

Paramedics, welcome to the National Scheme

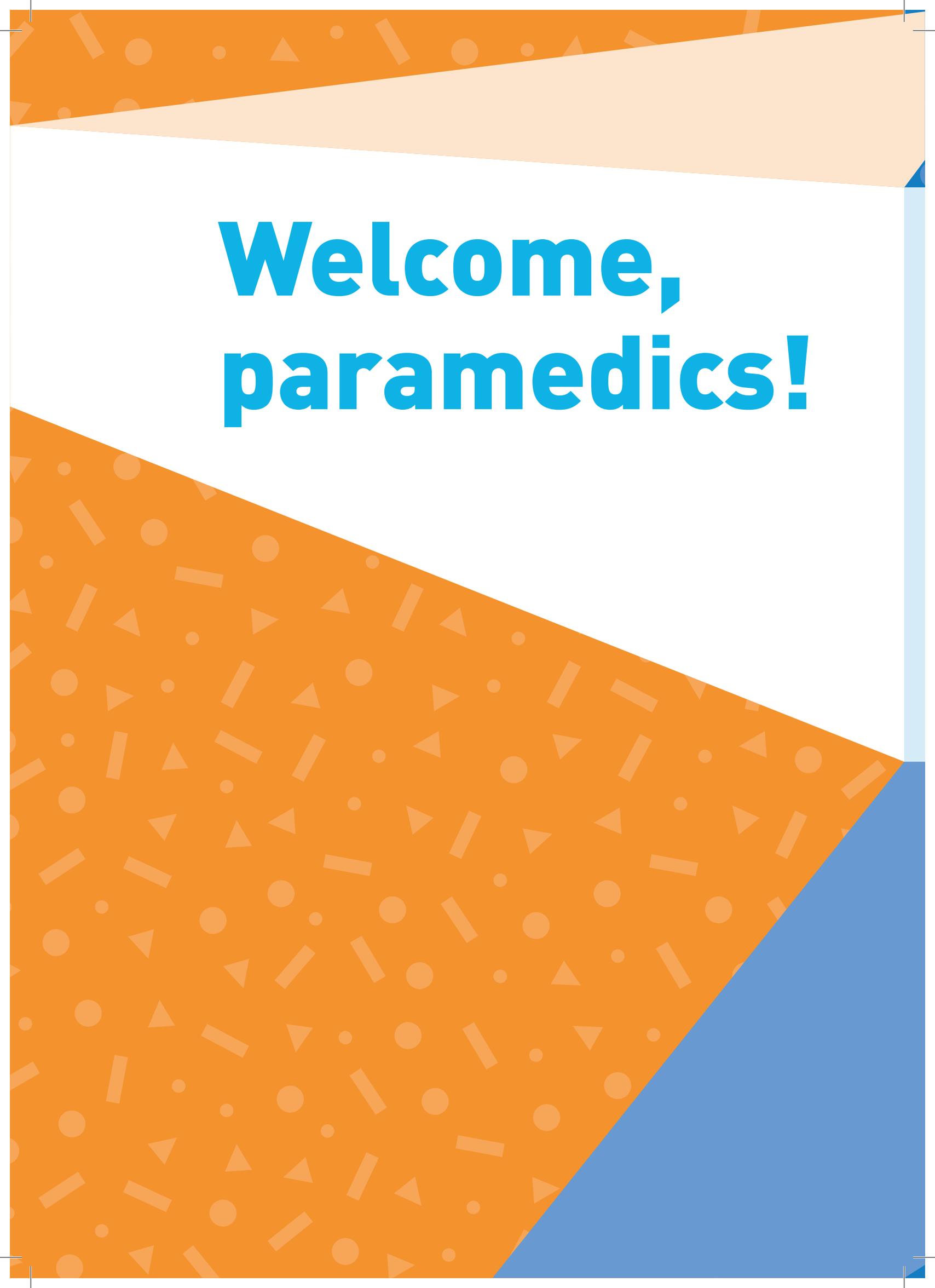
July 2018



Paramedicine
Board of Australia

AHPRA

www.paramedicineboard.gov.au



**Welcome,
paramedics!**

In late 2018, paramedicine will become a regulated profession under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme).

