



Communiqué

July 2019 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The Dental Board of Australia (the Board) held its 109th meeting on Friday 26 July 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. The Commission reported back to Health Ministers in July 2019.

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

Changes to registration and renewal questions about working with blood borne viruses

The Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) has updated the *Australian national guidelines for the management of healthcare workers living with blood borne viruses and healthcare workers who perform exposure prone procedures at risk of exposure to blood borne viruses* (the CDNA guidelines).

Dental practitioners are asked at registration and renewal to declare that they comply with the requirements of the CDNA guidelines, as well as the Board's [Guidelines on infection control](#). In response to the updates to the CDNA guidelines, the Board will be asking practitioners who perform exposure prone procedures to answer several additional questions about compliance with the CDNA guidelines. The CDNA guidelines and helpful information sheets for practitioners are available on the Department of Health's [website](#).

Further information about the CDNA guidelines and what they mean for practitioners will be published on the Board's website in the coming months. The Board is also developing guidelines to complement the CDNA guidelines and will consult with the profession and the community about this later this year.

Upcoming stakeholder engagement activities

The Board will hold its August meeting at the offices of the Board's accreditation authority, the [Australian Dental Council \(ADC\)](#) in Melbourne. The meeting itinerary includes a tour of the ADC's state of the art examination facilities as well as joint discussions about accreditation and policy issues.

In early September, the Board will host a roundtable with stakeholders to discuss the development of a national health support service for all dental practitioners and students. Attendees will include representatives from the Dental Council of NSW, dental professional associations, the directors of state and territory public dental services, the ADC and the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons. The meeting will be an opportunity to hear from the profession about the issues of concern and common stressors for dental practitioners and students.

The Board's biannual regulatory conference will be hosted in Melbourne in late October. The conference brings together the National Board with its regional Registration and Notifications Committee members,

Australian Health Practitioner and Regulation Agency (AHPRA) staff and co-regulators including the Dental Council of NSW and the Office of the Health Ombudsman in Queensland. Other stakeholders in attendance include members from the New Zealand Dental Council and the ADC. The working theme for this conference is 'Regulating dental practitioners in a time of change.'

Latest registrant data released

The Board has published its quarterly data report for 1 April – 30 June 2019. There are 23,730 registered dental practitioners, an increase of 101 on the figures from the 1 January -31 March 2019 report. Of the total, 17,727 are dentists.

There are 102 practitioners endorsed for conscious sedation.

The gender balance nationally for all dental practitioners is 51.8% female (12,304), 48.2% male (11,426). Female practitioners holding specialist registration is 494 and for male practitioners the number of specialists' registration is 1,274.

For further details on registration by division, gender, age, principal place of practice and specialty, visit our [Statistics page](#).

Cultural safety training provider announced

PricewaterhouseCoopers Indigenous Consulting Pty Limited (PwC's Indigenous Consulting) in partnership with Griffith University First Peoples Health Unit will deliver cultural safety training to Board and committee members as well as Australian Health Regulation Agency (AHPRA) staff. This appointment is the outcome of a competitive tender process. Cultural safety training is an important first step to ensure that AHPRA and the Boards are working to help health practitioners nationally understand their own connection to culture and unconscious biases, and how these are likely to influence their work.

AHPRA CEO Mr Martin Fletcher said the training is an important milestone and is part of the agency's commitment to support health equity for all Australians, which was publicly made by AHPRA and 36 other signatories in the National Scheme's [Statement of intent](#) last year.

'One of our strategic priorities is helping to embed cultural safety into the health system through our work with over 740,000 registered health practitioners across Australia.

'We want to be a regulator who deeply understands cultural safety and what it means for our work and we want to partner with others to build a culturally safe registered health practitioner workforce across Australia,' Mr Fletcher said.

National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group member and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia Chair, Ms Renee Owen, said everyone has a part to play to achieve health equity.

'We all have a responsibility to understand cultural safety so that we can work to eliminate racism from the health system and enable health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This training is an important step towards ensuring that the regulation of health practitioners is culturally safe', Ms Owen said.

This unique Aboriginal-led collaboration between PwC's Indigenous Consulting, Griffith University's First Peoples Health Unit and the [National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Group](#) will provide a world class, bespoke cultural safety training program supporting the necessary culture transformation of Australia's health professions.

The training to be provided by PwC's Indigenous Consulting in partnership with Griffith University First Peoples Health Unit will be rolled out from the end of 2019.

Advertising your regulated health service

To protect consumers, the National Law^[1] includes provisions about advertising regulated health services. The Board has recently included a [list of resources on the Board website](#) that you might find helpful for understanding and meeting your advertising obligations.

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

Advertising is actions by people or businesses to draw attention to their services. The ways people and businesses can promote services are almost limitless and include all forms of printed and electronic media.

If you are advertising a regulated health service, your advertising must not:

- **be false, misleading or deceptive**, or likely to be misleading or deceptive
- **offer a gift, discount or other inducement**, unless the terms and conditions of the offer are also stated
- **use testimonials or purported testimonials** about the service or business
- **create an unreasonable expectation of beneficial treatment**, or
- directly or indirectly **encourage the indiscriminate or unnecessary use of regulated health services**.

If you're not sure you're meeting your obligations, or if you've been contacted by AHPRA about your advertising there are [steps you can follow to](#) make sure you comply with your professional and legal obligations.

For further details see AHPRA's [advertising resources](#) on their 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
15 August 2019