

## Communique

---

7 March 2018

### February 2018 meeting of the Paramedicine Board of Australia

The Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) met for the fifth time on Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 February 2018 in Melbourne.

Under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) registration will become mandatory for paramedics from late 2018.

#### Planning for 2018-19

It is usual for National Boards to finalise their planning for the next financial year around this time. The planning of the Board is strongly focussed on the successful transition of the paramedicine profession into the National Scheme. The Board and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) are working closely together to achieve this and there is a detailed plan of work involving:

- the establishment and implementation of [registration requirements](#) and processes for the paramedicine profession
- the development of ethical and [professional standards](#) for the profession and processes for managing notifications and complaints
- the potential assignment of [accreditation functions](#) and development of accreditation and competency standards for the profession, and
- a series of forums and webinars on topical issues to help support the profession's journey into regulation under the National Law.

The Board will be consulting widely on a range of standards, codes, guidelines and other documents to support the regulation of the profession in the coming months. The continued feedback, input and support of stakeholders to these processes is critical in helping the Board set these requirements.

#### Consultation on draft registration standards

Public consultation was conducted from 20 December 2017 until 8 February 2018 by online publication of the standards, a webinar on 6 February 2018 and other supportive communications activities both online and via social media.

The draft registration standards were developed under the provisions s35 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory (National Law). Of these six standards, five were mandatory and the other related to the effect of the time limited 'grandparenting' provisions set out in s311 of the National Law. A guideline on continuing professional development (CPD) was developed to companion its respective standard.

The Board received external feedback about the draft registration standards from over 41 different stakeholders. That feedback has been of valuable assistance to the Board in finalising the proposed registration standards that will be submitted to Australian Health Ministers for consideration of approval. The nature of the feedback received highlighted the critical need for the Board to support this profession's transition into the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme with enhanced explanatory documentation about these standards, to allow their effective implementation.

The Board greatly appreciated the effort, consideration and input that so many stakeholders contributed into the refining of these important standards. There was feedback about many areas of the National Law and being a registered profession in the National Scheme that - although not directly related to the consultation - highlighted the need for the Board to continue to provide information and resources for the profession to better understand and transition into the National Scheme.

### **Qualifications for registration**

Under the National Law, to apply for registration you must satisfy the Board that you are [both qualified and suitable for registration](#). The National Law provides a number of pathways that a paramedic can use to demonstrate that they are qualified for registration. If you have a qualification that is on the list of approved programs, or the list of accepted programs, you are automatically qualified to apply for registration.

You can also demonstrate that you are qualified for registration via one of the three grandparenting pathways.

- 1) If you have a qualification or have completed training that is on the list of adequate qualifications and training then you will automatically qualify for registration.

**OR**

- 2) If you have a qualification or training that is not on any list, but have done further training and/or a period of supervised practice as a paramedic, the Board will consider your application as a whole to see if you are qualified for registration as a paramedic.

**OR**

- 3) If you have no qualification or training as a paramedic you can rely on, you can still demonstrate that you are qualified for registration by demonstrating five years of practice as a paramedic in the last 10 years.

The Board will be publishing lists of qualifications and guides as to the evidence required to support a grandparenting application in the coming months.

### **New research framework launched to improve patient safety**

In January, National Boards and AHPRA published a research framework to help transform health practitioner regulation to improve patient safety.

[A research framework for the National Scheme: Optimising our investment in research](#) sets out the research priorities and principles for National Boards and AHPRA to focus their research efforts.

The framework includes the priority research areas of: defining harms and risks related to the practice of regulated health professions, regulatory taxonomy or classification scheme, risk factors for complaints and/or poor practitioner performance, evidence for standards, codes and/or guidelines, evaluating regulatory interventions, stakeholder satisfaction and engagement, work readiness and workforce capacity and distribution.

It has been published to provide a solid base to facilitate risk-based research and evaluation activities, with a clear focus on translating the outcomes of research into initiatives that will inform regulatory policy development and decision-making to maximise the public benefit.

### **Update on the first ever National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy**

AHPRA, the 15 National Boards responsible for regulating the health professions, accreditation authorities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector leaders and organisations have committed to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy with the vision of: 'Patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's health system is the norm, as defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.'

Associate Professor Gregory Phillips, CEO of ABSTARR Consulting, and Dr Joanna Flynn AM, Chair of the Medical Board of Australia, are [co-Chairs of the health strategy group](#). The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy group publish communiqués of its work. These are available on the [Advisory group page](#) of the AHPRA website.

This work is happening in conjunction with the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan for AHPRA.

The next meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy group is scheduled for March 2018.

### **Keep informed**

The Board continues to encourage all stakeholders to visit [www.paramedicineboard.gov.au](http://www.paramedicineboard.gov.au) regularly and to [register for e-News updates](#) during the implementation period to receive the latest news on our progress towards implementing the national regulation of paramedics.

**Associate Professor Stephen Gough** ASM  
Chair  
Paramedicine Board of Australia