You will be able to apply to become registered with the Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) when registration opens at **9am AEST on 3 September 2018.**

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for this important transition.

What does this mean?

From 'participation day' (the day regulation of paramedicine takes effect) only people who are registered with the Board will be able to lawfully call themselves a 'paramedic' or hold themselves out to be a 'paramedic' (see glossary for explanation of 'holding out').

Once registered, you will be added to the national *Register of practitioners*.

What should I do now?

Familiarise yourself with the Board and its registration standards, and check that you are eligible and suitable for registration.

There's a glossary at the end of this booklet with key terms that you should be familiar with.

The date of participation day will be announced by ministers. Make sure you visit the Board's website www.paramedicineboard.gov.au and sign up for e-News updates to receive the latest information as it becomes available.

Follow @AHPPRA on Twitter and Facebook to receive real-time updates and make sure you're **#readytoregister**.

How do I get registered?

Follow these steps to apply for registration as a paramedic:

Check if you need to register

Anyone who works as or will use the title 'paramedic' (including people in non-clinical roles) must register with the Board. Students, medics, volunteer ambulance officers and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) do not need to apply for registration.

The Board will open online applications for registration at 9am AEST on 3 September 2018.



Prepare to apply for registration

Read the information provided by the Board about the eligibility requirements for registration. You need to be qualified and suitable for registration. There are different ways to demonstrate your qualifications. For example, you may need to request a transcript or employment documents from relevant institutions.



Create an account and apply online

From 3 September 2018, you can create an AHPRA online services login. This lets you save your application while you complete it, even if you come back to it later.

Start your application early to make sure that you have time to gather any necessary documents and complete your application before regulation begins in late 2018.



Upload the required documents and make payment

Depending on your background, you may need to upload supporting documents, like copies of qualifications or letters from employers.

To finish your application, make a payment by credit card. You'll get an email confirmation that payment has been received.



Wait for email updates about your registration

You'll get an email from the Board and AHPRA to let you know the outcome of your registration application or if we need more information from you.

You can call yourself a 'paramedic' while your registration application is being considered as long as you submit the complete application before the participation day.

However, it is an offence under the National Law (and penalties may apply) if you call yourself a 'paramedic' and have not submitted a complete application before participation day. It is also an offence to call yourself a 'paramedic' if your registration application has been considered and you have not been granted registration.

Am I eligible for registration?

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) sets out eligibility requirements for registering as a paramedic. While the final decision is with the Board, the flowchart below is a good starting point to help you determine whether you are eligible for registration.

The Board's website has more information about qualifications and suitability.

To be eligible for registration, you must be **qualified and a **suitable** person**

The National Law requires that, in order to be qualified for registration, you must satisfy one of the following.

The Board determines which qualifications are approved and publishes a list on its website.

or

You must hold an accepted qualification. This is a Diploma qualification issued by the NSW Ambulance Service.

or

You must satisfy the Board that you are qualified or competent to be registered by:

holding an adequate qualification or having completed adequate training

or

holding a qualification and having completed further study, training or supervised practice required by the Board

or

completing five years of acceptable practice in the last 10 years.

The National Law specifies that a suitable person to hold registration can meet all of the following criteria.

You have no impairment that, when practising, would be a risk to the health and safety of the public.

You have no criminal history that the Board deems as making you unsuitable for registration.

You don't have outstanding regulatory issues including disqualification, cancellation or suspension as a healthcare practitioner in any jurisdiction.

You have suitable English language skills.

You satisfy the Board's recency of practice requirements.

You satisfy the requirements of all of the Board's registration standards about suitability for registration.

You are for any other reason not a fit and proper person or not competent to practise safely.

