

Position statement

Becoming a registered paramedic

Introduction

Regulation of paramedicine is expected to start in late 2018.

Under the Health Practitioners Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (National Law) anyone who uses the protected title of 'paramedic' or holds themselves out as a paramedic must be registered with the Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) when regulation of paramedicine starts. People who are qualified to register or practice as a paramedic may also apply for registration as a paramedic.

If you are a paramedic but not practising in the direct delivery of care (e.g. management, administration or education) you still need to be registered with the Board.

A range of other professionals and volunteers who also provide emergency, unscheduled and out of hospital health care in the community, such as: first aiders, first responders, ambulance officers, medics and emergency medical technicians, do not need to be registered with the Board; however, you must not use the title paramedic or claim to be a registered paramedic.

From late 2018 it will become an offence under the National Law to use the title 'paramedic' or 'paramedicine' or otherwise hold yourself out to be a paramedic or practice paramedicine unless you are registered with the Board.

The National Law also requires that employers and engaging organisations (e.g. volunteer organisations) must ensure that the people they hold out or employ as paramedics are registered.

Breaches of the National Law can result in prosecution and significant fines apply.

The National Law

The National Law is primarily concerned with protecting the health and safety of the public and is essentially title protection and 'holding out'¹ legislation that provides strong penalties for those who breach its provisions relating to title and holding out.

Under the National Law, a person **must** be a registered paramedic if they:

1. Take or use the title 'paramedic' in a way that could be reasonably expected to induce a belief that the person is registered under the National Law (s 113(1)(a))
2. take or use a title, name, initial, symbol, word or description that, having regard to the circumstances in which it is taken or used, indicates or could be reasonably understood to indicate, that the person is a paramedic or is authorised or qualified to practise in the paramedicine profession(s. 116(1)(b))

¹ To represent, by words or conduct, something as true when it is not true

3. claim to be registered under the National Law or hold themselves out registered under the National Law (s. 116(1)(c))
4. claim to be qualified to practise as a paramedic (s. 116(1)(d))

Board recommendation

It is not a breach of the National Law for a person to use the knowledge and skills of a paramedic without being registered provided they do not contravene the above provisions. The Board recommends people should be registered when:

1. they intend to use the title paramedic or claim to be registered as a paramedic; and/or
2. they hold themselves out to be qualified as a paramedic; and/or
3. their employer/engaging organisation and/or their employer's/engaging organisation's professional indemnity insurer requires a person in that role to be registered; and/or
4. professional peers and the community would expect a person in that role to comply with the Board's registration standards for criminal history, English language skills, professional indemnity insurance arrangements, continuing professional development and recency of practice; and/or
5. they are required to be registered under any law to undertake any specific activity.

Review

This position statement will be reviewed as required. This will generally be at least every three years.

Last reviewed: 26 November 2018