



Communiqué

Medical Board of Australia meeting: 18 September 2013

The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Renewal of registration for 2013/14

The registration renewal date for medical practitioners with general, specialist and non-practising registration is 30 September 2013. By mid September, 77% of medical practitioners had renewed their registration online – on track with expectations and consistent with patterns from previous years.

The Board encourages practitioners to renew on time if they wish to continue to practise. Online renewal is quick and easy. There is a late fee for renewal applications received during October. Renewals received within a month of their registration expiry date will incur an additional late fee, which reflects the cost of managing late renewals. Under the National Law, practitioners who do not renew their registration within one month of their registration expiry date must be removed from the Register of medical practitioners. Their registration will lapse and they will not be able to practise medicine in Australia until a new application for registration is approved.

Practitioners who have provided an email address to the Board have been sent email reminders. Paper reminders have also been sent to practitioners who have not renewed.

The Board encourages medical practitioners to renew online.

Health Professions Agreement

The Board and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) have published the 2013/14 Health Profession Agreement (HPA) outlining the services that AHPRA will provide to the Board in 2013/14. Under the National Law, the Board and AHPRA work in partnership to implement the National Scheme, each with specific roles, powers and responsibilities set out in the National Law.

The guiding principles of the National Law require the National Scheme to operate in a 'transparent, accountable, efficient, effective and fair way'; and for registration fees to be reasonable 'having regard to the efficient and effective operation of the scheme'.

The Board and AHPRA are committed to transparent and accountable financial reporting. As AHPRA's reporting capability strengthens, more detailed information about the Board's financial operations and AHPRA's performance can be published. This complements the audited data and performance reporting included in the annual report. The Board can also provide more detailed information about how medical practitioners' registration fees are allocated to regulate the profession.

The Medical Board of Australia's HPA is available on the Board's website at: www.medicalboard.gov.au.

Quarterly data

One of the benefits of the National Scheme is that we now have national registers where we publish information about every registered health practitioner in Australia. It is now possible to produce accurate reports on the number of practitioners registered in each profession in Australia.

In 2012, the Board began publishing quarterly data profiling Australia's medical workforce, including a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants such as type of registration held, principal place of practice, endorsements and registrant age. The latest quarterly report is now available on the Board's [website](#) under 'news' and 'statistics'. All the Boards publish similar information about their health profession which is available on each Board's website.

Accreditation decisions

One of the objectives of the National Law is to facilitate the provision of high quality education and training of health practitioners. The accreditation function is the primary way of achieving this. The National Law defines the respective roles of the Board and its appointed accreditation authority, the Australian Medical Council (AMC), in the accreditation of medical schools and medical specialist colleges and in the development and approval of registration standards.

Accreditation of medical schools and specialist colleges

The AMC is responsible for accrediting individual programs of study after it is reasonably satisfied that:

1. the program of study meets an accreditation standard or
2. substantially meets an approved accreditation standard and the imposition of conditions on the approval will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time frame.

The AMC can also refuse to accredit a program of study. The AMC must give the Board a report after it decides to accredit a program of study (with or without conditions).

After being given an accreditation report, the Board may approve, or refuse to approve, the accredited program of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration. An approval may be granted subject to conditions.

Any changes to accredited programs of study must be approved by the Board.

The Board approved the following accredited programs of study:

Australasian College for Emergency Medicine

The Board approved the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine's (ACEM) accredited fellowship program in Emergency Medicine and continuing professional development program of the ACEM as providing a qualification for the purposes of specialist registration. Approval is until 31 December 2015.

University of Sydney

The Board approved the name change of the currently accredited medical program from Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) to the Doctor of Medicine (MD). The MBBS is in 'teach-out' phase, which means only currently enrolled students will complete this course. The MD will be introduced from 1 January 2014. Approval of the program continues until 31 December 2015.

National standards framework for intern training

As requested by the Board, the Australian Medical Council (AMC) is developing a national standards framework for intern training. The AMC and the Board have released a third joint newsletter on progress toward the development of the framework. The newsletter is available on both the Board's [website](#) and the [AMC website](#).

Dr Joanna Flynn AM

Chair, Medical Board of Australia

26 September 2013