

## Communiqué

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### February 2019 meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia

The 101<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board), was held on 1 March at the Melbourne Convention Centre, to coincide with the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) Combined Meeting.

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.

#### **Date for your diary – 25 July 2019 – webinar on continuing professional development for physiotherapists**

The Board is hosting a webinar on the topic of continuing professional development (CPD) on the 25 July 2019 at 4:00PM EST. Invitations will be sent to all registered physiotherapists closer to the time.

There will be an opportunity to ask live questions or you may wish to send questions to the Board before to the event. The session will be recorded and published afterwards so practitioners can view it if they are not able to join in the live discussion.

#### **Physiotherapy Board of Australia – Strategy for 2019-20**

The Board continued its discussions to refine its strategic priorities for 2019-20. The Board is keen to continue its program of stakeholder engagement and has planned stakeholder engagement breakfasts this year in Canberra and Brisbane.

Other priorities include workforce initiatives, such increasing the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the physiotherapy workforce.

The Board is continuing to work with its stakeholders to advance its strategies and is working closely with AHPRA and the other National Boards to advance cross-professional work.

#### **Launch of the World Health Organization Collaboration Centre for Health Workforce Regulation in Canberra**

Last year, AHPRA was honoured with being designated as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaboration Centre for Health Workforce Regulation (WHO CC HWR) across the Western Pacific. This designation means that AHPRA will work with National Boards and WHO and countries in the Western Pacific region to strengthen regulatory practice across the region and to learn from the best of international experience for our work in Australia. This is an important focus in an era of increased global mobility for both health practitioners and patients.

The physiotherapy profession will be represented by the Board at the upcoming official launch of the WHO CC HWR in April 2019. The Board are well placed to contribute to discussions including, offering insights into the way we regulate physiotherapists in Australia and the use of the profession's [Physiotherapy Practice Threshold Statements](#) which were developed in 2015 by both the Board and the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand.

## Legislative amendments on mandatory reporting and fake practitioners

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (Qld) (the Bill) has now been passed by the Queensland Parliament. The amendments include revisions to the mandatory reporting requirements for treating practitioners and an extension of sanctions for statutory offences.

The changes to the National Law intend to support registered practitioners to seek help for a health issue (including mental health issues). They will also increase the penalties (including the introduction of custodial sentences) for some offences under the National Law, including where a person holds themselves out to be a registered health practitioner when they are not.

AHPRA and National Boards will now work to implement these amendments. This will require working closely with professional bodies, employers and state and territory health departments to help spread the message that practitioners should be supported to seek help about their health issues.

The passing of the Bill in Queensland marks the second set of legislative amendments to the National Law since the start of the National Scheme in 2010.

When commenced, the amendments will apply in all states and territories except Western Australia, where mandatory reporting requirements will not change.

Practitioners can read a news item about the amendments on the [AHPRA website](#) or the Bill on the [Queensland Legislation website](#).

## National Boards and AHPRA host research summit

The National Scheme's 2019 Research Summit took place on 27 February 2019 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The summit centred on asking how research can be harnessed to strengthen regulation and enhance patient safety to contribute to improved health outcomes.

Led by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the National Boards, the all-day Research Summit hosted 17 speakers and drew more than 300 participants from national and state and territory board and committee members, AHPRA staff, co-regulatory bodies, representatives from accreditation authorities and key partners.

With the theme 'Optimising research for regulatory effectiveness', the Research Summit explored the National Scheme's evolving approaches to risk assessment, lessons from research into notifications, and future opportunities to use smart data. At the heart of discussions was asking how we can use data and research to improve regulatory processes and, ultimately, contribute to safer care for patients.

Professor Zubin Austin from the University of Toronto, Canada, was keynote speaker. His stirring keynote address highlighted that competency assessment has emerged as a dominant issue for regulators, educators and employers worldwide; Professor Austin called for more attention to be focused on notions of teamwork, emotional intelligence, and genuine practitioner engagement as important concepts in defining and evaluating competency.

Read more in the [media release](#) about the summit.

## 'Let's talk about it' videos launched

AHPRA has [launched a series of new videos](#) to support the public and registered health practitioners as they go through the notification process.

The video series, called 'Let's talk about it', explains what happens when concerns are raised with the regulator, provides easy to follow information about the notifications process and addresses common questions, so consumers and health practitioners know what to expect when they interact with AHPRA and National Boards.

The videos are:

- [A notification has been made about me](#) features five health practitioners who work within the National Scheme, directed at health practitioners who have had a notification made about them.
- [I have a concern, am I in the right place?](#) is targeted at members of the public who have a concern but aren't yet sure whether AHPRA is the right place for them to raise it.
- [I have raised a concern with AHPRA](#) provides information for individuals who have just raised a concern with AHPRA.

The videos sit alongside other written resources available on our website, see: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications).

### 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](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au) or [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://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.

**Kim Gibson**

Chair

15 March 2019