



Communiqué

June/July 2018

The Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) meets each month to consider and decide on matters related to its regulatory functions under the National Law¹ and within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué highlights any key matters from the Board's June and July 2018 meetings, as well as other important information.

The Board held its June and July 2018 meetings in Melbourne.

Revised registration standard for endorsement for scheduled medicines now in effect

The Board's revised registration standard for endorsement for scheduled medicines and associated guidelines came into effect on 1 August 2018.

The news item about the revised registration standard and guidelines can be found [here](#).

The revised registration standard replaces the previous registration standard that was in effect until 31 July 2018. It applies to podiatrists and podiatric surgeons applying to have their registration endorsed for scheduled medicines, as well as those whose registration is already endorsed for scheduled medicines.

Recognising that there were practitioners working towards an endorsement under Pathway 2 of the previous registration standard when the new registration standard took effect, the Board has developed transitional arrangements. The transitional arrangements allow these practitioners to continue under Pathway 2 or switch to Pathway B of the new registration standard.

Practitioners who want to use the transitional arrangements have until **1 September 2018** to let the Board know and submit relevant documents. The transitional arrangements are published on the [Board's website](#).

The registration standard and guidelines as well as other supporting information, including templates, FAQ and a Prescribing Self-Assessment tool are available on the [Endorsement for scheduled medicines page](#).

Accreditation and approval of programs of study for the podiatry profession

One of the objectives of the National Law is to facilitate the provision of high quality education and training of health practitioners. The accreditation function is the primary way of achieving this. The National Law sets out the respective roles of the Board and its appointed accreditation authority, the Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council (ANZPAC), in relation to the accreditation and approval of education providers and programs of study for the podiatry profession.

LaTrobe University

After considering a report from ANZPAC about its accreditation of the Bachelor of Applied Science/Master of Podiatric Practice and the Master of Podiatric Practice podiatry programs of study offered by La Trobe University at its Bundoora campus, the Board approved the accredited programs of study until 18 June 2023 as providing a qualification for the purpose of general registration and a qualification in podiatric therapeutics for the purpose of endorsement for scheduled medicines.

¹ The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Advertising update: selectively editing reviews or testimonials may break the law

AHPRA has published further guidance for advertisers of regulated health services to emphasise that selectively editing reviews or testimonials has the potential to break the law.

The recent example of an organisation only publishing positive reviews and removing all negative information from consumer reviews shows the importance of advertisers understanding their advertising obligations under all relevant legislation.

Selectively editing reviews or testimonials has the potential to be false, misleading or deceptive and, therefore, be unlawful. For example it is inherently misleading to:

- edit a review that is negative to make it positive, as this falsely presents the feedback
- edit a review that has a mix of negative and positive comments so that the published review only has positive comments, as this falsely implies that the reviewer only had positive feedback, or
- edit a review so that it no longer accurately reflects all the reviewer's feedback and presents an inaccurate or false impression of the reviewer's views.

Reviews influence consumer choice about their healthcare so advertisers must make sure reviews are genuine and not misleading. Advertisers' moderation guidelines about publishing reviews must comply with the National Law and the [Australian Consumer Law](#).

AHPRA and the National Boards recently published a testimonial tool to help advertisers understand what reviews can and can't be published, and have updated the tool to help advertisers get it right when they are moderating reviews or testimonials against the National Law's advertising requirements.

The updated [testimonial tool](#) is available in the [Advertising resources](#) section on the AHPRA website.

Closing the gap by 2031: a shared commitment

The National Scheme has made a landmark commitment to help achieve equity in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians to close the gap by 2031.

Launched at Melbourne Museum on Thursday 5 July 2018, the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme Statement of Intent is a joint commitment between 37 health organisations, including leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations and entities, AHPRA, all National Boards and all accreditation authorities.

AHPRA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group is leading this work, in close partnership with a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and experts.

The group shares a commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have access to health services that are culturally safe and free from racism so that they can enjoy a healthy life, equal to that of other Australians, enriched by a strong living culture, dignity and justice.

To help achieve this, the group is focusing on:

- a culturally safe health workforce supported by nationally consistent standards, codes and guidelines across all professions in the National Scheme
- using our leadership and influence to achieve reciprocal goals
- increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' participation in the registered health workforce
- greater access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to culturally safe services of health professions regulated under the National Scheme, and
- increased participation across all levels of the National Scheme.

AHPRA's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was also launched with support from Reconciliation Australia. The RAP is an important document outlining what AHPRA will do to start addressing the imbalance in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians.

More information is available in the [news item](#), the [Statement of Intent](#) and [AHPRA's Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

True partnership recognised through AHPRA and Victoria Police MOU

AHPRA and Victoria Police have announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enable greater cooperation, which will see the public better protected.

The MOU is the first of its kind between AHPRA and a police force. It recognises the cooperation already in place between the two agencies. It establishes procedures for timely and appropriate information sharing, within the law, where AHPRA or Victoria Police discover certain information in the course of their investigations.

The MOU provides a mechanism for the release of information by AHPRA when it identifies information relating to criminal offences, including physical harm, sexual offending, production of exploitative material and/or drug offences.

Victoria Police will also be better placed to share information with AHPRA about practitioners who they suspect may pose a risk of substantial harm to the public or individuals posing as registered health practitioners when they are not.

The agreement lays out detailed security protocols around the transmission, storage, use and disclosure of information that is shared between Victoria Police and AHPRA.

The MOU recognises the learning that came from the [Chaperone Review](#), a report into the use of chaperones to protect patients. The report stated that where there are allegations of indecent or sexual assault there needed to be greater clarity around whether AHPRA contacts the police or relies on the notifier (the person who makes the complaint) to do so.

The report also considered it was important that AHPRA was kept aware of developments in police investigations, which may trigger the need to review risk and take immediate action on a registered health practitioner's ability to practise their profession.

For more information, see the [media release](#) on the AHPRA website.

Further information

The Board publishes a range of information for podiatrists and podiatric surgeons on its [website](#) and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting the podiatry profession.

For more information about registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, please refer to the information published on www.ahpra.gov.au. Alternatively, contact AHPRA by an [online enquiry form](#) or phone 1300 419 495.

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Cathy Loughry
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia
8 August 2018