What are the Board's registration standards?

To register, paramedics must demonstrate that they meet the five mandatory registration standards:

- continuing professional development
- criminal history
- English language skills
- professional indemnity insurance arrangements, and
- recency of practice.

The Board has also released a time-limited grandparenting registration standard which provides alternative ways of proving you may be qualified for general registration as a paramedic.

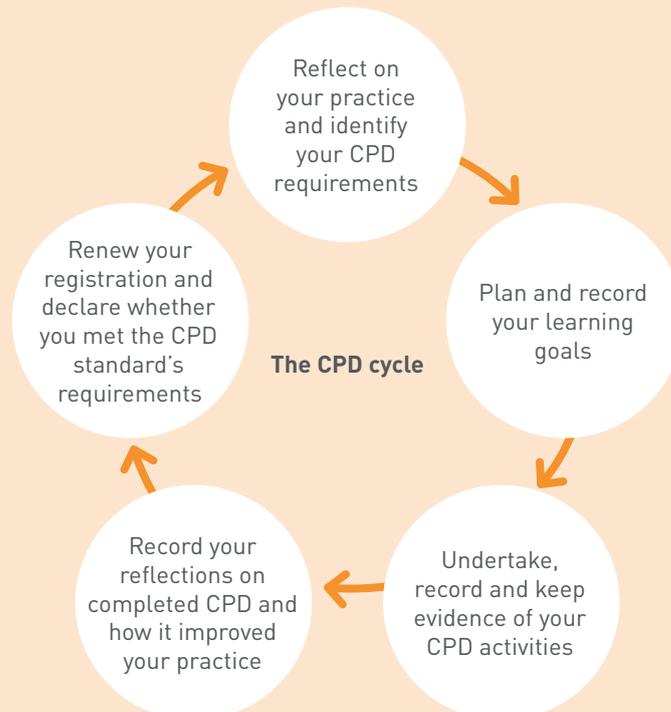
We've provided a brief introduction to each standard. The standards and supporting information are on the Board's website at www.paramedicineboard.gov.au/Professional-standards/Registration-standards.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

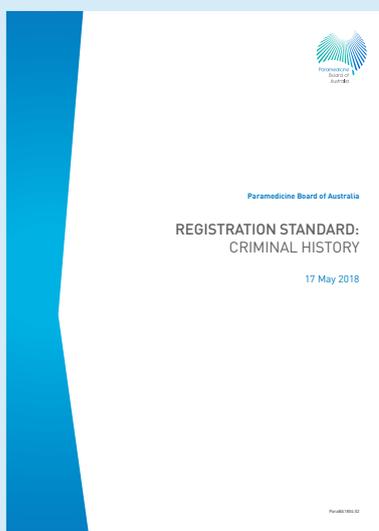


Each year, all registered paramedics (except students and non-practising registrants) must complete at least 30 hours of CPD that meet the requirements of the standard. You will also need to maintain a CPD portfolio.

The CPD standard requires you to complete at least eight hours of interactive CPD activities. Interactive CPD activities are any activities that involve other practitioners, including face-to-face education and activities by teleconference or web-conferences.



Criminal history



You must declare any Australian or international criminal history (charges or convictions) when you apply for registration as a paramedic and when you register or renew your registration. The Board will use factors set out in the registration standard to individually assess each case and decide whether a health practitioner's criminal history is relevant to the practice of their profession under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory.

AHPRA will conduct an Australian criminal history check as part of every application process. In addition, those who meet the criteria will need to arrange their own international criminal history check via one of the approved providers at the time of application.

