



Communiqué

August 2017 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The 88th meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Thursday 24 August 2017 at the Novotel on Collins in Melbourne.

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 to colleagues and interested parties, including in the organisation you work in.

Dental Board of Australia 3rd national conference

Last week, the Board held its 3rd national conference in Melbourne. The conference brought together National Board members, state and territory committee members, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) staff and key regulatory colleagues in New South Wales, in accreditation and also New Zealand.

This year's conference encouraged cross-professional learning across those regulating the dental profession through shared ideas, innovations and networking and to better understand and respond to our wider regulatory environment.

The Board welcomed two keynote speakers - Commissioner Karen Cusack the inaugural Victorian Health Complaints Commissioner who shared her insights on her new role and Dr Ian Freckelton QC who presented on regulation of unorthodox practice.

Working together over these two days has deepened the understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities in the regulation of dental practitioners and their contribution to the National Scheme¹.

Revised *List of recognised dental specialties, related specialist titles and definitions*

The Board's *List of recognised dental specialties, related specialist titles and definitions* has been revised following consultation and has now been approved by the [Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council](#). The revised list will take effect from 1 October 2017.

The revised list of recognised dental specialties reflects minor technical changes to the specialties of oral medicine, oral pathology and forensic odontology. The changes align the specialist titles with international nomenclature and/or better reflect the nature of work carried out by dentists within the existing specialty.

As part of the review of the *Registration standard for specialist registration*, the Board consulted on these minor amendments to the *List of recognised dental specialties*. There was support for these revisions from all stakeholders, including governments and the relevant dental specialist colleges.

The revised list is published on the [Registration standards page](#) of the Board's website.

¹ National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

COAG Health Council meeting communique: progressing amendments to the National Law

The federal and state and territory health ministers met in Brisbane on 4 August 2017 at the [COAG Health Council](#) to discuss a range of national health issues. The meeting was chaired by the Victorian Minister for Health, the Hon. Jill Hennessy. AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher attended the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) meeting which brings together all health ministers throughout Australia to provide oversight for the work of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. AHPRA and the National Boards provide a regular update to the Ministerial Council on our work.

The meeting included an agreement by health ministers to proceed with amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) to strengthen penalties for offences committed by people who hold themselves out to be a registered health practitioner, including those who use reserved professional titles or carry out restricted practices when not registered. Ministers also agreed to proceed with an amendment to introduce a custodial sentence with a maximum term of up to three years for these offences. These important reforms will be fast tracked to strengthen public protection under the National Law. Preparation will now begin on a draft amendment bill, with a view to being introduced to the Queensland Parliament in 2018.

Ministers also discussed mandatory reporting provisions for treating health practitioners, agreeing that protecting the public from harm is of paramount importance as is supporting practitioners to seek help and treatment for their health concerns, including for their mental health and well-being. They agreed doctors should be able to confidentially seek treatment for health issues while preserving the requirement for patient safety. It was agreed that the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council will recommend a nationally consistent approach to mandatory reporting following a consultation process with consumer and practitioner groups. A proposal on mandatory reporting is expected to be considered at the November 2017 meeting of the COAG Health Council.

The Council produces a [communiqué](#) from its meeting which can be accessed on AHPRA's website.

Regulatory stakeholders to gather at CLEAR

The [Fifth International Congress on Professional and Occupational Regulation](#) will be held this November in Melbourne, Australia. AHPRA will join other regulatory stakeholders from around the world to share global perspectives on licensure and regulation.

Additional information about the conference is on the [AHPRA website](#).

Are your contact details up-to-date?

It is important that 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.

Conclusion

The National Board publishes a range of information about registration and the National Board's expectations of practitioners on its website at www.dentalboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

For more information or help with questions about your registration please send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

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Chair, Dental Board of Australia
12 September 2017