

Communiqué

July 2018 meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia

The 96th meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board), was held on 27 July at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), 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.

July meeting

The Board held its meeting at VACCHO in July, where it combined its monthly meeting with an opportunity to learn about Victoria's peak body for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people living in Victoria.

VACCHO is an Aboriginal community organisation that believes that each Aboriginal community needs its own community based, locally owned, culturally appropriate and adequately resourced primary healthcare facility.

The Board was pleased to receive a presentation from the VACCHO staff and were offered an opportunity to tour the facilities and learn of their achievements.

CPD mini campaign

The Board is running a mini-campaign during August to highlight the requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for ongoing registration.

Under the Board's requirements, all registered physiotherapists must declare on registration they completed a minimum of 20 hours of relevant CPD and reflected on the impact of that CPD on their practice during the period November 2017 to November 2018.

The Board's website will be updated and information will be shared on our social media channels.

Visit from the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner

The Board was very pleased to welcome Richelle McCausland, the ministerially-appointed ombudsman for the National Scheme¹.

The position of the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner was established at the same time as the National Scheme, on 1 July 2010.

The role of this office is to provide ombudsman, privacy and freedom of information oversight of the National Scheme, particularly in relation to the actions of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the National Boards. In order to fulfil these functions, the National Law² confers

¹ National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

² Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

specified jurisdiction on the Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner. For efficiency, the separate Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner roles are combined in a single office.

Richelle gave a presentation to the Board about the types of complaints that her office receives and particularly about physiotherapy complaints, of which there are few in comparison with other professions.

Richelle is committed to ensuring that the public and health practitioners have confidence in Australia's national health practitioner regulation scheme, by providing services that are independent, fair and accessible.

Stakeholder engagement breakfast in Hobart in October

The Board is hosting another information sharing breakfast for physiotherapists and others on Saturday, 6 October in Hobart. The Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) annual conference is being that week in Hobart and the Board is inviting all conference goers and Tasmanian physiotherapists to the breakfast, which is an opportunity to meet Board members, before the conference gets under way.

Our commitment to improving Indigenous health outcomes

The National Scheme has made a landmark commitment to helping achieve equity in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians to close the gap by 2031.

Nearly 40 health organisations have signed the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme Statement of Intent, including leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations, AHPRA, all National Boards, all accreditation authorities and other entities.

AHPRA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group is leading this work, in close partnership with a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and experts.

The group shares a commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have access to health services that are culturally safe and free from racism so that they can enjoy a healthy life,

To help achieve this, the group is focusing on:

- a culturally safe health workforce supported by nationally consistent standards, codes and guidelines across all professions in the National Scheme
- using our leadership and influence to achieve reciprocal goals
- increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' participation in the registered health workforce
- greater access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to culturally safe services of health professions regulated under the National Scheme, and
- increased participation across all levels of the National Scheme.

More information is available in the [news item](#), the [Statement of Intent](#) and [AHPRA's Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

True partnership recognised through AHPRA and Victoria Police MOU

AHPRA and Victoria Police have announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enable greater cooperation which will see the public better protected.

The MOU is the first of its kind between AHPRA and a police force. It recognises the cooperation already in place between the two agencies. It establishes procedures for timely and appropriate information sharing, within the law, where AHPRA or Victoria Police discover certain information in the course of their investigations.

The MOU provides a mechanism for the release of information by AHPRA when it identifies information relating to criminal offences, including physical harm, sexual offending, production of exploitative material and/or drug offences.

Victoria Police will also be better placed to share information with AHPRA about practitioners who they suspect may pose a risk of substantial harm to the public or individuals posing as registered health practitioners when they are not.

The agreement lays out detailed security protocols around the transmission, storage, use and disclosure of information that is shared between Victoria Police and AHPRA.

The MOU recognises the learning that came from the [Chaperone Review](#), a report into the use of chaperones to protect patients. The report stated that where there are allegations of indecent or sexual assault there needed to be greater clarity around whether AHPRA contacts the police or relies on the notifier (the person who makes the complaint) to do so.

The report also considered it was important that AHPRA was kept aware of developments in police investigations, which may trigger the need to review risk and take immediate action on a registered health practitioner's ability to practise their profession.

For more information, see the [media release](#) on the AHPRA website.

Are your contact details up-to-date?

It is important 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 social media

Connect with AHPRA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to receive information about important topics for your profession and participate in the discussion.



Further information

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of registered physiotherapists on our website at www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au or 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.

Charles Flynn

Chair

30 July 2018