



Communiqué

June 2019 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The 108th meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Friday 28 June 2019 in Melbourne.

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

Scope of practice update

Health Ministers referred the Board's proposed revised *Scope of practice registration standard* (the standard) to the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#) (the Commission) in March 2019. The purpose of the referral is for the Commission to independently assess the patient quality, patient safety implications and the consumer benefit of the revised standard, and to report back to Health Ministers in July 2019.

The Board is continuing its engagement work to support the implementation of the proposed revised registration standard and will keep dental practitioners informed as this work progresses, including on the work of the Commission.

Accreditation agreement signed

On 27 June the Australian Dental Council (ADC), AHPRA and the Board signed a new five-year accreditation agreement starting 1 July 2019.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has been developing new accreditation agreements with all external accreditation authorities to apply for the next five-year period from 1 July 2019. These agreements provide a contemporary framework for addressing key accreditation issues such as cultural safety, safety and quality, reducing regulatory burden, multi-profession collaboration to meet evolving health care needs, and strengthened accountability and transparency. The agreements also include principles for funding and fee setting and new key performance indicators to track progress on priority issues.

The Board looks forward to continuing its important work with the ADC as the accreditation authority for the dental profession.

Board continues discussion about cultural safety

The Board was pleased to welcome to its meeting Ms Bonnie King, Practitioner member from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner Board of Australia. Ms King shared her background and insights about the value and role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners in the health workforce. Members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice profession work across organisations in many roles, including as dental assistants.

Under the National Scheme's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy five-year plan, there is work underway to:

- finalise an agreed baseline definition of cultural safety to be used in the National Scheme, and
- organise the roll out of the cultural safety training for National Board and Committee members and making this training available for Accreditation Authorities.

The Board also continued to discuss opportunities for profession specific work to support the promotion of culturally safe practises by all dental practitioners, and this will be a key topic at the Boards biannual conference in October 2019.

Honour for Chair of the Board's Victoria Registration and notification committee

The Board congratulates Dr Janice 'Jan' Davies, member of the Victoria Registration and Notification Committee of the Board (Committee) for her award in the Queen's Birthday honours list 2019.

Dr Davies was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in this year's Queen's Birthday honours. The Board applauds Dr Davies service to community health, and as part of that, her significant contribution to the work of the Board. In addition to this role Dr Davies is also a member of the Podiatry Board of Australia. She is also an independent healthcare consultant and has been involved in a number of organisations including the National Quality Dementia Care Initiative, Dementia Australia (formerly Alzheimer's Australia), and the National Institute of Clinical Studies.

Fake practitioners face jail and hefty fines

From 1 July 2019, the National Law became tougher on people who pretend to be a registered health practitioner. The penalty for anyone prosecuted by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) under the National Law^[1] for these offences now includes bigger fines and the prospect of prison time.

AHPRA has successfully prosecuted multiple cases where people were falsely claiming to be registered practitioners when they were not.

Under the National Law, anyone who calls themselves any of the 'protected titles', such as 'dental practitioner', 'medical practitioner' or 'psychologist', must be registered with the corresponding National Board.

The amendments mean that offenders will be faced with the possibility of a maximum term of three years imprisonment per offence. They also face an increase in the maximum fines from \$30,000 to \$60,000 per offence for an individual and from \$60,000 to \$120,000 per offence for a corporate entity.

It is an offence to use one of the protected titles, and it is also an offence to knowingly or recklessly claim to be a registered practitioner when you're not or use symbols or language that may lead a reasonable person to believe that an individual is a registered health practitioner or is qualified to practise in a health profession. These offences are known as 'holding out.'

Read the full media release on the [AHPRA website](#).

New video gives a practitioner's experience of a notification

AHPRA and the Board know that making or being the subject of a notification can be confusing and stressful. We are working to support health consumers and practitioners by improving the way we communicate about notifications.

As part of this work, AHPRA and National Boards released the [latest video](#) in our '[Let's talk about it](#)' series. It tells one practitioner's experience of the process, aiming to help other practitioners who have a notification made about them.

AHPRA has gathered feedback from notifiers and practitioners on their experience of the notifications process. After over 80 interviews and more than 5,000 survey responses, a small number of consistent themes have emerged. These themes are informing the content of our video series.

This latest video, *A notification was made about me: A practitioner's experience*, is a powerful first-hand account of a practitioner's experience engaging with AHPRA and a National Board. It contains a clear message for other health practitioners about seeking support early in the notification process.

Registered health practitioners and their support networks will be encouraged to use this new resource when they are involved in the notifications process.

^[1] Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Dental practitioners can view the video on the [AHPRA website](#), where practitioners can find additional information on understanding the notifications experience, and on [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo channels](#).

Read the full media release 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.

Dr Murray Thomas
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
16 July 2019