

Communiqué

March 2016 meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

The Occupational Therapy 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).

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

This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the work of the Board.

Board appointments

Health Ministers announced the Board's new Chair and member appointments in March 2016. The Board welcomes Ms Rachael Kay as a new practitioner member from South Australia. Ms Kay's appointment is from 1 March 2016 to 1 July 2017.

I have the pleasure of advising that I was appointed as Chair of the Board to 1 July 2017, a role I was pleased to accept.

The Board also extends its sincere thanks to outgoing practitioner member for Victoria, Ms Kate MacRae. The Board acknowledges Ms MacRae's dedication to and work on the National Scheme.

Board appointments

The Board is calling for applications for appointment as a practitioner member from Victoria. All appointments are made by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory. Appointments are for up to three years as decided by the Ministerial Council. More information and a candidate information pack is available on the Board's [website](#). Applications close Monday, 18 April 2016.

Registration standard review update

The Board received a project update regarding its review of the registration standards for continuing professional development, recency of practice and professional indemnity insurance arrangements. A suite of consultation material relating to these standards is being finalised and the Board anticipates preliminary consultation will start in March 2016.

Competency standards development project

The Board is progressing with its development of new competency standards for the profession. Meetings of the Board's Competency Standards Advisory Panel and Competency Standards Reference Group have been held and have informed the first stage in the development of draft standards for the profession. The Board anticipates it will begin preliminary consultation in the coming months and looks forward to working with the profession on this important piece of work.

La Trobe University accreditation of programs

The Board has agreed to approve the accreditation of the following programs offered by La Trobe University:

- Bachelor of Applied Science and Master of Occupational Therapy Practice offered at the Bendigo and Melbourne Campuses
- Bachelor of Health Science and Master of Occupational Therapy Practice offered at the Bendigo and Melbourne Campuses
- Master of Occupational Therapy Practice offered at the Bendigo and Melbourne Campuses, and
- Bachelor of Psychological Sciences and Master of Occupational Therapy Practice offered at the Melbourne Campus

This decision was based on advice received from the [Occupational Therapy Council \(Australia and New Zealand\)](#).

Review of registration standards

The Board received further advise on the review of registration standards and noted that it will further opportunities to review consultation material, prior to the Board undertaking preliminary consultation later in 2016.

National awareness campaign

As advised in the Board's February communiqué you may have seen the beginning of the AHPRA national awareness campaign. **Know your obligations**, the first of three phases, directed at employers of health practitioners, launched at the close of last year. The message has been shared over social media through targeted ads resulting in a doubling of our online community.

The Board noted that the next phase of the campaign is targeted at practitioners. Under the headline of **The not-so-small print**, practitioners are encouraged to stay up to date with regulation changes as they occur, and to be aware of their obligations as registered practitioners. Advertisements will be rolled out later this month across a mix of social media, industry publications and newsletters.

The final phase will be directed at the public to increase awareness of the [national register of practitioners](#).

Employer obligations

If you employ registered health practitioners, you have an important obligation to ensure that they hold current registration and that you understand your mandatory notification requirements under the National Law.

AHPRA has published [resources](#) to help you understand and meet your obligations, which are designed to complement your recruitment requirements and processes. These materials state exactly what your obligations are and it is important that you are familiar with them.

Keeping in touch with the Board

The Board publishes a range of information about registration and its expectations of practitioners on its website at www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au. Practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policy and guidelines affecting their profession.

Julie Brayshaw

Chair

Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

22 March 2016