



Communiqué

February 2017 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The 82nd meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Friday 24 February 2017 at the National Office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Board's meeting as well as other important information.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. We encourage you to distribute it to colleagues and interested parties, including in the organisation you work in.

Update from the Australian Dental Council

As the accreditation authority for the dental profession, the Australian Dental Council (ADC) attended this month's meeting to update the Board on the work it completed in 2016 and has planned for 2017. This includes a review of assessment processes.

These meetings allow us to continue to develop a common understanding of the different roles and functions we each have under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

Programs to extend scope

Late last year, the ADC reviewed the list of [Programs to extend scope](#) on behalf of the Board. As an outcome of this review process, the Board has re-approved seven programs to extend scope until 31 December 2018. The list of approved programs has been updated on the [Board's website](#), see the *Accreditation* section of www.dentalboard.gov.au.

The Board has also reviewed the approval process of these programs and has agreed to phase out the approval of these programs with a transition period from 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2018. During and after this transition period, the Board will no longer approve programs to extend scope and consequently, the ADC will no longer accredit these programs.

The Board made this decision considering a number of factors:

- The National Law¹ only provides a regulatory framework to approve programs of study that lead to registration. Programs to extend scope do not lead to registration and are offered to dental practitioners already registered with general or limited registration.
- The historical need for these programs have faded with a decrease in the demand for them and the fact that most of these topics are now incorporated in the programs of study already approved by the Board.
- The objectives, the guiding principles and the [Regulatory principles of the National Scheme](#).

Continuing professional development

The *Programs to extend scope* can continue to be delivered as continuing professional development (CPD) programs. The Board reminds all dental practitioners that CPD programs alone cannot be used to

¹ The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

increase scope and may not provide a dental practitioner with the sufficient clinical experience to incorporate techniques and procedures into their practice.

Registered dental practitioners are responsible for selecting CPD programs that:

- relate to the definition of their practice as defined in the Board's [Scope of practice guidelines](#), and
- 'broaden knowledge, expertise and competence' in accordance with the Board's [Continuing professional development registration standard](#) and [guidelines](#).

Scheduled review of *Dental Scope of practice registration standard* and *Guidelines for scope of practice*

The *Programs to extend scope* are currently defined in the Board's [Scope of practice registration standard](#) and associated [guideline](#).

The Board has begun planning for the scheduled review of this registration standard and associated guideline which refer to the approval of *Programs to extend scope*. As part of this review and in line with its obligations under the National Law, the Board will consult all stakeholders including education providers. The Board will provide regular updates through its communication channels including its communiqué and newsletter as the review progresses.

Proposed *Entry-level competencies for endorsement for conscious sedation*

The Board completed a public consultation on proposed *Entry-level competencies for endorsement for conscious sedation* in January 2017. The consultation paper and submissions received will be available shortly under [Past consultations](#) on the Board's website.

The Board is now working to finalise the new competencies taking feedback received as part of the consultation into account, and plans to publish the new competencies soon.

New legislation for the regulation of medicines and poisons in Western Australia

New legislation for the regulation of medicines and poisons in Western Australia came into effect on Monday 30 January 2017.

The [Medicines and Poisons Act 2014](#) and its subsidiary legislation, the [Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016](#), contain a number of key reforms for health practitioners handling medicines and businesses using poisons. The new laws will replace the current *Poisons Act 1964* and *Poisons Regulations 1965*.

An awareness campaign explaining how the new legislation will affect practitioners has started and resources including a collection of *Guidance notes* providing detailed information on various topics, have been published on the [WA Health](#) website.

Regulatory actions

Since the last communiqué, a number of actions taken by the Board have achieved greater protection of the public.

Highlights include:

- A dental practitioner has been disqualified for two years and six months and ordered to pay the Board's costs fixed at \$90,000, after a tribunal found him guilty of professional misconduct and unprofessional conduct. [Read the full news item.](#)
- A dental practitioner has been reprimanded and had her registration suspended for professional misconduct. [Read the full news item.](#)
- A school dental therapist has had her registration cancelled after acting outside her scope of practice and providing inadequate or inappropriate treatment over a seven year period. [Read the full news item.](#)

Dental practitioners can find out more about the outcomes of court and tribunal action by on the Board's website, see News section on www.dentalboard.gov.au or by see the Publication and resources section of www.ahpra.gov.au where they have a page dedicated to court and tribunal outcomes.

National health workforce dataset - Allied Health Fact Sheets 2015

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in conjunction with the National Boards is responsible for the national registration process for 14 health professions. A subset of data from this annual registration process, together with data from a workforce survey that is voluntarily completed at the time of registration, forms the National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS).

The NHWDS includes demographic and professional practice information for registered health professionals and is de-identified before it can be made publically available.

The NHWDS Allied Health 2015 data has recently been released as a series of fact sheets on each allied health profession, and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners across all allied health professions – the *NHWDS Allied Health Fact Sheets 2015*. They were published on a new-look website – the [Health Workforce Data website](#) – by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The fact sheets present information specific to each profession, such as information relating to scope of practice, specialties and endorsements where applicable.

Aggregate data is also accessible via the [Health Workforce Data Online Data Tool \(ODT\)](#).

The data included is generated through Workforce Surveys, which are provided by AHPRA on behalf of the Department of Health to all health professionals as part of their yearly renewal of registration. Each survey is slightly different and is tailored to obtain data specific to that profession.

A fact sheet on dental practitioners is available [online](#).

Local insights, National Scheme: State and territory summaries published

Individual annual report summaries for each state and territory, offering insights into how the National Scheme is operating in each jurisdiction, have now been published.

Based on the AHPRA and National Boards annual report for 2015/16, the summaries are available [online on AHPRA's website](#).

Information includes applications for registration by profession, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, profession and specialty.

To download any or all of the state and territory reports, or to view the main 2015/16 annual report, [visit our microsite](#).

Dental regulation at work: Protecting the public in 2015/16

A profession-specific annual report summary that looks into the work of the Board over the year to 30 June 2016 has now been published.

The report draws on data from the 2015/16 annual report by AHPRA and the National Boards.

Information includes the number of applications for registration, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, age, division and principal place of practice.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or concerns received, matters open and closed during the year, statutory offence complaints (such as advertising breaches) and matters that required immediate action.

To download this report, or to view the main 2015/16 annual report and summary reports by state or territory, [visit the microsite](#).

Quarterly registration data

The Board publishes quarterly data profiling Australia's dental workforce.

The quarterly registration data at December 2016 for the dental profession is published on the Board's website under [About>Statistics](#). The report includes a number of statistical breakdowns.

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.

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Chair, Dental Board of Australia
08 March 2017