



Communiqué

Meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia held on 22 April 2015

Board survey

Thank you to all the podiatrists and podiatric surgeons who recently completed the Board's survey.

We have had a great response rate and appreciate the time taken by registrants to complete the survey.

The survey has now closed and the results are being analysed by the consultant who was engaged to conduct this anonymous survey on behalf of the Board. We hope the feedback will assist the Board to better understand registrants' knowledge and understanding of their obligations under the National Law as well as identifying areas where the Board might need to provide more guidance to the profession.

Once again, thank you to everyone who completed the survey.

Approval of revised accreditation standards for podiatry

Under the National Law, the Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council (ANZPAC) is responsible for developing accreditation standards for the approval of the Board. Accreditation standards are used to assess whether a program of study, and the education provider that delivers the program of study, provide individuals who complete the program with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes to practise the profession

ANZPAC recently completed the scheduled review of the *Accreditation Standards for Podiatry Programs for Australia and New Zealand*, and the *Podiatry Competency Standards for Australia and New Zealand*.

The entry-level program accreditation standards specify the criteria against which podiatry programs of study are evaluated. The podiatry competency standards are used for a range of purposes, including program accreditation, and describe the professional attributes and core competencies of entry-level podiatrists.

The review was undertaken to ensure that both sets of standards continue to represent contemporary best practice, benchmark well against other health profession standards nationally and internationally and remain relevant and effective over time. Throughout the review, ANZPAC undertook wide-ranging public consultation.

ANZPAC considered the feedback received from stakeholders during the public consultation when finalising the standards for submission to the Board. The Board has approved the revised *Accreditation Standards for Podiatry Programs for Australia and New Zealand*. They will be published on the Board's website under the 'Accreditation' tab and take effect on the day they are published on the Board's website.

The Board also approved the revised *Podiatry Competency Standards for Australia and New Zealand*.

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 National Law sets out the roles of the Board and its appointed accreditation

The Board is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

authority, ANZPAC, in relation to the accreditation and approval of education providers and programs of study for the podiatry profession.

ANZPAC is responsible for accrediting individual programs of study if it is reasonably satisfied that the program of study and the education provider that provides the program of study meet, or substantially meet an approved accreditation standard and the imposition of conditions on the accreditation will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time.

ANZPAC is required to give the Board a report after it decides to accredit a program of study (with or without conditions). After being given an accreditation report, the Board may approve, or refuse to approve, the accredited program of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration or endorsement. An approval may be granted subject to conditions.

Programs of study approved by the Board are published under [Accreditation](#) on the Board's website.

After considering reports on accreditation provided by ANZPAC, the Board approved the following programs of study.

[Queensland University of Technology \(QUT\)](#)

The Board approved until 26 February 2020 the Graduate Certificate of Podiatric Therapeutics program of study offered by the Queensland University of Technology as providing a qualification in podiatric therapeutics for the purpose of an endorsement for scheduled medicines.

[ACPS Fellowship Training Program](#)

The Board approved until 26 February 2020, the Fellowship Training Program offered by the Australasian College of Podiatric Surgery (ACPS) as providing a qualification for the purpose of specialist registration as a podiatric surgeon.

Health ministers to consider the review report in August

Federal and state and territory health ministers will respond to the report of the review of the National Scheme in August this year.

Ministers met in mid-April at the COAG Health Council to discuss a range of national health issues, including the final report of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) Review. The independent review was conducted by Kim Snowball, the former Director General of Health in WA. It involved an extensive consultation process that included more than 230 written submissions and more than 1,000 individuals participating in consultation forums in each capital city.

The review aimed to identify what was working well in the National Scheme and opportunities to improve and strengthen our work to protect the public and facilitate access to health services. According to the report of the meeting, health ministers will consider the recommendations from the NRAS Review and discuss them further at their meeting in August 2015.

The *COAG Health Council communiqué* is available on the [COAG Health Council website](#).

Improving monitoring of conditions on practitioner registration

AHPRA has welcomed calls for stringent monitoring and swift detection of breaches in compliance by registered health practitioners with restrictions on their registration.

On 24 March 2015, the Queensland Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) published a report recommending a range of initiatives to strengthen monitoring and compliance in Queensland and the National Scheme.

The report's recommendations affirm the sweeping changes AHPRA has already initiated to strengthen its compliance and monitoring program.

AHPRA's detailed response to the OHO and the recommendations in the report is published in the [Corporate publications](#) section of AHPRA's website.

Since July 2014, health complaints management in Queensland for registered health practitioners has involved a partnership between National Boards, AHPRA and the OHO.

Improvements to compliance monitoring add to the overhaul of complaints management in Queensland that started in 2012. Recent initiatives include preparation for stricter drug and alcohol screening announced in February 2015, the appointment of a national compliance manager and stronger national coordination of the compliance function.

For more information, please read the [media release](#) on AHPRA's website.

Further information

Further information about the Board can be found on its [website](#) and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting their profession.

Cathy Loughry
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia
4 May 2015