

## Communiqué

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The 49th meeting of the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 28 March 2014 in Hobart.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting, as well as 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.

### Common guidelines and Code of conduct

The Board has published revised and new common codes and guidelines:

- revised *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services*
- *Social media policy*
- revised *Mandatory reporting guidelines*, and
- revised *Code of conduct*.

These guidelines, policy and code came into effect on 17 March 2014, and all registered health practitioners need to meet these new standards.

The Board consulted widely last year on the draft versions of these documents.

Much work has also gone into making sure that the format and language used in the documents meet plain language requirements, to make it easier to access and understand the important information in them.

More information has been published on the AHPRA and National Boards' websites. FAQs are available in the [news item](#) on the Board website.

### Advertising guidelines: update

The *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services* were developed by the National Boards. These are now published under [Codes and guidelines](#) on the Board website.

The guidelines explain the requirements of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory ([National Law](#)) in relation to advertising and the use of testimonials in advertising. The National Law does not allow testimonials to be used when advertising a regulated health service (section 133).

On 26 March the Medical Board of Australia announced it would revise the guidelines to make them clearer about the use of testimonials. Read the [news item](#) on the Medical Board of Australia website.

The Physiotherapy Board of Australia, along with the other 13 National Boards, is now considering whether to revise and clarify the wording on testimonials as part of implementing the new *Advertising guidelines*.

We will keep practitioners informed and, in the meantime, AHPRA is managing complaints about advertising in line with the information in the advertising FAQ (see *FAQ and additional information* in the [news item](#)) on the Board website.

To clarify, practitioners are not responsible for removing (or trying to have removed) unsolicited testimonials published on a website or in social media over which they don't have control.

### Consultation on revised standards and guidelines

The Board will shortly publish the following standards and guidelines for public consultation for a period of at least eight weeks:

- *Recency of practice registration standard* and related guideline
- *Professional indemnity insurance registration standard*
- *Continuing professional development registration standard* and related guideline

The Board will publish later in 2014 the following revised documents for consultation:

- Limited registration standards (various) and related guidelines
- *Supervision guidelines for physiotherapy*

The Board is seeking broad-ranging input on these revised documents, and will update registrants and the community on progress about the consultation period through this communiqué and in the news section of the Board's website.

## **Audit**

AHPRA and the Board have established a nationally consistent approach to auditing health practitioners' compliance with the mandatory registration standards.

Each time a practitioner applies to renew their registration, they must make a declaration that they have met the registration standards for their profession. Practitioner audits are an important part of the way that the Board and AHPRA can better protect the public by regularly checking declarations made by a random sample of practitioners. The audit helps to make sure that practitioners are meeting the required standards of practice and give important assurance to the community and the Boards.

Auditing of all professions has started. If you are selected for audit you will be notified in writing and will need to provide evidence that you meet the requirements of the registration standards.

Further information will be available soon on the Board's website – [www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au](http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au).

## **Updating contact details**

To check your contact details, go to the Your Account link, use your unique contact number (user ID) and follow the prompts. Your user ID is not your registration number. If you do not have your user ID, complete an online enquiry form, selecting 'user ID' as the category of enquiry or by calling 1300 419 495.

## **Follow @AHPRA on Twitter**

If you were in the Twittersphere in late March 2014, you may have noticed that AHPRA has joined the conversation. Less than two weeks into AHPRA's social media journey, the CEO Martin Fletcher ran a live chat #AHPRAqanda.

The chat included nearly 60 participants, and AHPRA tweeted 99 times in the hour. If you missed it, see the chat archive from [the Twitter chat with AHPRA CEO page](#) on the AHPRA website.

AHPRA decided to hold the chat to respond to the online conversations about the National Board advertising guidelines, which gained momentum on Twitter with a number of practitioners and members of the community.

AHPRA will regularly host twitter chats about important topics, and will use this forum to try and get more feedback to National Board consultations.

## **Conclusion**

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of you as a physiotherapist 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 an online enquiry form or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

## **Paul Shinkfield**

Chair  
9 April 2014

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