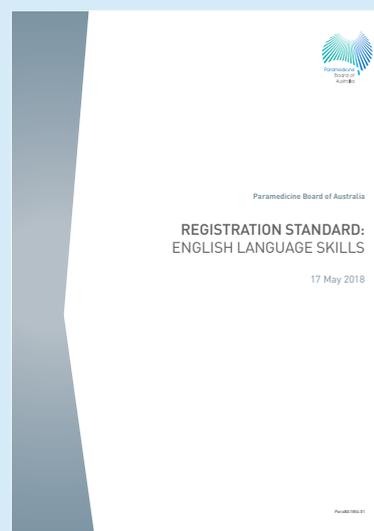
It's important to remember to advise the Board if there is any change to your criminal history at any time.

More information is available on the AHPRA website at www.ahpra.gov.au/CriminalHistory.

English language skills

All applicants for initial registration must demonstrate English language skills in one of the ways set out in the registration standard. Depending on your pathway, you may be required to provide evidence of primary education, secondary education, qualifications or training in the profession, evidence of employment and/or English language test results.

More information is available on the AHPRA website at www.ahpra.gov.au/EnglishLanguageSkills.



Professional indemnity insurance (PII)



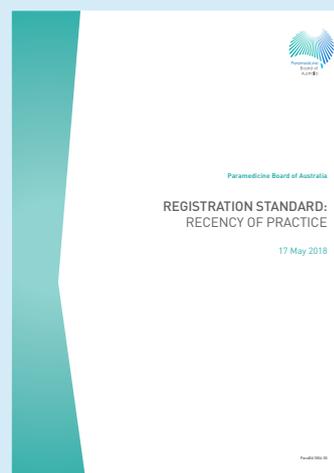
All paramedics must have professional indemnity insurance arrangements that meet the requirements of the standards for all aspects of their practice of the profession.

You can be covered by your own PII arrangements or third-party PII arrangements. For example, your PII could be arranged through an employer, a volunteer organisation or a combination of both.

Recency of practice

When you register for the first time and each time you renew your registration as a paramedic, you must declare that you meet the Board's recency of practice requirements. This means that, within your current scope of practice, you must complete a minimum of:

- a) 450 hours of practice in the previous three years, or
- b) 150 hours of practice in the previous 12 months, or
- c) 750 hours of practice in the previous five years with no continuous absence from practice of greater than two years.



Grandparenting



The *Registration standard: Grandparenting* sets out alternative ways of proving you may be qualified for general registration as a paramedic. These pathways are open for a limited time only.

If you wish to apply for general registration as a paramedic before participation day, but you do not hold an 'approved' or 'accepted' qualification, you will need to follow a grandparenting pathway to demonstrate your competence to the Board.

It's important that you read the registration standard for detailed information. Definitions of terms such as 'approved' and 'accepted', as well as further guidance on grandparenting, are available on the Board's website.

On the next page is a summary of the three pathways, including eligibility and evidence you may need to provide to gain registration through grandparenting provisions.

Grandparenting pathways

Pathways	Pathway (311(1)(a)) Adequate qualification	Pathway (311(1)(b)) Combination of qualifications/training and further study or a period of supervised practice	Pathway (311(1)(c)) Competence to practise the profession
Deciding which pathway you are eligible for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Qualification min AQF L7 (Bachelor degree or higher), and ✓ you could practise paramedicine with that qualification in the state it was issued, and ✓ your qualification was issued by a higher education institution e.g. university, and ✓ the qualification was subject to external quality assurance from those with expertise in paramedicine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Qualification min AQF L5 (Diploma or higher), and ✓ you could practise paramedicine with that qualification in the state it was issued, and ✓ your qualification was issued by a registered training institution e.g. registered training organisation (RTO), and ✓ you have at least 1700 hours of supervised practice in a Jurisdictional Ambulance Service (JAS) or under a registered paramedic or passed a Board-approved assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demonstrate five years' practice as a paramedic in the past 10 years, and ✓ a portfolio of information that demonstrates your competence as a paramedic (see evidence below for guidance).
Evidence you must provide when you apply	Brief practice history		
	Evidence of qualification or training undertaken that has been approved by the Board as adequate.	Evidence of training or further study undertaken. Evidence of your successful completion of any period of supervised practice.	A detailed practice history as required in the application process and a verifiable portfolio about your practice and competence as a paramedic that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of service Letter from employer A position description Proof of registration Authority to practise Performance review Personal submission

Who is AHPRA?

