



## Communiqué

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April 2017

The Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) meets each month to consider and decide on matters related to its regulatory functions under the National Law<sup>1</sup> and within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué highlights key matters from the Board's meeting as well as other important information.

### April 2017 meeting

The Board held its April 2017 meeting at the Canberra office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

To coincide with the meeting, the Board met with local stakeholders, which provided an opportunity to discuss issues relating to the work of the Board and local podiatry practice.

The Board also held a forum in Canberra for registrants, which was well attended. The Board presented on continuing professional development (CPD) and the importance of communicating effectively with patients.

The Board welcomed the opportunity to meet informally with members of the profession practising in the ACT.

### Meeting your legal and professional advertising obligations

Registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons who advertise health services need to **check, correct** and **comply** with their professional and legal advertising obligations.

Under the National Law, a regulated health service or a business providing a regulated health service must not advertise in a way that:

- is false, misleading or deceptive
- uses gifts, discounts or inducements without explaining the terms and conditions of the offer
- uses a testimonial or a purported testimonial
- creates an unreasonable expectation of beneficial treatment, and/or
- directly or indirectly encourages the indiscriminate or unnecessary use of regulated health services.

There are also restrictions on advertising in a way that identifies a health practitioner as a specialist when they do not hold registration as a specialist or as an endorsed practitioner in a health profession.

The National Boards and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) have published a strategy for the National Scheme aimed at keeping health service consumers safe from misleading advertising.

The [Advertising compliance and enforcement strategy](#) explains how National Boards and AHPRA will manage advertising complaints and compliance, including the regulatory powers available to deal with breaches of the National Law.

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<sup>1</sup> The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The strategy is designed to keep improving how regulated health services are advertised so healthcare consumers can be better informed.

When preparing advertising, registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons should always put the consumer first and ensure that their advertising is not [false, misleading or deceptive](#) in any way.

This strategy builds on the previous education and enforcement work from National Boards and AHPRA.

More information is available on the [Advertising resources](#) section of the AHPRA website and more information will be published in coming months.

### **Update on the review of the code of conduct**

The Board's [Code of conduct](#) (the Code) seeks to assist and support podiatrists and podiatric surgeons to deliver safe and effective podiatric care within an ethical framework. It also helps the Board in its role of protecting the public by setting and maintaining standards of good practice. The Board may use the code to evaluate the professional conduct of a podiatrist or podiatric surgeon

In addition, it serves as a guide to the public and consumers of health services about what good practice is and the standard of behaviour they should expect from their health practitioner.

The Code is shared by ten other National Boards (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Chiropractic, Dental, Medical Radiation Practice, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Osteopathy, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy) with some minor profession-specific changes for some of these National Boards.

The Code was published in March 2014 and the Board, together with the other National Boards that share the Code, has started a scheduled review that will draw on best available research and data and involve stakeholder consultation and engagement.

Even though the review is still at an early research phase, the Board is already considering how it can maximise opportunities for input when the consultation stage of the review starts. In addition to public consultation, the Board intends use its website and social media to inform the podiatry profession about how it can contribute to the review. The Board will highlight opportunities to be involved in the review in its communiqué and newsletters.

### **Communiqué published - Podiatry Board of Australia 2016 Forum**

In October 2016 the Board hosted a forum for its key stakeholders in Adelaide. The theme for the day was *Changing the podiatry curriculum: a new pathway to safe prescribing*.

The aim of the forum was to provide an opportunity to start the discussion about changing the podiatry curriculum so that students will acquire the necessary competencies to safely prescribe scheduled medicines and be qualified for endorsement for scheduled medicines on graduation.

The Board has published a [communiqué from the forum](#) on the Board's website.

### **Further information**

The Board publishes a range of information for podiatrists and podiatric surgeons on its [website](#) and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting the podiatry profession.

For more information about registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme please refer to the information published on [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au). Alternatively, contact AHPRA by an [online enquiry form](#) or phone 1300 419 495.

Cathy Loughry  
Chair  
**Podiatry Board of Australia**  
8 May 2017