

## Communiqué

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The 56<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 24 October 2014 at the AHPRA national office in Melbourne.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting, and other points of interest.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

### Queensland – new arrangements for handling notifications from 1 July 2014

From **1 July 2014**, the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* came into effect in Queensland.

The Office of the Health Ombudsman has been receiving all complaints about Queensland health practitioners since 1 July, and will decide whether to retain the matters or refer them to the National Board to manage.

Complaints made to AHPRA or National Boards before 1 July 2014 will generally continue to be managed by AHPRA on behalf of the National Boards. However, under the new law the Office of the Health Ombudsman can request that a matter be referred to them to be managed. If this happens, AHPRA will inform both the notifier and the practitioner who is the subject of the notification.

For information about the Office of the Health Ombudsman please go to [www.oho.qld.gov.au](http://www.oho.qld.gov.au) or call 133 646 (133 OHO).

### Actions to improve the consumer experience

#### HIC report published online

A report recommending ways to improve consumers' interaction with the National Scheme has been published, along with a list of actions that AHPRA is taking to address the issues raised.

In March this year, AHPRA commissioned the Health Issues Centre Victoria (HIC) to investigate and make suggestions to improve the consumer experience of the National Scheme that regulates health practitioners.

AHPRA has published the HIC report – *Setting things right: Improving the consumer experience of AHPRA including the joint notification process between AHPRA and OHSC*. Accompanying the report is AHPRA's action plan, which outlines what work AHPRA has done to date, and what will be done next, to address the report's recommendations. Both documents can be accessed via [AHPRA's News page](#).

AHPRA has committed to reporting publicly on its actions to improve the experience of people who make a notification (complaint about a health practitioner).

The HIC drew on historical and current data to come up with clear picture of the current experience of consumers who have made a complaint about a practitioner. The research focused on the experience of Victorian notifiers, but AHPRA's action plan applies the improvements nationally.

#### Registrant survey - postponed

We recently notified you that the Board would conduct a voluntary and anonymous email survey of registered physiotherapists. By conducting this survey, the Board aims to get a better understanding of physiotherapists' knowledge of their obligations under the National Law, and the areas on which it might need to provide more guidance.

The anonymous survey has been postponed until early 2015 to avoid interfering with the registration renewals campaign that started on 24 September.

### **Student presentation**

The Board has published a [presentation](#) for use by education providers and other interested parties to help explain registration requirements for physiotherapists under the National Law. [The Powerpoint presentation is free to download from the Board's website](#), and is ideally suited to students nearing completion of their studies who are preparing for their careers as registered physiotherapists in Australia.

### **Renewing your registration**

Online renewal of registration is now open for general or non-practising registered physiotherapists.

About 25,800 physiotherapists who are due to renew their registration with the Board by 30 November can [submit an online application now](#).

The Board announced last month that it had [reduced the fee](#) for the registration period from 1 December 2014 to 30 November 2015 to \$159.

Under the National Law, all registered health practitioners are responsible for renewing their registration on time each year.

A series of reminders to renew your registration will be sent to your registered email address by AHPRA on behalf of the Board. The reminders include a link to online renewal.

Physiotherapists who don't renew their registration within one month of 30 November must be removed from the *Register of practitioners*. Their registration will lapse and they will not be able to practice or work in Australia as a physiotherapist until a new application for registration is approved.

### **Updating contact details**

To check or update your contact details, go to the [Your Account](#) link on the AHPRA homepage, and enter your User ID, date of birth and password. 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.

### **Follow @AHPRA on Twitter**

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

### **Conclusion**

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of registered physiotherapists on our website at [www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au) or [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

For more detail or with questions about your registration, please send a web enquiry form or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

### **Paul Shinkfield**

Chair

27 October 2014