

Media release

14 February 2014

Revised guidelines, code and policy released today, effective from March 2014

Revised guidelines and codes of conduct, and a new social media policy, containing important information for all registered health practitioners have been released today and come into effect from mid-March 2014.¹

Registered health practitioners need to familiarise themselves with this guidance to ensure their practice meets National Board expectations from mid-March.

The documents were released by the National Boards regulating registered health practitioners in Australia through the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme). They are the:

- revised *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services*
- revised *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- revised *Code of conduct*, and
- new *Social media policy*.

The guidelines, *Social media policy* and code were published on National Board websites today and will come into effect in mid-March 2014. The guidelines and policy are common across all National Boards and apply to all registered health practitioners. Most National Boards have a shared code of conduct while some have different codes (see overleaf).

The documents are the result of a scheduled review three years into the National Scheme and are the first set of revised documents to be released this year, with more to come later in 2014.

Physiotherapy Board of Australia Chair Paul Shinkfield said National Boards consulted widely late last year on the draft versions of the new guidelines, *Social media policy* and *Code of conduct*.

'The National Boards have an ongoing focus on best practice regulation in the public interest, and in public protection,' Mr Shinkfield said.

'The experiences from the first three years of the National Scheme were applied when these documents were being reviewed to make sure that they are clear and make it easier for practitioners to understand their obligations, and for members of the community to understand what is expected of health practitioners.'

Mr Shinkfield said the new common advertising guidelines continued to allow physiotherapists who are Fellows of the Australian College of Physiotherapy to advertise their specialist qualifications in a way that does not contravene the National Law.²

¹ The Psychology Board of Australia reviewed its code last year and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and Optometry Board of Australia are reviewing their codes separately. See table on page 2 for a list of which Boards have a shared and separate code.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Martin Fletcher, said the decision was made to publish the documents now to help practitioners, employers and members of the community understand what National Boards expect from practitioners.

‘It’s important that practitioners know and understand their obligations. By publishing these documents five weeks before they come into effect, practitioners, in particular, can start to be ready for when they come into effect in mid-March. It’s also important for employers of health practitioners and interested members of the community to be able to see and understand this guidance,’ Mr Fletcher said.

Published today

National Board	Code of conduct (revised)	Advertising guidelines (revised)	Mandatory reporting guidelines (revised)	Social media policy (new)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice	Shared code	Common to all National Boards	Common to all National Boards	Common to all National Boards
Chinese Medicine	Shared code			
Chiropractic	Shared code with minor modifications			
Dental	Shared code			
Medical	Separate code, <i>Good medical practice</i>			
Medical Radiation Practice	Shared code with minor modifications			
Nursing and Midwifery	Separate code, review progressing separately			
Occupational Therapy	Shared code			
Optometry	Shared code with minor modifications, review progressing separately			
Osteopathy	Shared code			
Pharmacy	Shared code with minor modifications			
Physiotherapy	Shared code			
Podiatry	Shared code			
Psychology	Separate <i>Code of ethics</i> ,			

² The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

	reviewed last year			
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FAQ and additional information on the Board's [website](#):

- FAQ on the transition from the current to the new/revised documents.
- Document showing the differences between the current and revised *Mandatory notifications guidelines*.
- Document showing the differences between the current and revised shared *Code of conduct*.

For more information

- Visit www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au
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