

Communiqué

February 2017 meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia

The 82nd meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 24 February 2017 in the National Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) 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.

Revised recency of practice registration standard

The Board's revised recency of practice registration standard is now in effect. This means when you renew your registration at the end of November 2017 you must declare whether or not you have met the requirements of the revised standard.

The revised standard applies to all registered physiotherapists except those who are registered as non-practising.

The key change to the Board's revised recency of practice standard is the requirement for a minimum number of hours of practice. To meet the revised standard's requirements, a practitioner must practise in their chosen scope of practice for a minimum of 450 hours in the previous three years or 150 hours in the previous 12 months.

Read more about the revised standard in the [Board's FAQ](#).

Code of Conduct review in 2017

Eleven of the professions regulated in the National Scheme, including physiotherapy, will be consulting on proposed amendments to the shared [Code of Conduct](#) in 2017. The review is scheduled, in line with good governance. You will be invited to provide input into the revised changes of this important document.

No matter where a physiotherapist works, no matter their chosen scope of practice, all physiotherapists have a professional obligation to adhere to the registration standards, codes and guidelines, including the Code of Conduct.

There will be news items, updates in communiqués and other communications to let you know when the process of consultation gets under way.

Quarterly registration data released

The Board publishes quarterly data profiling Australia's physiotherapy workforce.

At December 2016, there were 30,004 registered physiotherapists in Australia comprising the following number of registrants according to registration type:

- 28,748 general registration
- 344 limited registration (postgraduate training or supervised practice)
- 15 limited (teaching or research), and
- 897 non-practising registration.

The quarterly registration data at December 2016 for the physiotherapy profession are published on the Board's website under the [Statistics](#) page. The report includes a number of statistical breakdowns by gender, age and principal place of practice.

Physiotherapy Board of Australia profession profile

The Board has published a [report](#) of its work with physiotherapists in the National Scheme during 2015/16.

The report provides a profession-specific view of the Board's work to manage risk to the public. It is a profile of regulation at work for physiotherapy professionals in Australia for the 12 months ending 30 June 2016 and includes the number of applications for registration, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, age and principal place of practice.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or concerns received about physiotherapists, matters opened and closed during the year, types of complaint, monitoring and compliance and matters involving immediate action.

Insights into the profession include:

- Of the 657,621 registered health practitioners in Australia in 2015/16, 28,855 were physiotherapists (4.4% of the total registrant base).
- 2,505 new applications for registration as a physiotherapist were received.
- Registration for the physiotherapy profession grew by 4.8% during the year to 30 June 2016.
- Student registration decreased by 1.7%, to 8,943 registrants.
- 68% of physiotherapists are women; 32% are men.
- The age bracket with the most physiotherapists was 25-29 (6,187 registrants).
- As part of the registration process, 2,702 criminal history checks were carried out for physiotherapists. Of 94 disclosable court outcomes, none required regulatory action.
- 102 notifications (complaints or concerns) were lodged about physiotherapists during the year, equating to less than 0.4% of the profession.
- Immediate action to suspend or limit a physiotherapist's registration was taken six times in 2015/16.
- There were 69 active monitoring cases, with most relating to suitability/eligibility for registration as a physiotherapist.

The data in this report are drawn from data published in the [2015/16 annual report](#) of AHPRA and the National Boards, reporting on the National Scheme.

Local insights, National Scheme: State and territory summaries published

Individual annual report summaries for each state and territory, offering insights into how the National Scheme is operating in each jurisdiction, have now been published.

Based on the AHPRA and National Boards annual report for 2015/16, the summaries are available [online on AHPRA's website](#).

Information includes applications for registration by profession, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, profession and specialty.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or concerns received by AHPRA by profession, types of complaint, matters involving immediate action, monitoring and compliance, panels and tribunals, and statutory offence complaints.

To download any or all of the state and territory reports, or to view the main 2015/16 annual report, [visit our microsite](#).

AHPRA Performance Report July-September 2016

The July to September 2016 quarterly performance reports for AHPRA and the National Boards are now available.

The reports, which are part of an ongoing drive by AHPRA and the National Boards to increase their accountability and transparency, include data specific to each state and territory.

Each report covers AHPRA and the National Boards' main areas of activity:

- managing applications for registration as a health practitioner
- managing notifications about the health, performance and conduct of registered health practitioners and offences against the National Law, and
- monitoring health practitioners and students with restrictions on their registration.

The reports are available on the [Statistics page](#).

To provide feedback on the reports please email: reportingfeedback@ahpra.gov.au.

First workshop on developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy for the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

At their combined meeting in September 2016, National Boards, AHPRA and accreditation authorities discussed how to best to work together to support better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The goal of the workshop was to identify the National Scheme's strategy and role in ensuring patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples in Australia's health system.

The first workshop was an initial discussion to identify the goals and possibilities of action in a strategy. It is expected that a further, larger summit will be convened to ensure engagement and alignment with other efforts.

Are your contact details up-to-date?

It is important your contact details are up-to-date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board. You can check your details via the [Login icon](#) at the top right of the AHPRA website. Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

Follow AHPRA on social media

Connect with AHPRA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to receive information about important topics for your profession and participate in the discussion.



Further information

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of registered physiotherapists on our website at www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

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

Charles Flynn

Chair

28 February 2017