



Communiqué

Meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia held on 28 May 2015

Round table discussion with stakeholders

The Board hosted a 'round table' meeting with its podiatry stakeholders in Melbourne on 29 May 2015. There were representatives from the national and state podiatry associations, heads of podiatry schools, podiatric surgery programs of study, the Advanced Practising Podiatrists High Risk Foot Group, ANZPAC, Chief Allied Health Officers, and the Podiatrists Board of New Zealand.

The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for collaborative discussion and exploration of issues from a range of perspectives. It also improves our ability to gather information from our stakeholders to assist us to discharge our regulatory responsibilities under the National Law.

Quarterly registration data released

The Board has released its quarterly registration data, including a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants. You can find the latest report on the [Statistics page](#) of the Board's website.

The Board's March 2015 data update, shows there are 4,372 registered podiatry practitioners in Australia. Of these, 4,247 hold general registration as a podiatrist, 30 hold general and specialist registration as a podiatric surgeon and 95 hold non-practising registration. Practitioners who have their registration endorsed for scheduled medicines total 66.

Revised criminal history and English language skills registration standards published

The registration standards for criminal history and English language skills have been revised following consultation and have now been approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council. Both standards take effect from 1 July 2015.

Criminal history

The new criminal history registration standard is common to all National Boards. The changes are expected to have minimal impact on practitioners as no changes have been made to the factors National Boards will take into account when considering an applicant's or registrant's criminal history.

When a practitioner first applies for registration, the National Board requires the applicant to declare their criminal history in all countries, including Australia. All registered health practitioners must inform their National Board if they are:

- charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or
- convicted or found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment in Australia and/or overseas.

The Board is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

When practitioners renew their registration they must disclose any changes to their criminal history.

The registration standard and associated explanatory information are published on [AHPRA's website](#).

English language skills

The new registration standard for English language skills applies to all applicants for initial registration, regardless of whether they qualified in Australia or overseas.

The new standard introduces additional pathways for applicants to demonstrate evidence of their English language skills.

The new standard was developed after a review of the existing standard, which included a public consultation. All Boards, except the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia, consulted on and revised their English languages skills standard. The standards are now largely common across professions.

The registration standard and supporting information are published on [AHPRA's website](#).

Top tips for using the register

The online, [national register of practitioners](#) provides up-to-date information about every registered health practitioner in Australia. The register can be accessed from the home page of AHPRA and each of the National Boards. To help the public and employers get the most out of the register, AHPRA has developed some 'top tips' for using the register. In particular, the tips remind anyone responsible for recruiting health practitioners how to use the register to verify a practitioner's registration status. The tips can be found on the [AHPRA website](#).

Follow @AHPRA on Twitter

AHPRA uses [Twitter](#) to encourage greater discussion about National Board consultations and to host regular Twitter chats on important topics.

Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sex abuse

The Board and AHPRA have been following the [Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sex abuse](#) and its implications for the regulation of health practitioners. The issues raised in the Royal Commission are serious and disturbing.

The Board and AHPRA are committed to learning from the evidence before the Royal Commission and its findings and taking action to make sure our regulatory system is responsive to anyone who has been sexually abused by a registered health practitioner, who comes forward.

If you have a concern about a health practitioner call:

- AHPRA 1300 419 495
- NSW 1800 043 159, or
- Queensland 133 646 (133 OHO).

Security tip – keep your web browser updated

AHPRA and the Boards have made changes to our websites to ensure your information is kept safe.

If you are using Internet Explorer version 6 (or an older version) to view the Board's website and are experiencing difficulty accessing web pages and online services, the Board recommends you [upgrade to the newest version of Internet Explorer immediately](#). It is available for free from Microsoft.

If you are using a new version of Internet Explorer and are still having difficulty accessing our website please contact us to report your experience.

Call **1300 419 495** Monday to Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time).

Updating contact details

To check or update your contact details, go to the online services panel for practitioners on the homepage of the Board's website and click on the relevant link. Enter your user ID, date of birth and password to access your account. Please note that your user ID is not your registration number. If you cannot remember your user ID or password, contact us [online](#) or call 1300 419 495.

Further information

Further information about the Board can be found on its [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
5 June 2015