



Communiqué

Medical Board of Australia meeting: 20 November 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).

2012/13 Annual report

AHPRA and the National Boards have published the 2012/13 annual report. The 2013 annual report details the work of the National Boards over the 12 months to 30 June 2013. It contains a wealth of data about all the professions regulated through the National Scheme, as well as specifically about the medical profession. It provides useful insights into the work of the Board and AHPRA.

The 2012/13 Annual Report is available on the [AHPRA website](#) under 'Legislation and Publications'.

Renewal of registration for 2013/14

Medical practitioners with general, specialist or non-practising registration were due to renew their registration by 30 September 2013.

At the end of October 2013 (the end of the late period), 99% of medical practitioners had responded to the renewal campaign. More than 95% of registrants renewed online.

Medical practitioners with general or specialist registration who did not renew by 31 October 2013 can no longer practise as their registration lapsed on 1 November 2013. If they wish to keep practising they must make a new application for registration. The fast track registration process is available for one month (until 30 November 2013). A fast track application fee is payable in addition to a registration fee. If submitting a fast track application, a practitioner cannot practise until their application is approved and their registration details are updated on the national register.

Registration standards, codes and guidelines for review

The Board developed registration standards, codes and guidelines for the start of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010. These standards, codes and guidelines were scheduled for review at least every three years.

Registration standards

All National Boards have registration standards that define the requirements that applicants for registration and registrants need to meet to be registered.

The National Boards are currently consulting on the standards outlining:

- requirements about the **English language skills** necessary for an applicant for registration to be suitable for registration
- matters to be considered in deciding whether an individual's **criminal history** is relevant to the practice of medicine.

The consultation paper is available in the 'News' section of the Board's [website](#) under 'Current consultations'. This is an opportunity for practitioners and the community to provide feedback to the Board. The consultation closes on **23 December 2013**.

Review of Good Medical Practice

The Board recently reviewed its code of conduct, *Good Medical Practice – A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia*. The Board proposed minor changes to ensure the code reflects the current regulatory framework.

The Board consulted widely on the proposed changes. The consultation closed on 27 September 2013 and the Board received feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. The Board is now considering the feedback and is finalising the revised code. Submissions will be published on the Board's [website](#) shortly.

Guidance on clinical observerships

In response to queries from health care providers, the Board has developed guidance on clinical observerships. The National Law does not define clinical observers, but observerships are most often undertaken by international medical students or international medical graduates who wish to familiarise themselves with the Australian medical system.

The guidance is provided to help health care providers decide whether clinical observers should be registered under the National Law. The guidance should be read in conjunction with the Board's published statement on *Medical Registration – What does it mean? Who should be registered?*.

The guidance is currently being finalised and will be available soon on the Board's [website](#) under 'FAQ and Fact Sheets'.

Upcoming vacancies for the state and territory boards of the Medical Board of Australia

The Board has established boards in every state and territory. These boards act under delegation from the National Board and make decisions about applications for registration and about notifications about individual practitioners in their jurisdiction. Their decisions are informed by policies and standards set by the National Board. AHPRA, which works in partnership with the National Board, advertises board vacancies and provides support for the appointment process. The Health Minister in each jurisdiction appoints the board.

For more information about the vacancies in your jurisdiction visit our [Board Member Recruitment page](#) or for enquiries email boardappoint@ahpra.gov.au.

Applications close 20 January 2014. Existing Board members are eligible to apply for re-appointment.

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.

The AMC accredited the following programs of study and on that basis, the Board approved the accredited programs of study as providing a qualification for the purpose of registration:

University of Western Australia

The accredited medical programs are the:

- Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (six year course) – approved to 31 December 2017
- Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (four and a half year course) – approved to 31 December 2017
- Doctor of Medicine (four year course) - approved to 31 December 2018.

University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney)

The accredited medical program is the:

- Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (four year course) - approved to 31 December 2017.

Accreditation of post graduate medical councils

Under the National Law, an applicant for general registration who has an approved qualification is, among other things, required to have successfully completed any period of supervised practice in the profession required by an approved registration standard.

The Board has an approved registration standard for granting general registration as a medical practitioner to Australian and New Zealand medical graduates on completion of intern training. This standard defines the supervised practice that applicants for general registration are required to complete and states that all terms 'must be accredited against approved accreditation standards for intern training positions by an authority approved by the Board'.

At the request of the Board, the AMC has undertaken work to implement a national standards framework for intern training. Under the national framework, the AMC will review and accredit the authorities that accredit intern training programs in each jurisdiction. These authorities are commonly known as postgraduate medical councils (PMCs). The PMCs will be accredited against the *Procedures for Assessment and Accreditation of Intern Training Accreditation Authorities*.

The AMC will provide an accreditation report to the Board after it decides whether to accredit each PMC (with or without conditions). After being given an accreditation report, the Board will decide whether to approve the PMC as an intern accreditation authority.

As this is a new process, the AMC has conducted a pilot with two PMCs to review their performance against the draft *Procedures for Assessment and Accreditation of Intern Training Accreditation Authorities*.

Similarly to the process used when specialist colleges were first accredited, the remaining PMCs will provide a report to the AMC which will form the basis of a recommendation on initial accreditation and approval. This initial accreditation and approval will continue until the AMC completes a formal review.

South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory Council

The Board approved the South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory Council as an authority that accredits intern positions until 31 December 2018.

Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania

The Board approved the Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania as an authority that accredits intern positions until 31 December 2018.

Dr Joanna Flynn AM
Chair, Medical Board of Australia

29 November 2013