

Communiqué

14 October 2019

September 2019 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.

The Board met on 22 September 2019 at the AHPRA Office in Melbourne.

Review of registration standards

Following a scheduled review and wide-ranging consultation the Board, along with five other National Boards, has reviewed the following registration standards:

- *Registration standard: Continuing professional development (CPD)*
- *Registration standard: Recency of practice (ROP), and*
- *Registration standard: Professional indemnity insurance arrangements (PII).*

The revised registration standards for CPD, ROP and PII were approved by the Council of Australian Government (COAG) Health Council on 30 June 2019. They will take effect on 1 December 2019 to align with the renewal cycle and the current registration standards will be retired from that day.

The revised registration standards will apply to all registered occupational therapists and applicants at initial registration (except for the CPD standard, which does not apply at initial registration). At registration renewal:

- in **November 2019**, occupational therapists will declare whether they met the requirements of the current registration standards, and
- in **November 2020**, occupational therapists will declare whether they met the requirements of the revised registration standards.

Advance copies of the revised registration standards have been published on the [Board's website](#) for occupational therapists to familiarise themselves with the revised requirements.

The Board is continuing to work towards a smooth and effective implementation on 1 December 2019. The Board will soon publish the revised *Guidelines: continuing professional development* which provide additional information for occupational therapists about how to meet the revised CPD registration standard. The guidelines aim to help occupational therapists with:

- understanding the importance of CPD in staying up to date, maintaining safe practice and improving patient/client outcomes
- choosing effective CPD activities that meet the CPD standard, and
- keeping CPD portfolios recording learning goals, CPD activities and reflections.

All supporting materials related to the revised registration standards are currently being reviewed and will be published shortly.

Meeting with the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner

The Board met with Ms Richelle McCausland, Ombudsman and Commissioner to discuss the work of the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner (NHPOPC). This meeting was a very valuable opportunity to hear more about the complaint process and the nature of complaints being dealt by the NHPOPC.

Getting to know your colleague – information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice profession

Members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board (ATSIHPBA) attended part of the Board meeting to discuss the work of ATSIHPBA and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice profession.

The ATSIHPBA wants to help the occupational therapy profession in understanding the value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners can bring to Australian healthcare to make it culturally safe and help close the gap.

The ATSIHPBA would like to continue to work with National Boards, AHPRA and health professionals to help spread the word about their culturally safe workforce which is qualified, competent, registered and ready to go to work in both clinical and non-clinical roles.

There are some things that health professionals can do to help:

- **Ask a question:** ask your health service, employer or other team members, ‘how many Aboriginal Health Practitioners do we employ?’ or ‘Did you know we could make our practice more culturally safe by employing an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner, and do our bit towards closing the gap?’
- **Make them a priority:** Prioritise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health workforce agenda.
- **Share the message:** Distribute the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice [profession brochures](#) explaining their role to employers.

Engaging the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce to work in partnership with occupational therapists is a key opportunity to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

If you would like to find out more about the profession please contact Executive Officer, Jill Humphreys at jill.humphreys@ahpra.gov.au or visit the [ATSIHPBA website](#).

Approval of programs of study

The Board agreed to approve the following programs of study accredited by the Occupational Therapy Council of Australia Ltd and offered by Monash University in Victoria until 31 December 2024:

- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (Honours), and
- Master of Occupational Therapy Practice.

The [list of approved programs of study](#) will be updated to reflect the Board’s approval.

Webinar for soon-to-be graduates

On 26 August 2019, Julie Brayshaw, Board Chair, hosted the third annual webinar for new or soon-to-be occupational therapy graduates about to apply for initial registration with the Board. The following topics were covered during the webinar:

- the role of the Board and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- the registration process, including:
 - when and how to apply
 - registration costs
 - how to contact AHPRA, and
- the obligations of registered occupational therapists.

The recording of the webinar, the presentation slides, the transcript of the webinar and related FAQs are now published on the Board's [website](#). Occupational therapy students have been informed of the webinar publication on the Board's website.

Newsletter from the Board

The latest Board's newsletter has been sent to all registered occupational therapists. The Board's newsletter is also published on its [website](#).

National Scheme update

Public consultation open on key guidelines and framework

Three consultations have recently been launched on revised guidance to help practitioners and others understand their mandatory notification obligations, understand their obligations when advertising a regulated health service and to support a responsive and risk-based approach to supervised practice.

The Board, together with other National Boards and AHPRA, are consulting on revised policy guidance on three major areas to replace current guidance, including:

- the revised *Guidelines: Mandatory notifications about registered health practitioners* and the *Guidelines: Mandatory notifications about health students*
- the revised *Guidelines on advertising regulated health services*, and
- the proposed *Supervised practice framework*.

To ensure the community, health practitioners and stakeholders have the chance to respond to all three consultations the closing dates for public consultation have been staggered and will close as follows:

- Public consultation on the mandatory notifications guidelines will close on 6 November 2019.
- Public consultation on the advertising guidelines will close on 26 November 2019.
- Public consultation on the supervised practice framework will close on 17 December 2019.

The consultation papers are available on the Current Consultations webpage of the [Board's website](#). Feedback is invited from the community, health practitioners and stakeholders.

Are your contact details up-to-date?

It is important that your contact details are up-to-date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board. You can check your details via the Login icon at the top right of the AHPRA website. Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

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.



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

15 October 2019