



Communiqué

March 2019

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 and within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS).

This communiqué highlights any key matters from the Board's 1 March 2019 meeting, as well as other important information.

The Board held its March 2019 meeting at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to coincide with the NRAS 2019 Research Summit and the 2019 NRAS Combined Meeting.

2019 NRAS Combined Meeting

The NRAS Combined meeting brought together the National Boards as well as the Agency Management Committee, AHPRA staff, accreditation authorities, co-regulatory partners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group members, government and community stakeholders, and fellow NZ regulators. It provided an opportunity to take stock of the National Scheme after nearly a decade and to think about some of the common challenges we face in the future.

National Boards and AHPRA host Research Summit

The NRAS 2019 Research Summit took place on 27 February 2019.

The Summit centered on asking how research can be harnessed to strengthen regulation and enhance patient safety to contribute to improved health outcomes.

Led by AHPRA and the National Boards, the all-day Research Summit hosted 17 speakers and drew more than 300 participants from national and state and territory board and committee members, AHPRA staff, co-regulatory bodies, representatives from accreditation authorities and key partners.

With the theme *Optimising research for regulatory effectiveness*, the Research Summit explored the National Scheme's evolving approaches to risk assessment, lessons from research into notifications, and future opportunities to use smart data. At the heart of discussions was asking how we can use data and research to improve regulatory processes and, ultimately, contribute to safer care for patients.

Professor Zubin Austin from the University of Toronto, Canada, was keynote speaker. His stirring keynote address highlighted that competency assessment has emerged as a dominant issue for regulators, educators and employers worldwide; Professor Austin called for more attention to be focused on notions of teamwork, emotional intelligence, and genuine practitioner engagement as important concepts in defining and evaluating competency.

Read more in the [media release](#) about the Summit.

Podiatry regulation at work: Protecting the public in 2017/18

A profession-specific annual report summary that looks at the work of the Board over the year to 30 June 2018 has now been published.

Read the media release for the report [here](#).

To download this report, or to view the main 2017/18 annual report and summary reports by state or territory, visit the [AHPRA website](#).

Quarterly registration data released

The Board has released its quarterly registration data. Read the latest report and other statistics [here](#).

'Let's talk about it' videos launched

AHPRA has [launched a series of new videos](#) to support the public and registered health practitioners as they go through the notification process.

The video series, called 'Let's talk about it', explains what happens when concerns are raised with the regulator, provides easy to follow information about the notifications process and addresses common questions, so consumers and health practitioners know what to expect when they interact with AHPRA and National Boards.

The videos are:

- [A notification has been made about me](#) features five health practitioners who work within the National Scheme, directed at health practitioners who have had a notification made about them.
- [I have a concern, am I in the right place?](#) is targeted at members of the public who have a concern but aren't yet sure whether AHPRA is the right place for them to raise it.
- [I have raised a concern with AHPRA](#) provides information for individuals who have just raised a concern with AHPRA.

The videos sit alongside other written resources available on our website, see: www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications.

Practitioners can view the videos on the AHPRA and National Board websites or from their [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#) channel, and can join the conversation by following AHPRA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) and use the hashtag #letstalkaboutit and tag @AHPRA.

Legislative amendments on mandatory reporting and fake practitioners

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (Qld) (the Bill) has been passed by the Queensland Parliament. The amendments include revisions to the mandatory reporting requirements for treating practitioners and an extension of sanctions for statutory offences.

The changes to the National Law intend to support registered practitioners to seek help for a health issue (including mental health issues). They will also increase the penalties (including the introduction of custodial sentences) for some offences under the National Law, including where a person holds themselves out to be a registered health practitioner when they are not.

AHPRA and National Boards will now work to implement these amendments. This will require working closely with professional bodies, employers and state and territory health departments to help spread the message that practitioners should be supported to seek help about their health issues.

The passing of the Bill in Queensland marks the second set of legislative amendments to the National Law since the start of the National Scheme in 2010.

When they take effect, the amendments will apply in all states and territories except Western Australia, where mandatory reporting requirements will not change.

Practitioners can read a news item about the amendments on the [AHPRA website](#) or the Bill on the [Queensland Legislation 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 Scheme, please refer to the information published on www.ahpra.gov.au. Alternatively, contact AHPRA by an [online enquiry form](#) or phone 1300 419 495.

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Cylie Williams
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia
15 March 2019