



Communiqué

May 2019 meeting of the Paramedicine Board of Australia

The Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law).

The Board meets each month to consider and decide on any matters related to its regulatory function within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders about the work of the Board. Please share it on to colleagues or employees who may be interested.

The Board held its 19th meeting at the AHPRA National Office in Melbourne on 27 May 2019.

Business as usual for paramedic registration

Over 18,080 have been received to date and almost 17,000 applications have been finalised.

Due to the provisions of section 85 in the National Law, in some cases AHPRA may need to seek approval to extend the time needed to process an application. This would be sent via a specific email. Practitioners who receive such an email, are requested to respond and confirm their agreement to the extension of time as soon as possible. Unfortunately, without approval to extend the time allowed to process the application, the National Law requires that the application is taken to be refused.

Should anyone be the recipient of an extension request email, or have already received one, please ensure that you provide this email along with your acceptance response to your employer as evidence of your application if required. When registration is granted, applicants will receive confirmation via email with their registration number which they will need to provide to their employer.

A number of these applications are quite complicated and it may take some time for the Board to work through them all, your ongoing patience and cooperation is appreciated.

Mandatory Reporting

The Board noted the proposed changes to the mandatory reporting requirements in the National Law that are expected to come into effect later this year. To support these changes, the Board has joined with all other National Boards to develop a set of guidelines to assist practitioners, employers and educators in complying with these new requirements. The Board expects to be consulting on these guidelines in the coming months and would appreciate feedback from stakeholders as part of this process.

National Scheme news

Company fined \$30,600 for unlawful advertising

Practitioners are reminded to be truthful in advertising their services after a Sydney company was convicted of 10 charges and fined \$30,600 for unlawful advertising.

The Running Clinic (Australia) Pty Ltd (formerly trading as the Heel Clinic), was convicted and fined for advertising offences under the National Law. It was fined \$30,600 and ordered to pay Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (AHPRA) costs of \$8,000.

AHPRA filed 10 charges against the company. It alleged that advertising claims on The Running Clinic's websites and Facebook account contained false, misleading and deceptive claims about podiatry services that were likely to create an unreasonable expectation of beneficial treatment.

AHPRA first raised the unlawful advertising with the company in 2015 and, while minor changes were made, it failed to significantly rectify the issues.

AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher welcomed the court outcome.

'Consumers have a right to expect that all registered health practitioners are truthful when advertising their services. This court outcome sends a clear message to anyone advertising a regulated health service that AHPRA will act if they break the law.'

Information about your advertising obligations are available on [the Board's](#) website.

Practitioners' responsibility to support public health programs

Australia's health regulators have reminded health practitioners about their responsibility to support public health programs, including vaccination.

Regulators have spoken out to support public safety, given mounting concerns about a five-year high in measles cases and an early spike in flu cases this year.

AHPRA and the National Boards for 16 professions have urged more than 740,000 registered health practitioners to take seriously their responsibilities for public health, including by helping patients to be protected from preventable illnesses.

AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher reminded practitioners that supporting public health programs, including vaccination and immunisation, and not promoting anti-vaccination views were regulatory responsibilities.

'Registered health practitioners have a regulatory responsibility to support patients to understand the evidence-based information available,' Mr Fletcher said.

National Boards set codes, standards and guidelines, including about protecting and promoting the health of individuals and the community, which they expect registered health practitioners to meet.

'Practitioners are of course entitled to hold personal beliefs, but they must ensure that they do not contradict or counter public health campaigns, including about the efficacy or safety of public health initiatives,' he said.

If practitioners do not comply and meet the professional standards set by their National Board, regulators can and do take action.

National Boards and AHPRA have taken action to manage risk to the public, in response to a number of concerns raised about practitioners (including medical practitioners, nurses and chiropractors) who have advocated against evidence-based vaccination programs. This has included restricting practitioners' practice pending further investigation, when there was a serious risk to the public.

Practitioners can read the [media release](#) on the AHPRA website.

Information Publications Scheme – promoting accessibility of our information

From 1 June 2019, AHPRA and National Boards are required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) established under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth). The IPS promotes openness and transparency and aims to reduce the number of Freedom of Information applications through the proactive publication of information. This requires that certain information and documents be made publicly available.

AHPRA and National Boards have worked together to implement the IPS and information has been recently published about it on the [AHPRA website](#).

Further information

The Board publishes a range of information for paramedics on its [website](#) and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting the podiatry profession.

For more information about registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Scheme, please refer to the information published on www.ahpra.gov.au. Alternatively, contact AHPRA by an [online enquiry form](#) or phone 1300 419 495.

Follow AHPRA on social media

Connect with AHPRA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to receive information about important topics for your profession and participate in the discussion.



Associate Professor Stephen Gough ASM
Chair, Paramedicine Board of Australia