

A guidance list for health service providers regarding commencement of the national registration and accreditation scheme

Introduction

On 1 July 2010, the national registration and accreditation scheme ('national scheme') for health practitioners will commence in Victoria and other states and territories that have adopted the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* ('the National Law').

Ten health professions (chiropractors, dental care practitioners [including dentists, dental hygienists, dental prosthetists and dental therapists], medical practitioners, nurses and midwives, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, and psychologists) will be regulated nationally from 1 July 2010. A further four professions (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners, medical radiation practitioners and occupational therapists) will be regulated nationally from 1 July 2012. Chinese medicine and medical radiation practitioners will continue to be regulated under Victorian regulation until 1 July 2012.

A guidance list outlined in this document has been prepared to assist health services to understand the implications of the national scheme, and make necessary amendments to policies and procedures or any other documents that need to align with requirements set under the National Law. It is up to the health service as to how they wish to use the guidance list within their organisation.

An extensive range of materials are available from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency ('national agency') including web links to national boards of Australia ('national boards'), registration standards, codes and guidelines and information sheets. For more information, please go to:

- **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency**
G.P.O Box 9958
MELBOURNE 3001
www.ahpra.org.au
Registration Helpline: **1300 088 590**
- **National Boards of Australia**
Correspondence to the national boards can be sent via email to the Chair's email address which is listed on each of board websites (detailed below).
 - Chiropractic Board of Australia www.chiropracticboard.gov.au
 - Dental Board of Australia www.dentalboard.gov.au
 - Medical Board of Australia www.medicalboard.gov.au
 - Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au
 - Optometry Board of Australia www.optometryboard.gov.au
 - Osteopathy Board of Australia www.osteopathyboard.gov.au
 - Pharmacy Board of Australia www.pharmacyboard.gov.au
 - Physiotherapy Board of Australia www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au
 - Podiatry Board of Australia www.podiatryboard.gov.au
 - Psychology Board of Australia www.psychologyboard.gov.au

- **Department of Health**
Sector Workforce
Practitioner Regulation Unit
Level 20, 50 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE 3000
www.health.vic.gov.au/pracreg/natdev
practitioner.regulation@health.vic.gov.au
Tel: 9096 6982

A guidance list

Suggested items for consideration

<p>Commitment/Resources</p>	<p>A commitment is needed to inform all people within the organisation, contractors and other relevant third parties of the National Law requirements.</p> <p>You may wish to identify suitable person(s)/department within the health service responsible for informing the organisation of the national scheme.</p> <p>Enlisting support from any communications and marketing departments to spread the message to staff.</p> <p>Consider appointing an internal HR champion able to answer staff questions.</p>
<p>Operations</p>	<p>Consider identifying, reviewing, updating and managing internal policies and procedures to reflect requirements specified under the National Law and ensure that they are integrated into the organisation's day to day operations. For example, update documentation to reflect terms and definitions stipulated under the National Law and contact details of new national boards.</p>
<p>Registration standards</p>	<p>On 1 April 2010, Health Ministers approved a suite of mandatory registration standards for each profession. The national scheme creates a single national system within each health profession regarding the types of registration and endorsement categories that will apply to practitioners. The national boards have developed a registration table for registrants to map out how their registration will look like in the national scheme compared to existing arrangements.</p> <p>Types of registration</p> <p>The profession specific registration types under the National Law are listed below. Further information is provided at Attachment 1 or from the respective national boards' website (please note: not all of the registration types listed below are used in every profession):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General registration ▪ Specialist registration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 13 specialities in dentistry ○ 23 specialities in medicine ○ one speciality in podiatry ▪ Limited registration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Postgraduate training or supervised practice ○ Area of need ○ Teaching or research ○ In the public interest ▪ Provisional registration ▪ Non-practising registration, and ▪ Student registration. <p>Across the ten professions there are five mandatory registration standards required of health practitioners by the national boards. These are: criminal history, English language, professional indemnity insurance, continuing professional development and recency of</p>

practice. A summary of the registration standards are noted below with full details available from the national boards website.

- **Criminal history:** the National Boards have new powers to check the criminal history of registered health practitioners before deciding on an application for renewal of registration, or at any time during the registration period.
- **English language:** an applicant who is internationally-qualified or an applicant who did not undertake and complete their secondary education to the requisite level required must provide evidence (as per each national board's requirements) that they have the necessary English language skills for registration.
- **Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII):** health practitioners must not practise their profession unless they are covered in the conduct of their practice by appropriate PII arrangements. For practitioners employed by an organisation/health service they would usually be covered by that organisations indemnity insurance. A specific exemption only applies for independently practising Midwives for home birth services.
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD):** health practitioners must participate regularly in CPD that is relevant to their scope of practice in order to maintain, develop, update and enhance their knowledge, skills and performance to ensure that they deliver appropriate and safe care.
- **Recency of practice:** To ensure that health practitioners are able to practise competently and safely, they must have recent practice in the fields in which they intend to work during the period of registration for which they are applying.

