

## Communiqué

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The 68<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 27 November 2015 at the National Office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) 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.

### Annual planning

The Board recently held its annual planning session. As well as reflecting on the work done over the past year the session allowed us to plan the work over coming years.

The regulatory work plan that we review on an annual basis is provided in summary form in the annual health professions agreement (HPA). The HPA sets out the partnership between the Board and AHPRA, and the services AHPRA will provide in supporting us to carry out our functions. The 2015/16 HPA has recently been [published](#).

In our planning we work closely with AHPRA and the other National Boards to ensure that the work we need to do as regulators of the physiotherapy profession can be achieved. We also consider if it is work that can be done in collaboration with other National Boards to support consistency in regulatory policy across the professions.

We will continue to [consult](#) widely both within and outside of the physiotherapy profession as we progress the items on our plan.

### Have you renewed your registration yet?

Physiotherapists have until 30 November each year to renew their registration to avoid paying a late fee.

AHPRA, on behalf of the Board, has sent a series of email and hard copy reminders about this to practitioners. If you are a registered physiotherapist with general registration and have not received a reminder to renew your registration, you should phone AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Renewal applications received by AHPRA after the registration expiry date will incur a late payment fee in addition to the annual renewal fee.

If your application for renewal is received on time, or during the following one month late period, you can continue practising while your application is processed.

If you do not apply to renew your registration by 31 December 2015 it will lapse. This will mean that your name will be removed from the [Register of Physiotherapists](#) and you will not be able to practise your profession in Australia.

### National drug screening protocol

AHPRA and the National Boards have published information on a national drug screening protocol that comes into effect in November 2015.

This will mean that all physiotherapists who have restrictions placed on their registration by the Board as a result of past substance misuse will have routine quarterly hair testing, in addition to random urine testing.

The introduction of routine hair testing is based on expert advice about modern screening methods. Routine hair testing helps provide comprehensive information about the use – over time – of a wide range of drugs (not just based on the practitioner’s drug taking history).

These restrictions are generally designed to keep the public safe while the practitioner remains in practice. The national protocol supports the monitoring of these practitioners to make sure they are complying with the restrictions.

The drug screening protocol is part of a wider, national strategy to effectively manage compliance and monitoring across the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. More information is in the [statement](#) published on the Board’s website.

### 2014/15 annual report has been published

The 2014/15 National Scheme annual report, including a report from the Board, has been published.

The report details the work of the National Boards and AHPRA in implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme over the 12 months to 30 June 2015.

The annual report is published at [www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015/](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015/). It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Physiotherapy Board of Australia. A media release about the report – with data across professions and jurisdictions – is published on the AHPRA website. A report, which presents the data specific to physiotherapy practice, will be published on the Board’s website before the end of the calendar year.

We will be publishing physiotherapy specific and individual state and territory reports in coming weeks. We will let you know when these are released.

### Revised standard for all physiotherapists published

A revised registration standard for continuing professional development (CPD) comes into effect on 1 December and will replace the standard that is currently in place. The revised standard will apply to most applicants for initial registration and applicants for renewal of registration from 1 October 2016. **It does not apply to the current cycle of renewals.**

The Physiotherapy Board of Australia has [previously published](#) the contents of the revised standard and supporting materials.

The document has been updated. There are no changes to the existing requirements for physiotherapists. All practising physiotherapists must complete at least 20 hours of self-chosen CPD per year and must keep a log and reflect on how their CPD enhances their practice. The CPD must relate to the physiotherapist’s chosen scope of practice.

The standards were revised after a scheduled review, which included public consultation. National Boards have previously published consultation reports providing a summary of the consultation processes, rationale for any changes and proposed way forward, including areas where further work is planned.

Please refer to [AHPRA’s registration standards page](#) for additional information and resources.

The Board will be publishing a revised professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements registration standard soon, which will be in effect from early 2016.

### Expressions of interest to join the Registration and Notifications Committee

The Board is refreshing the membership of its Registration and Notifications Committee (RNC). The RNC has duties delegated to it by the National Board which include the consideration of notifications (complaints) made about physiotherapists. An Expression of Interest process is [published](#) on the Board’s website. The closing date for expressions of interest is Monday, 7 December 2015.

### Panels – express your interest

The Board invites you to express interest in being added to a list of panel members to be called on when a performance and professional standards panel or a health panel hearing is required.

These panels may be infrequent, but being involved is an opportunity to become familiar with the types of notifications the Board receives and the legislation that governs physiotherapy practice, decision-making and administration under the National Law<sup>1</sup>. It is also a good way to be introduced to the work of regulators.

Training is available for appointed panel members. Appointments to the list of approved persons will soon be advertised by the Board.

The closing date to express interest in being added to the list is Monday, 7 December 2015.

For more information, visit the [Panel member recruitment](#) page on AHPRA's website.

### Quarterly registration data released

The Board has released its [quarterly registration data](#). The latest report and other statistics are published on our website under *About*.

### Top tips for using the register

The [register of practitioners](#) is core to all of our work because it provides up-to-date information about every registered health practitioner. To help the public and employers get the most out of the register, we have developed [these tips](#). In particular, the tips remind anyone responsible for recruiting health practitioners how to use the register to verify a practitioner's registration status.

### Are your contact details up to date?

It is important that your contact details are up to date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board.

You can check your details via the [Login icon](#) at the top right of the AHPRA website.

Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

### 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 information or help with questions about your registration, please send a web enquiry form or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

### Paul Shinkfield

Chair

30 November 2015

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