the new advertising, what you used to spend on old media, think about redirecting here.

Well-optimized sites get more and more traffic over time, obviously that means calls, hopefully clients. **Without SEO**, searchers won't be able to find your site. However good your site looks, it won't grow your practice if it can't be found.

Organic SEO ranking refers to where your web content appears in search engine results pages (SERPs).

No 1 Ranking means that when a person searches for a particular term your page / content is the first result apart from paid results.

In 2019 around Macquarie Media found that 88% of all search traffic goes to organic results over paid ads.

Those who do use paid ads

- They are over the age of 55
- Did not realize it was an ad
- The ad was well marketed
- The ad created interest

Those who don't

- They are under the age of 35
- Worried their internet behaviour will be tracked
- Lack of trust in online advertising in general
- Banner ads are not relevant to their search
- Worried about getting a virus

Appearing in the top 3 results is excellent result because almost half of the clicks on any search results page go to those positions. Appearing on the first page at all, within the top 10 results, is also useful. That's because **95% of people** never make it past the first page.

Tips on latest Google information

Firstly: Google's search bots (pieces of automated software called "spiders") crawl the web... All that really means is they visit web pages.

Secondly: they add correctly optimized and crawlable pages to Google's index and catalogue them.

Thirdly: when people search Google, it returns what it thinks are the most appropriate results based on the search terms they enter (out of the trillions of pages in Google's index).

At that point the responsibility becomes yours, you have to rely on your search engine optimisation, page titles and meta descriptions to get searchers to click **your** link and visit **your** site and **call** your phone.

According to Google's own search quality ratings: when it indexes the main content of each page, it checks factors like:

- The purpose of the page
- **EATS - Expertise, Authority, Trustworthiness, Search value** – not just from the site and the page content, but expertise from the individual **creator** of the content too
- Content quality and amount
- Website information and information about the content **creator**
- Website reputation and content **creator** reputation

These go into its ranking algorithm and help to determine SEO ranking. Based on the rating guidelines above, Google shows searchers the most relevant, high quality results related to what they're looking for. The most relevant are shown first, with the rest being shown over successive pages.

If you build your own site you need to be aware of this, if you don't you need to ensure your web builder is using best practice.

The First Factor of Ranking is Security and Accessibility

One of the most important ranking factors Google announced July 2018 that its algorithm and search index now based on mobile page speed (64% searches made on mobile or tablet).

<https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>

This now a reality and will affect rankings. Sites may look good on a desktop but if they're not mobile friendly you will be penalised. Google wants a good user experience.

Test your site on: iOS, Android, Phone and Tablet – menus need to work, forms need to work, **phone numbers clickable. – test for phone 60+% searches**

The Second Factor is Page Speed

Google's prime objective is to return relevant results to search queries as accurately and quickly as possible. The sites that head the organic listings are those that meet the criteria we've listed and one of the most important is page speed. Your site can look great, but if it's slow, it will be penalised.

The Third Factor is Domain Age

Almost 60% of domains in top 10 of a Google search are 4 years old or more. Data from a study of two million pages suggests that very few sites less than a year old achieve that ranking. So, if you've had your domain name for a while, keep it and optimise it. The name of the domain is less important than the age, build and content.

The Fourth Factor is SEO

Search Engine Optimisation. You hear a lot of talk about content and SEO and most of it is correct. One thing Google does not make a secret of is that its search algorithm relies on words and how they are formed. These are the words and phrases searchers use when they're looking for information. They're also the words and phrases that describe the topics your site is about.

Optimise site for all of those search types. Work with **key phrases**, Website content needs to be optimised. **Key word are gone, key phrases and questions are in** its an evolution of how people are using devices.

Understanding LSI Keywords and SEO Ranking

It's not just about the main keywords either; it's also important to include terms related to the main terms people are searching for. These are called LSI (latent semantic indexing) keywords. They provide a kind of online word association to help Google know which results to show.

For example, using the right LSI keywords will tell Google that when searchers type in "mini", your page is relevant to the car, rather than the skirt, and vice versa.

The Fifth Factor Is Content Length

Google wants content to be quality and have some length to it minimum suggested is 350 words per page. While just writing more to stretch out the length is never advisable, if a subject calls for depth, give it depth.

The research suggests that content over 2000 words gets more top ten positions in Google search engine rankings.

The Sixth Factor is Using Video

This is why Google bought YouTube for \$1.65 Billion. According to analysts, video content will represent a 80% of online traffic by 2021.

Video marketing stats shows that:

- People are watching video across all age groups
- Some 79% of people would rather watch a video than read a blog post
- People are using video to help them make purchase decisions

Think about including video in your content strategy. Video gets read, shared and linked to, providing plenty of signals to amplify your search ranking.

The Seventh Factor is Technical SEO: We said earlier that getting the code right is one aspect of optimizing content for better search engine rankings. Here are some of the aspects you need to look at:

- Use keyword phrases in **page titles**, which is where Google first looks to determine which content is relevant to which search. You'll see the page title as the first line of a search result entry.
- Use **header tags** to show content hierarchy. If your title is formatted as h1, then use h2 or h3 for subheadings.
- Create a **meta description** that both entices readers and includes your keyword phrase. Keep meta descriptions short and grabby – you have around 160 characters to convince searchers that this is the post they want.
- Use keyword phrases in image tags to show how the images are relevant to the main content. Google also has an image search, which is another way for people to find your content.
- Where it's appropriate, use schema mark-up to tell Google what kind of content you're producing. This can also help your content appear in rich card entries other than answer boxes.

The Eighth Factor User Experience (Rank Brain)

Google uses **artificial intelligence** to better rank web pages. It calls that signal **RankBrain**. This includes other signals that affect your search engine ranking. These are:

- **Clickthrough rate** – the percentage of people who click to visit your site after an entry comes up in search results

- **Bounce rate**, especially pogo sticking – the number of people who bounce away again, which basically means your site didn't give them what they wanted
- **Dwell time** – how long they stay on your site after they've arrived

If people land on your site, don't like it and bounce away, then Google will think it's not relevant to their needs. If enough people do this, then you might find it more difficult for your site to rank higher in search results.

In contrast, if people click through to your web page and stick around for a while, that tells Google your content is relevant to their search.

So when you optimize titles, descriptions, and content to get the clicks and deliver value on the other end, you can boost your search engine ranking.

The Ninth Factor Links

The web is built on links, so naturally, links are a crucial SEO ranking signal. There are three kinds of links to think about:

- Inbound links
- Outbound links
- Internal links

Google uses inbound links as one way to help determine how authoritative and relevant your content is.

The best-case scenario is where an authoritative site includes a relevant link to your site in a relevant piece of their content. **So, if the HCA Register includes a link to your Site and vice-versa, that'll be perceived better than if a random person with a low-quality site links to it.**

Ideally, you want to have very few inbound links from low-quality domains. You want to show that you're creating quality content for your visitors and linking to relevant, authoritative sites in your niche is a good thing.

The Tenth Factor Real Business Information – Local Search - Google My Business

Google's official word is that social shares are not a direct ranking factor. Links from Twitter or Facebook aren't counted the same as links from other authoritative websites.