



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Physiotherapy registration: what you need to know

Physiotherapy

March 2016



What is the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme?

A single, national regulatory system for registered health professions

- 14 health profession boards
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority



The National Scheme

- **Mobility:** registered physiotherapists are able to practise across Australia
- **Uniformity:** consistent national standards – registration and professional conduct
- **Efficiency:** streamlined, effective
- **Collaboration:** sharing, learning and understanding between professions
- **National online registers:** showing current conditions on practice (except health)



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Regulated health professions

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Who does what?

Physiotherapy Board of Australia

- Sets national standards, codes and guidelines for physiotherapy
- Decides who is registered to be a physiotherapist
- Approves accredited programs of study
- Oversees assessment of overseas trained practitioners



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What is AHPRA?

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

- Provides support & administration services to National Boards & committees
- Operates one national office with shopfront in each State & Territory
- Employs staff, owns property & enters into contracts on behalf of Boards



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Key features of registration

- Mandatory standards that must be met to remain registered:
 - Criminal history
 - Continuing professional development
 - Recency of practice
 - English language skills
 - Professional indemnity insurance



Key features of registration

- Student registration
- Initial registration application upon qualification, then apply to renew every year
- Public online register of physiotherapists
- Notifications (complaints)
 - Health, performance and conduct
 - Mandatory notifications
 - More at www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications



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Why register?

- Registration is a legal requirement
 - main purpose: public protection
 - only suitable persons with approved qualifications, who meet requirements of registration standards, are eligible
- If you want to practise as a physiotherapist you must be registered
- Qualification is not registration



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Why are physiotherapists registered?

You must not practise unregistered:
fines of up to \$30,000



What constitutes practice?

- Practice is any role where health practitioner skills & knowledge are used whether remunerated or not



Not restricted to direct clinical care - includes working in:

- nonclinical relationship with clients
- management & administration
- education & research
- advisory, regulatory or policy roles
- any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession &/or use professional skills



Why should you care?

- **No registration, no job as a physiotherapist**
 - Cannot use the title “Physiotherapist” and “Physical Therapist”
 - Restricted practice: One of only four professions legally able to manipulate the cervical spine
- **REMINDER:** You cannot work as a physiotherapist if you are not registered



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When things go wrong

- You will be held to account against the Registration Standards and the Physiotherapy Code of Conduct
- Common complaints:
 - Communication
 - Boundary issues
 - Behaviour
 - Clinical care
 - Documentation



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Voluntary Notifications...



Anyone may make a notification about a physiotherapist's **performance, conduct or health** in writing, on-line or by phone

Mandatory notifications...

Practitioners & employers must report physiotherapists if reasonable belief they have engaged in **notifiable conduct**:

- practising while intoxicated by drugs or alcohol
- engaging in sexual misconduct in professional practice
- placing the public at risk of substantial harm through a physical or mental impairment affecting practice
- placing the public at risk of harm through a substantial departure from accepted professional standards





Becoming registered

- Graduation does not mean automatic registration
- Once qualified, you must apply for registration (information provided by University to AHPRA)
- Application can be made online
- You must meet registration requirements



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What are applicant obligations?

- Ensure all information provided is **true & correct**
- **Update any changes** to principal place of practice, postal address, name changes during application process
- If you are **unsure whether to disclose information** – disclose anyway or call AHPRA for more information



Serious penalties may apply if an applicant is found to have provided false &/or misleading information, including application being refused



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After registration?

Ongoing practitioner responsibilities...

- **Annual renewal** by **30 November** (online renewal encouraged)
 - late fee or reapplication (with all documentation) will be required
- **Declare:**
 - change of contact details or principal place of practice
 - criminal proceedings
 - health issues likely to impact on practice
- Minimum **20 hours CPD each year**: record & reflect
- Recency of practice
- Adhere to standards
- Mandatory notification requirements



How do I stay informed?

- www.ahpra.gov.au
 - See *Registration* for information for students and graduates
 - See *Notifications* for more on complaints
- Go to the Board's website – www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au
- Check for newsletters, standards and other important information for your profession
- Join in consultations about emerging issues