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is the national organisation responsible for implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) across Australia.

AHPRA works in partnership with the National Boards (including the Paramedicine Board of Australia) to ensure the community has access to a safe health workforce across the 15 professions currently registered under the National Scheme. AHPRA and the Boards protect the public by regulating health professionals who practise in Australia.

AHPRA delivers five core regulatory functions

Professional standards

Provide policy advice to the National Boards regarding registration standards, codes and guidelines for practitioners.

Registration

In partnership with the National Boards, ensure that only health practitioners with the skills and qualifications to provide competent and ethical care are registered to practise.

Notifications

Manage complaints and concerns raised about the health, performance and conduct of individual health practitioners.

Compliance

Monitor and audit practitioners to make sure they are complying with Board requirements.

Accreditation

Work with accreditation authorities and committees to ensure graduating students are suitably qualified and skilled to apply to register as a health practitioner.

How does AHPRA work to protect the public?

Support the National Boards in their primary role of protecting the public.

Support the National Boards in the development of registration standards, codes and guidelines.

Publish a national *Register of practitioners* so that important information about individual health practitioners is available to the public at www.ahpra.gov.au/registration/registers-of-practitioners.

Manage registration and renewal processes for local and overseas-qualified health practitioners, and manage student registration.

Manage notifications about the professional conduct, performance or health of registered health practitioners on behalf of the National Boards, except in New South Wales where notifications are managed by health professional councils and the Health Care Complaints Commission. In Queensland, investigations may be undertaken by the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

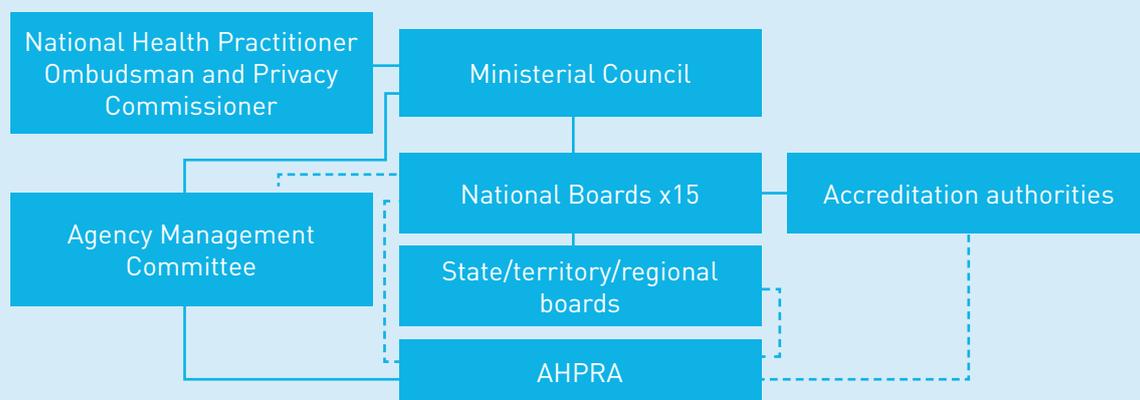
Work with health complaints entities to make sure the appropriate organisation deals with the community's concerns about health practitioners.

Provide advice to the Ministerial Council about the administration of the National Scheme.

