

Media release

1 November 2013

2012/13 National Scheme Annual Report published

The 2012/13 Annual Report of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the National Boards has been published.

The report details the work of the National Boards and AHPRA in implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme over the 12 months to 30 June 2013.

There are now more than 590,000 health practitioners registered to practise in Australia – an increase in all professions and more than ever before – with one in 20 working Australians a registered health practitioner.

Medical Board of Australia Chair, Dr Joanna Flynn, said the past year had delivered many challenges while the Board worked hard to ensure effective medical regulation in Australia.

'While working behind the scenes to consolidate and develop many of the processes and polices needed for fair regulation, the Board consciously focuses on striking the right balance between public safety and facilitating access to health services,' Dr Flynn said.

The annual report reveals that:

- 95,690 medical practitioners were registered at the end of June 2013, an increase of around 4 per cent per annum in the three years since the National Scheme began
- there was a 14% increase in notifications across professions – 8,648 notifications were received, up from 7,549 (including NSW¹)
- there was a 33% increase in mandatory notifications – to 782 – with rates of mandatory reporting inconsistent across professions and states and territories
- 30% of all mandatory reports were about medical practitioners
- 54% of notifications were about medical practitioners (who are 16% of total practitioners)
- there were 4,709 notifications about medical practitioners (up from 4,001) – 1,677 lodged in NSW, 1,154 in Queensland and 989 in Victoria
- 4.2% of medical practitioners had a complaint made about them
- across Boards, 40% of notifications were about clinical care, 9% were about medications, 8% about health impairment, 6% about communication, 4% about boundary violation and 4% about documentation
- across Boards, 65% of mandatory reports were about standards (up 3%), 21% about impairment (down 6%), 8% about alcohol/drugs (up 2%) and 6% about sexual misconduct (up 1%)

¹ NSW is part of the National Scheme but notifications about practitioners' health, performance and conduct are handled by the [HCCC](#) and the NSW health professional councils supported by the [HPCA](#).

- 17% (130) of mandatory notifications led to immediate action by National Boards – consistent with NSW and 2012 data
- across Boards, 33% (1,857) of notifications came from Health Complaints Entities, 29% (1612) from the community, 12% (678) from another or treating practitioner and 11% (593) from an employer or hospital
- National Boards took immediate action 266 times during the year, and restricted a practitioners' registration in some way in 86% of cases
- the Medical Board of Australia took immediate action in 147 matters – leading to 31 suspensions, four surrenders of registration, 71 conditions imposed on registration and 21 undertakings from practitioners. The Board took no further action in 20 matters, and
- on June 30 2013, there were 54,226 medical practitioners with specialist registration. Of those, 47,210 also had general registration (87%) while 7,016 had only specialist registration.

AHPRA Agency Management Committee Chair Peter Allen said the National Scheme had a significant impact on the lives of many Australians – directly on all health practitioners who are registered to practise, and indirectly through our work to protect public safety and maintain professional standards.

'The ongoing, effective functioning of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme is a reflection of the partnership and collaboration between AHPRA and the National Boards,' Mr Allen said.

Dr Flynn said a Board priority this year was on progressing work to streamline the pathways for international medical graduates to make it easier for them to apply for registration, without compromising the rigor of assessment processes.

'We also started a conversation about whether we should consider introducing a revalidation process to ensure that all doctors who are on the register remain fit and competent to practise,' she said.

'The annual report explains the work we do, and accounts to the community and the health professions about how we do it,' she said.

The annual report is published on the [AHPRA website](#) under *Legislation and publications*.

It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Medical Board of Australia.

A media release about the report – with data across professions and jurisdictions – is published on the [AHPRA website](#).

For more information

- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
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