



Communiqué

50th meeting of the Dental Board of Australia – 21 March 2014

The Dental Board of Australia (the National Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the National Board's March 2014 meeting which was held at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) office in Hobart.

Advertising guidelines: update

Revised *Advertising guidelines* came into effect on 17 March for all the regulated health professions. These are published under [Codes and guidelines](#) on the National Board website.

The guidelines were developed by the National Boards and explain the requirements of the [National Law](#) in relation to advertising and the use of testimonials in advertising. The National Law does not allow testimonials to be used when advertising a regulated health service (section 133).

On 26 March the Medical Board of Australia announced it would revise the guidelines to make them clearer about the use of testimonials. Read the [news item](#) on the Medical Board of Australia website.

The Dental Board, along with the other 13 National Boards, is now considering whether to revise and clarify the wording on testimonials as part of implementing the new *Advertising guidelines*.

We will keep practitioners informed and in the meantime, AHPRA is managing complaints about advertising in line with the information in the [advertising FAQ](#) on the National Board website. Question 4 of the FAQ clarifies that practitioners are not responsible for removing (or trying to have removed) unsolicited testimonials published on a website or in social media over which they don't have control.

Dental practitioner audit

An audit page has been published on our website under the [Registration](#) tab to keep practitioners informed and provide information and tools to help practitioners who are selected for audit in 2014.

AHPRA and the National Boards have developed a nationally consistent approach to auditing health practitioners' compliance with mandatory registration standards.

Audits are an important part of the way for dental practitioners to demonstrate to the community and to the Dental Board that they are meeting the mandatory registrations standards.

Under the National Law, AHPRA can request (on behalf of the Dental Board) you to provide evidence that you meet the standards, as declared in your previous annual statement.

Your annual statement is made when you apply to renew your registration. Practitioners are required to declare that these statements are 'true and correct'.

The annual statement also includes statements about whether:

- you have met the recency of practice requirements stated in the Board's registration standard
- you have met the Board's continuing professional development (CPD) requirements as set out in the Board's CPD registration standard during the previous registration period
- you have practised in accordance with the requirements of the Board's Professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements registration standard, and whether you commit to practise in accordance with that registration standard if your registration is renewed, and
- if there was any change in your criminal history during the previous registration period and whether you have any other criminal history that has not been disclosed to AHPRA.

How will I know if I am being audited?

Audits of random samples of dental practitioners will occur periodically throughout the coming year.

If you are selected for audit, you will receive an audit notice in the mail from AHPRA. It includes a checklist that outlines what supporting documentation is required to demonstrate that you meet the standard(s) being audited.

What is being audited?

Each time you apply to renew your registration, you make a declaration that you have (or have not) met the registration standards for your profession. The audit requires that you provide further information to support your declarations.

Your audit notice letter will identify which standard/standards are being audited. One or more of the following four mandatory registration standards may be audited:

- Criminal history
- English language skills
- Recency of practice, and
- Continuing professional development.

All of these standards are published on the Dental Board's website under the [Registration standard](#) tab.

Approval of continuing professional development activities

The National Board publishes both a continuing professional development registration standard and guidelines on its website. These documents outline the minimum requirements dental practitioners must meet and how they might meet them. This may be through a range of activities.

Neither the National Board, nor AHPRA on behalf of the National Board approves, authorises or otherwise endorses CPD activities. Instead, the Board's guidelines provide practitioners with guidance on what standards they should expect CPD providers to conform to when choosing an activity.

The National Board reminds all providers that it is important not to infer any endorsement of their CPD activities when advertising such.

Dental practitioner specialties

The National Board has released a [communiqué](#) on the project on dental specialties for dentists and has announced that the Dental Council (NZ) is an official partner with the National Board in this project.

The Expert Reference Group – Specialist (ERGS) of the National Board is overseeing the project. The ERGS is not intended to be a representative body, but rather a group of experts from Australia, New Zealand and the education sector, that the National Board and Dental Council (NZ) have agreed, to provide advice about specialist related matters and provide recommendations on the project.

Further updates and information will be provided at key stages of the project.

Updating contact details

To check that your contact details registered with AHPRA are up to date, go to the 'Your Account' link at the top right of the Board website, use your unique contact number (User ID) and follow the prompts. Your User ID is not your registration number. If you do not have your User ID, complete an online enquiry form, selecting 'User ID' as the category of enquiry or phone 1300 419 495.

Email accounts should be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

John Lockwood AM
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
22 April 2014