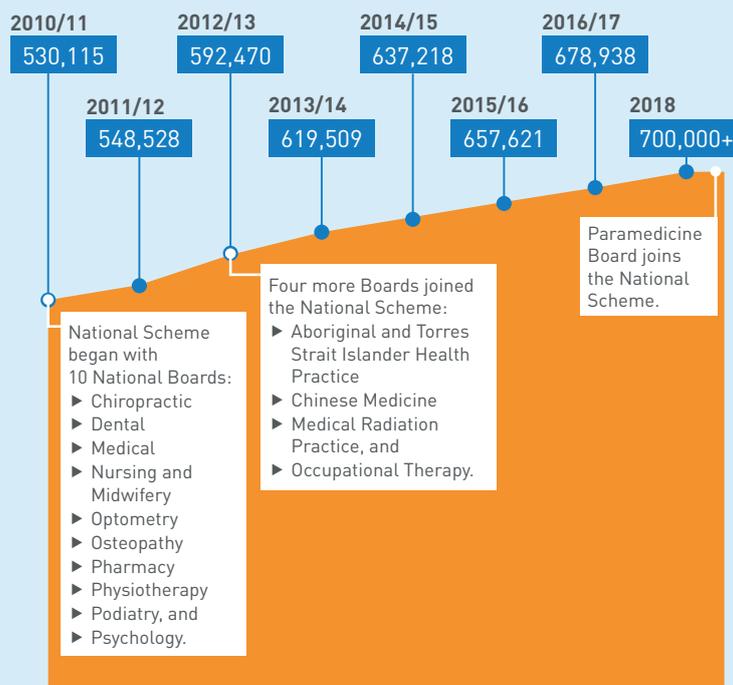
Who's who in the Scheme?

AHPRA and the National Boards work within a dynamic regulatory environment. We are responsible for the registration of every practitioner practising in the 15 regulated health professions across Australia. However, the regulation of these practitioners is a shared responsibility.

