



Communiqué

February 2016

The 71st meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Friday 26 February in the National Office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

This was the first meeting of the Board for 2016 and provided us with the chance to plan the significant work that we want to get done in the year ahead.

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Board's meeting as well as other important information.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. We encourage you to distribute it widely to colleagues and interested parties. This includes distributing it to the different levels in the organisation that you work in.

Visit from Dental Council (New Zealand)

We were joined for part of the meeting by the Chair, and CEO of the Dental Council (New Zealand) The relationship with the DCNZ is an important one for the Board as we share the common interest of regulating dental practitioners on either side of the Tasman.

We each have our own respective pieces of legislation that we function under. They represent different mechanisms to register practitioners. The DCNZ approves scope of practice for the different divisions of the dental professions and recognises qualifications that allow practitioners to practice in this scope. The Board registers practitioners who we have determined are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner. This allows these registrants to use the relevant protected title for the profession.

We each have obligations under Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition arrangements so it is in both our interests to collaborate where possible to ensure that the standards expected of practitioners applying for registration in each country are aligned.

Update from the Australian Dental Council

As the accreditation authority for the dental professions, the Australian Dental Council attended our meeting to update us on the work it completed in 2015 and has planned for 2016. This includes the implementation of the new accreditation standards.

These meetings allow us to continue to develop a common understanding of the different roles and functions we each have under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

Tribunal in Northern Territory reprimands, removes dentist from the register

The Health Professional Review Tribunal in the Northern Territory has reprimanded a dentist, removed his name from the register of practitioners and banned him from reapplying for registration for two years, over his treatment of six patients.

The Board referred Mr Graham Raynes to the tribunal because of concerns he had failed to provide adequate care and treatment to patients at his practice at Nhulunbuy, Northern Territory and Newman, Western Australia.

More information and a link to the tribunal's full decision is available in a [news item](#) on our website.

Registration renewal – online and on time

The registration renewal cycle for dental practitioners has finished for another year.

Nearly 98 per cent of dental practitioners renewed online with 97 per cent on time.

We will publish the first quarter [registrant data](#) in coming months. This will include the outcomes of the registration renewal cycle.

We are concerned about the numbers of dental practitioners who declared they were renewing their endorsement for conscious sedation. There are just over 90 practitioners who have this endorsement on their registration, however nearly 4,500 dental practitioners declared that they wished to renew their endorsement.

We will work with AHPRA to improve the clarity of the questions asked for the next renewal cycle.

This is an opportunity to remind all dentists of the need to be endorsed if you are using conscious sedation in your practice. We have recently updated the information on our website about [conscious sedation](#). This information includes responses to common questions in this area.

The [national register of practitioners](#) confirms if a dental practitioner's registration includes an endorsement.

It is important to answer all questions when you apply for renewal of your registration carefully. This is something that you need to do for yourself and not ask someone to do on your behalf.

AHPRA publishes information for employers

AHPRA has published information on obligations for employers of registered health practitioners.

If you employ registered health practitioners, you have an important obligation to ensure that they hold current registration and that you understand your mandatory notification requirements under the National Law¹.

There are [resources available](#) to help you understand and meet your obligations, which are designed to complement your recruitment requirements and processes. These materials state exactly what your obligations are and it is important that you are familiar with them.

Health practitioner regulation: Learn how you're protected

A new video and an accompanying infographic explaining the Australia-wide scheme that is in place to protect members of the public was released by AHPRA in December.

Both resources are available on the [What we do](#) page of the AHPRA website or read the [news item](#) on the Board website for more information. The video can also be watched on AHPRA's [YouTube channel](#).

Local data summaries published

The National Boards and AHPRA have published [reports for each state and territory](#) on the National Scheme.

The reports provide a unique insight on local outcomes within a scheme for which the core focus is protection of the public. They are for the 2014/15 year of the scheme.

The summaries provide local data on registration types, notifications (complaints) and mandatory notifications for the regulated health professions, for each state and territory.

Limited registration

Limited registration is a form of registration available to eligible applicants who are not qualified for general registration but who need registration to practise in a particular role or participate in a particular activity.

It is most commonly used in the dental professions for academic staff in teaching or research roles or for students participating in postgraduate training.

We have published advice on [‘When it is necessary to be registered?’](#) if you are not sure if you need to be registered to practise in Australia.

AHPRA manages applications for registration on behalf of the Board. It is critical that any application for limited registration is made in time to process before you need to start practising. AHPRA has published a range of information on its website on [registration processes](#) to help you complete your application accurately. This helps your application to be processed in a timely manner.

Reports considered by the Board

From time to time we consider reports that relate to the practice of dentistry. We consider how these reports impact on our role in regulating the dental profession.

We considered the following report and review at our recent meeting.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report [Oral Health and dental care in Australia – Key facts and figures 2015](#) highlights key trends in the oral health and dental care of the Australian population using the most recently available data. It is the latest in the *Oral health and dental care in Australia: key facts and figures* suite of printed publications and web products.

The [Systematic review of patient safety interventions in dentistry](#) November 2015, found scant evidence for effective patient safety approaches, with the exception of surgical safety checklists, which were successful in preventing wrong tooth extractions. Further research is needed to characterise patient safety in dentistry and implement effective interventions.

Australia Day honours for member

We want to congratulate Dr Sajeev Koshy, a practitioner member of the Board, on being awarded the Medal of Order of Australia in the recent Australia Day honours. Dr Koshy received this award for his service to the field of dentistry in Australia.

Are your contact details up to date?

Throughout the year we need to send you important information related to your registration.

So that you receive this information you need to check that we have your correct contact details.

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.

John Lockwood AM
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
7 March 2016