

## Communiqué

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The 57<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 28 November 2014 at the AHPRA national office in Melbourne.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting, and other points of interest.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

### Queensland – new arrangements for handling notifications from 1 July 2014

From **1 July 2014**, the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* came into effect in Queensland.

The Office of the Health Ombudsman has been receiving all complaints about Queensland health practitioners since 1 July, and will decide whether to retain the matters or refer them to the National Board to manage.

Complaints made to AHPRA or National Boards before 1 July 2014 will generally continue to be managed by AHPRA on behalf of the National Boards. However, under the new law the Office of the Health Ombudsman can request that a matter be referred to them to be managed. If this happens, AHPRA will inform both the notifier and the practitioner who is the subject of the notification.

For information about the Office of the Health Ombudsman please go to [www.oho.qld.gov.au](http://www.oho.qld.gov.au) or call 133 646 (133 OHO).

### Annual report

This year for the first time, AHPRA and the Physiotherapy Board of Australia have also published a summary on the regulation of the physiotherapy profession.

Also for the first time, state and territory summaries have also been published, providing an overview for all professions.

These reports are published on the AHPRA website under [Publications](#) and are accessible via the Board's website.

### Actions to improve the consumer experience

#### HIC report published online

A report recommending ways to improve consumers' interaction with the National Scheme has been published, along with a list of actions that AHPRA is taking to address the issues raised.

In March this year, AHPRA commissioned the Health Issues Centre Victoria (HIC) to investigate and make suggestions to improve the consumer experience of the National Scheme that regulates health practitioners.

AHPRA has published the HIC report – *Setting things right: Improving the consumer experience of AHPRA including the joint notification process between AHPRA and OHSC*. Accompanying the report is AHPRA's action plan, which outlines what work AHPRA has done to date, and what will be done next, to address the report's recommendations. Both documents can be accessed via [AHPRA's News page](#).

AHPRA has committed to reporting publicly on its actions to improve the experience of people who make a notification (complaint about a health practitioner).

The HIC drew on historical and current data to come up with clear picture of the current experience of consumers who have made a complaint about a practitioner. The research focused on the experience of Victorian notifiers, but AHPRA's action plan applies the improvements nationally.

### **Registrant survey - postponed**

We recently notified you that the Board would conduct a voluntary and anonymous email survey of registered physiotherapists. By conducting this survey, the Board aims to get a better understanding of physiotherapists' knowledge of their obligations under the National Law, and the areas on which it might need to provide more guidance.

The anonymous survey has been postponed until early 2015 to avoid interfering with the registration renewals campaign that started on 24 September.

### **Registration renewals**

The deadline for physiotherapists to renew their registration passed on 30 November 2014. Physiotherapists who forgot to renew their registration by this date are able to submit a [Fast Track application](#) form.

The registration renewal date for physiotherapists with general or non-practising registration is 30 November. You can check your registration details and expiry date on the [national registers of practitioners](#).

Make sure your contact details provided to AHPRA, including email, are current as you will be sent reminders when your registration is due. Look for these reminders from AHPRA as confirmation that online renewal is open.

See [fees](#) for the cost of annual renewal, including the late payment fee for renewal applications received during December.

If you do not renew your registration by 31 December (end of the one month late period), your registration will lapse in accordance with the National Law and your name will be removed from the national register.

If you wish to keep practising and do not renew registration by 31 December, you must submit a fast track application for registration. Fast track application forms are available on the Board website or by phoning the Customer Service Team on 1300 419 495 during January.

If submitting a fast track application, you cannot practise until your application is processed and your registration details are updated on the national register.

### **Student presentation**

The Board has published a [presentation](#) for use by education providers and other interested parties to help explain registration requirements for physiotherapists under the National Law. [The Powerpoint presentation is free to download from the Board's website](#), and is ideally suited to students nearing completion of their studies who are preparing for their careers as registered physiotherapists in Australia.

### **Physiotherapy November newsletter**

The November 2014 edition of the Physiotherapy registrant newsletter has been forwarded electronically to all physiotherapists. If you have not received your newsletter, please ensure that AHPRA holds your current and correct contact details. You can update your contact details by following the steps outlined in the next paragraph.

### **Updating contact details**

To check or update your contact details, go to the [Your Account](#) link on the AHPRA homepage, and enter your User ID, date of birth and password. Please note that your User ID is not your registration number. If you cannot remember your user ID or password, contact us [online](#) or call 1300 419 495.

### **Follow @AHPRA on Twitter**

AHPRA uses [Twitter](#) to encourage greater discussion about National Board consultations and to host regular Twitter chats on important topics.

## **Conclusion**

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of registered physiotherapists on our website at [www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au) or [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

For more detail or with questions about your registration, please send a web enquiry form or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

On behalf of the members of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia, I wish you Season's Greetings and all the best for 2015.

**Paul Shinkfield**

Chair

1 December 2014