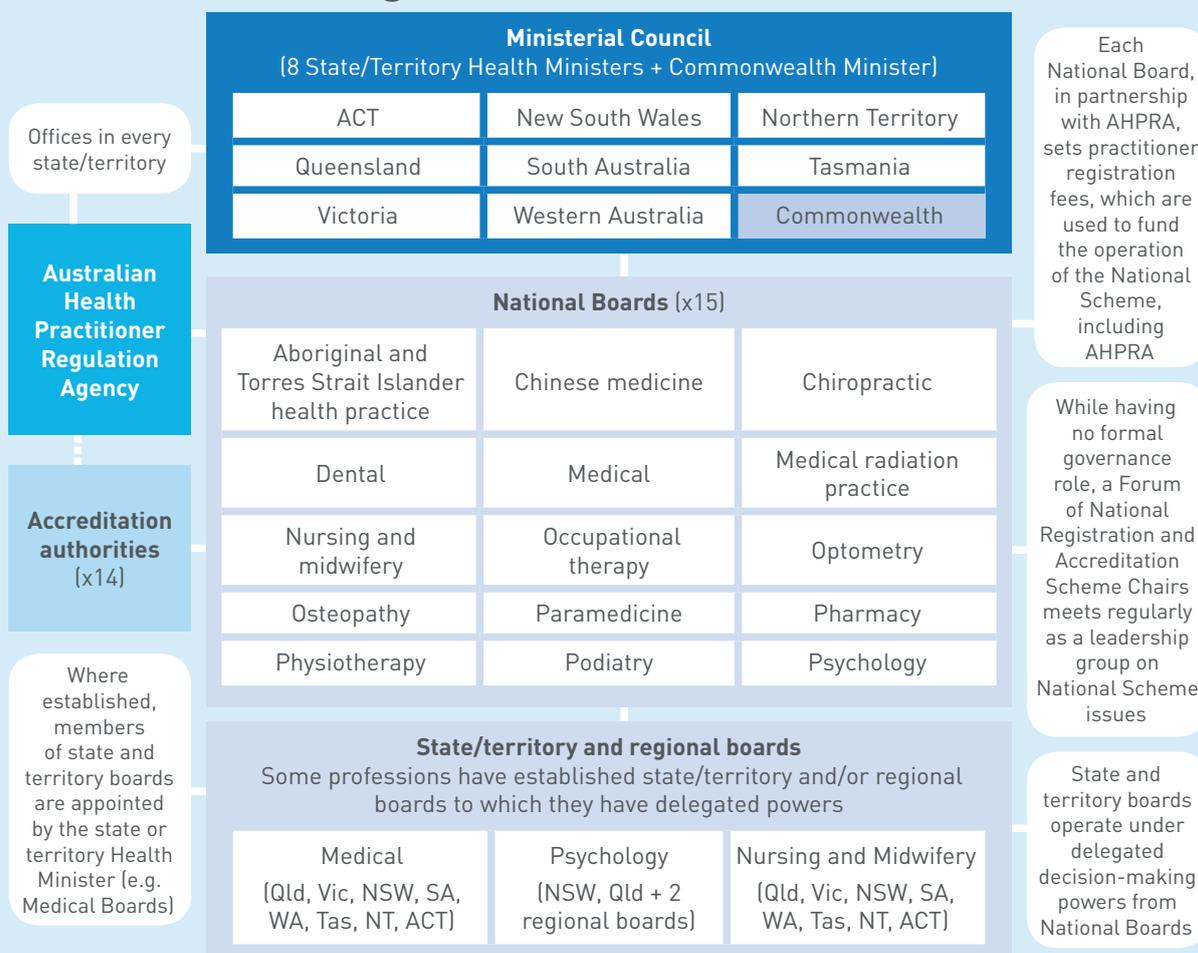
Who's who in the National Scheme



Registration numbers, year by year, since the National Scheme began



Structures and governance



How the Scheme is implemented

National Boards x15

- Primary role is regulatory decision-making in the public interest
- Set national registration requirements and standards
- Oversee various regulatory processes including registration, and the receipt, assessment and investigation of notifications (complaints)*
- Approve accreditation standards for the professions
- Approve qualifications for entry into the profession

AHPRA

- Administers the Scheme
- Supports National Board decision-making
- Establishes and administers procedures for managing registration and notification matters*
- Provides legal interpretation
- Makes recommendations to the boards and committees
- Is the first contact point for all enquiries about registration, notifications from practitioners, employers, governments and stakeholders

Accreditation authorities

- Assigned accreditation functions by the National Board
- Develop accreditation standards for board approval
- Accredit programs of study
- Submit accredited programs of study to boards for approval
- Monitor approved programs of study
- Assess overseas-trained practitioners applying for registration in Australia

* Except in NSW which has a co-regulatory arrangement for managing notifications and in Queensland where AHPRA manages less-serious matters

Regulatory principles for the National Scheme

These regulatory principles underpin the work of the Boards and AHPRA in regulating Australia's health practitioners, in the public interest. They shape our thinking about regulatory decision-making and have been designed to encourage a responsive, risk-based approach to regulation across all professions.

1. The Boards and AHPRA **administer and comply with the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law**, as in force in each state and territory. The scope of our work is defined by the National Law.

2. We protect the **health and safety of the public** by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered.

3. While we balance all the objectives of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, **our primary consideration is to protect the public.**

4. When we are considering an application for registration, or when we become aware of concerns about a health practitioner, **we protect the public by taking timely and necessary action under the National Law.**

5. In all areas of our work we:

- **identify the risks** that we are obliged to respond to
- **assess the likelihood and possible consequences** of the risks, and
- **respond in ways that are proportionate and manage risks** so we can adequately protect the public.

This does not only apply to the way in which we manage individual practitioners but in all of our regulatory decision-making, including in the development of standards, policies, codes and guidelines.

6. When we take action about practitioners, **we use the minimum regulatory force appropriate to manage the risk** posed by their practice, to protect the public. Our **actions are designed to protect the public and not to punish practitioners.**

While our actions are not intended to punish, we acknowledge that practitioners will sometimes feel that our actions are punitive.

