



Communiqué

Meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia held on 21 March 2014

Breakfast forum

The Board hosted a breakfast forum at the APodA (Vic) conference in Melbourne on 21 March 2014. The breakfast forum was well attended by local members of the profession. Board members had an opportunity to mingle informally with members of the profession before a more formal presentation which provided registrants with important information about the Board's expectations in relation to their professional conduct, with particular reference to the Board's Code of conduct.

The Board thanks the association for their assistance in arranging the forum and all the registrants who attended the Board's breakfast forum.

New code and guidelines

The following revised guidelines and code of conduct, and a new social media policy came into effect for all podiatrists and podiatric surgeons on 17 March 2014:

- revised Guidelines for advertising regulated health services
- revised Guidelines for mandatory notifications
- revised Code of conduct, and
- new Social media policy.

The documents explain the Board's expectations of registered practitioners and have been designed to improve awareness, understanding and compliance. Practitioners need to know and understand these documents to ensure their practice meets the Board's expectations.

The Board released the content of these documents on its website on 13 February and emailed registered practitioners so that practitioners could familiarise themselves before the requirements took effect.

The [Guidelines for advertising regulated health services](#), [Guidelines for mandatory notifications](#) and [Social media policy](#) were developed jointly by the 14 National Boards in the National Scheme and apply to **all** registered health professions in Australia. The [Code of conduct](#) for podiatrists is shared by most regulated health professions.

National Boards consulted widely late last year on the draft versions of the new documents.

Further information is available on the [Board's website](#), including FAQ's about the revised documents.

Changes to the Privacy Act

Amendments to the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act) commenced on 12 March 2014. Further information about the changes can be found on the [website](#) of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Health information is regarded as one of the most sensitive types of personal information. For this reason, the Privacy Act provides extra protections around its handling. For example, an organisation generally needs an individual's consent before they can collect their health information.

All organisations that provide a health service are covered by the Privacy Act. The Privacy Act regulates how these organisations collect and handle personal information, including health information. It also includes provisions that generally allow a person to access information held about them. The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) also regulates the handling of health information held in an individual's personally controlled electronic health record.

State and Territory legislation also continues to apply in relation to health records and information.

The amendments to the Act and the Australian Privacy Principles also apply to the Board and AHPRA. An updated privacy policy ensuring the National Law is administered in accordance with those changes is available on the [AHPRA website](#).

Further information

Further information about the Board can be found on the [Board's website](#) and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting their profession.

Cathy Loughry
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia
03 April 2014