Endorsements

Under the National Law, national boards can 'endorse' the registration of suitably qualified practitioners. An endorsement of registration recognises that a person has additional qualifications and expertise in an approved area of practice and / or for scheduled medicines. A summary of different types of endorsements under the National Law is listed below. Comprehensive information is available from the national boards website.

The approved endorsements include:

- **Scheduled medicines**

- Nursing and Midwifery

*Please note: under the National Law there will not be regulation of nurse immunizers or national recognition of additional qualifications in maternal and child health and mental health.

- Optometry

- Podiatry

- **Nurse practitioner**

- **Acupuncture**

- **Approved area of practice**

- Psychology (7)

- Dentist (1)

- And other future developments

* It is noted that there will not be an Enrolled Nurse endorsement for medicines administration that the current Victorian medication endorsed Division 2 (Enrolled Nurses) will appear on the public register with no endorsement noted. In contrast, current Victorian Division 2 nurses that DO NOT hold a medication endorsement will have a 'notation' against their registration on the public register. At this point

the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia is currently considering how the various current medication endorsements will be managed, i.e. endorsement for subcutaneous and intramuscular, enteral & topical and Intravenous routes.

Registration Renewal Dates

All health professionals registered at 30 June 2010 will be deemed into the national scheme and will continue to be registered to practice until the new renewal period. Registration will be valid until the end date of registrant's current registration (full details on registration renewals is available from each of the national boards website). In July 2010, the national agency will send registrants a new national registration number, a national registration certificate and information regarding their national registration renewal date.

National boards for each of the professions have determined new registration renewal dates listed below:

Registration renewal dates

31 May	Nursing and Midwifery
30 September	Medical
30 November	Chiropractic
30 November	Dental
30 November	Optometry
30 November	Osteopathy
30 November	Pharmacy
30 November	Physiotherapy
30 November	Podiatry
30 November	Psychology

Registration fees

Fees for each profession are currently being considered by the national boards and are expected to be announced in June 2010.

In addition to the obligations on individual registrants, health services should also check the registration status of employees to ensure that they are registered at 30 June 2010. If they are not registered on 30 June they will not transition to the national scheme.

Each national board will maintain a public register on the internet that will list any conditions that may apply to a national practitioner's registration.

Victorian boards operating under HPR Act will continue to fulfil their regulatory obligations up to 30 June 2010. Each Board's public register will be available until 30 June 2010, going forward the national register will be available.

Tell your employees who are registered practitioners to read and respond to the letter that they receive from the National Board.

Ensure that your health service updates its procedures to check the registration status of all registered health practitioners, prior to appointment. For medical practitioners, please ensure your health service complies with the specific requirements set out in '*Credentiailling and defining the scope of clinical practice for medical practitioners in Victorian health services policy*'. The policy can be downloaded from the department's Clinical Engagement website www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalengagement/credentiailling

	<p>Health services and/or organisations employing health professionals should be prepared to provide information on the cover for their organisation to their employed health professionals if they are required to demonstrate this to register and/or renew. Independent health professionals are required to have their own PII.</p> <p>Employers should schedule to update health practitioners' records with their new registration numbers after they have been issued by AHPRA in July 2010.</p> <p>Consider developing and implementing plans to manage various endorsements that exist for practitioners with additional qualifications and specific expertise. For instance, ensuring that the HR department develops recruitment protocols to verify that the health practitioner holds relevant qualifications and employment history to perform their contracted job duties.</p> <p>Where possible, develop administrative processes (e.g. record keeping) to support employees record their CPD activities.</p>
<p>Codes and guidelines</p>	<p>On 7 April 2010, the national boards released a consultation paper on codes and guidelines on mandatory notifications, advertising, conduct, practice, continuing professional development and other documents for consultation. This consultation process is now closed. The national boards will publish final codes and guidelines on their website.</p> <p>Guidelines on mandatory notification</p> <p>Notifiable conduct under section 140 of the National Law, means that a practitioner has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) practised the profession while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs, or b) engaged in sexual misconduct in connection with their profession, or c) placed the public at risk of substantial harm in their practice because they have an impairment, or d) placed the public at risk of harm during their practice because of a significant departure from professional standards. <p>Section 141 of the National Law requires that a registered health practitioner must notify the national board if, in the course of practising their profession, they form a reasonable belief that another registered health practitioner has behaved in a way that constitutes 'notifiable conduct'.</p> <p>Section 142 of the National Law requires that employers must notify the national agency, when they form a reasonable belief that a health practitioner has behaved in a way that constitutes 'notifiable conduct'. If the national agency becomes aware that an employer of a registered health practitioner has failed to notify the national agency of notifiable conduct as required under the National Law, the national agency must give a written report about the failure to the responsible Minister for the participating jurisdiction in which the notifiable conduct occurred.</p> <p>National boards have developed or are developing guidance for practitioners and employers in relation to mandatory reporting obligations that are available on their website. It is suggested that all directors, managers and staff with people management roles familiarise themselves with the National Law requirements regarding mandatory reporting and develop administrative processes to manage mandatory notifications in your health service.</p>