7. Community confidence in health practitioner regulation is important. Our response to risk considers **the need to uphold professional standards and maintain public confidence in the regulated health professions.**

8. **We work with our stakeholders**, including the public and professional associations, to achieve good and protective outcomes. **We do not represent the health professions or health practitioners.** However, we will work with practitioners and their representatives to achieve outcomes that protect the public.

Glossary

Accreditation

Accreditation under the National Law ensures that the education and training leading to registration as a health practitioner is rigorous and prepares graduates to practise a health profession safely. The accreditation authority may be a committee of a National Board, or a separate organisation.

Education provider

The name of the university, education institution, specialist medical or other health-profession college that provides a program of study.

Holding out

Under the National Law, it's unlawful to knowingly or recklessly claim to be a registered health practitioner when you are not. This can include using a title, name, initial, symbol, word or description which could be reasonably understood to indicate that an individual is a health practitioner or qualified to practise in a health profession. Significant fines can be applied for breaches of this part of the National Law.

National Board

Appointed by the Ministerial Council to regulate the profession in the public interest and meet the responsibilities set down in the National Law. National Board members and/or state board members and/or committee members are delegated the functions/powers of the National Board.

National Law

The Act, adopted in each state and territory, setting out the provisions of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. The National Law has been adopted by the parliament of each state or territory through adopting legislation. The National Law is generally consistent in all states and territories. Co-regulatory arrangements exist in NSW with respect to part 8 of the National Law which concerns health, performance and conduct.

National Scheme

AHPRA works in partnership with 15 National Boards to implement the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme). The National Scheme aims to protect the public by ensuring only suitably trained and qualified practitioners are registered. It also facilitates workforce mobility across Australia, the provision of high-quality education and training of health practitioners and rigorous assessment of overseas trained practitioners.

Participation day

The day that paramedics will become regulated by the Board under the National Scheme. This date is yet to be set by the Health Ministers.

Practice

This definition of practice is used in a number of National Board registration standards.

It means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a practitioner in their regulated health profession. Scope of practice is sometimes used to describe the boundaries that a health practitioner is qualified to work within. Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with patients or clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of health services in the health profession.

Protected title

The National Law restricts the use of protected titles. This means that it is unlawful for someone to knowingly or recklessly take or use a title to make someone believe they are registered in one of the health professions e.g. paramedic or paramedicine, as well as other practices including using a specialist title when the person does not have specialist registration.

Non-practising paramedic

Non-practising registration is a registration type for practitioners who wish to take a temporary break from practice in Australia. To hold this type of registration, a practitioner must have previously held general registration. A registered health practitioner who holds non-practising registration in a health profession must not practise the profession in Australia.

Grandparenting provisions

The Grandparenting provisions under section 311 of the National Law provide alternative pathways for demonstrating that you are qualified for general registration as a paramedic if you do not have an approved, substantially equivalent or accepted qualification. These pathways are open for a limited time only.

Register of practitioners

AHPRA's online register of all registered health practitioners in Australia that anyone can use to confirm if a practitioner is registered to practise.

Registered health practitioner

An individual who is registered with the National Board of a health profession regulated under the National Law. This does not include students.

Qualifications and training in the profession

Approved qualifications or programs of study

A current qualification or program of study that the Board has approved as being suitable for registration in the profession.

Substantially equivalent qualifications or programs of study

A qualification that is substantially equivalent to, or based on similar competencies to an approved program of study.

Accepted qualification

A Diploma of Paramedicine issued by the NSW Ambulance Service.

Adequate qualifications or training in paramedicine

A qualification or training in paramedicine that has been assessed as meeting the criteria established by the Board for it to be considered adequate under section 311(1)(a) of the National Law.

Contact us

We are available to answer your enquiries online or on the phone.

Our office hours are Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm AEST.

You can find us online at www.ahpra.gov.au.

Call us on **1300 419 495** from Australia, or
call **+61 3 9275 9009** from outside Australia.

Connect with us for the latest news, updates and opportunities

Sign up for the e-News at www.paramedicineboard.gov.au



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