



Pharmacy Board of Australia

REGISTRATION STANDARD: PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

1 July 2016

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Summary

This registration standard explains the Pharmacy Board of Australia's (Board) requirements for professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements under the National Law.

Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all registered practising pharmacists with general, limited or provisional registration. Practitioners can be covered by their own or third party PII arrangements.

It does not apply to students or pharmacists with non-practising registration.

What must I do?

1. When you practise as a pharmacist, you must be covered by your own or third party PII arrangements that meet this standard:
 - a. for all aspects of your practice
 - b. that cover all locations where you practise
 - c. that provide cover for you whether you are working in the private, non-government and/or public sector, and
 - d. that provide cover for you whether you are practising full-time, part-time, self-employed, employed, or in an unpaid or volunteer capacity, or any combination of these factors.
2. Your PII cover must include:
 - a. civil liability cover
 - b. appropriate retroactive cover for otherwise uncovered matters arising from prior practice, and
 - c. automatic reinstatement

or

 - d. the equivalent of 2a to 2c above under third party PII arrangements.
3. If you are covered by a third party PII arrangement, it must meet this standard. If you are in any doubt

about whether the third party cover meets this standard, you should always ask what is covered by the third party PII arrangement.

If the third party cover does not meet this standard you must take out additional cover to ensure this standard is met.

4. If any area of your practice is specifically excluded from your PII cover, you must not practise in that area.
5. If your PII arrangements are provided by your employer, and you intend to practise outside your stated employment, you must have individual PII arrangements in place to cover that practice, including undertaking practical components of continuing professional development.

Amount of cover

1. You are required to have PII arrangements that include a level of cover not less than \$20 million for any single claim (that is, for each claim), or for all claims in the aggregate, that may be made against you.
2. You are expected to conduct a self-assessment and seek expert insurance advice (such as from your insurer) or legal advice to ensure that you have appropriate cover for your individual practice and the risks involved.

Factors that you should consider include:

- a. your practice setting and the type of services and care you deliver
- b. the patient or client groups involved
- c. the volume of patients or clients to whom treatment, advice, guidance or care is provided
- d. current employment status
- e. previous history of insurance claims and the type of claims made against you in the past, if any
- f. your experience practising the profession
- g. any advice from professional indemnity insurers, professional associations and industrial organisations, including advice about the history

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and volume of professional liability claims experience by other members of the profession, and

- h. any advice from an insurance broker or insurer.

Are there exemptions to this standard?

There are no exemptions to this standard. The National Law requires you to have appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place when you practise as a pharmacist.

What does this mean for me?

The National Law provides that a registered health practitioner must not practise his/her profession unless appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements are in force in relation to the practitioner's practice of the profession (section 129 of the National Law).

When you apply for registration

When you apply for registration as a pharmacist, you must declare that you will not practise the profession unless you have professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place that meet this standard. This is a requirement under the National Law.

When you apply for renewal

1. You will be required to declare annually at renewal:
 - a. whether during the preceding period of registration, you practised the profession in accordance with the requirements of this standard, and
 - b. that you will not practise the profession unless you have professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place that meet this standard.

During the registration period

1. You must notify the Board within seven days if you no longer have appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place in relation to your

practice that meet the requirements of this standard (section 130 of the National Law).

2. Your compliance with this standard may be audited from time to time.

When you cease practice

1. When you decide to cease practice, you must take out appropriate run-off cover for matters that would otherwise be uncovered arising from previous practice as a registered pharmacist.

Evidence

The Board may, at any time, require you to provide evidence that you have the appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place.

On the Board's request, you must be able to produce documentary evidence that insurance cover was held for the period practised during the current registration period and/or the previous three full registration periods.

If requested by the Board, the following evidence will be accepted:

- if covered by private insurance, documentary evidence from an insurer in your name, and/or
- if covered by a third party insurance arrangement, documentation from the third party, such as a certified copy of the certificate of currency or a letter from the third party.

What happens if I don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- the Board can impose a condition or conditions on your registration or can refuse your application for registration or renewal of registration when you don't meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for pharmacy (sections 82 and 112 of the National Law)
- practising without appropriate PII arrangements, or failing to notify the Board within seven days that

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appropriate PII arrangements are no longer in place, is not an offence but may be behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken (section 129 and 130 of the National Law), and

- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice for pharmacy (section 41 of the National Law).

More information

Health practitioners should be aware that the provision of professional indemnity insurance (PII) to health professionals is generally governed by the *Medical Indemnity (Prudential Supervision and Products Standards) Act 2003 (Cth)*, with some exceptions.

An insurer providing PII to health professionals must generally be registered with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). Health practitioners who are taking out their own professional indemnity insurance are advised to ensure that:

- a. their PII provider is registered with APRA as a general insurer or that it is a Lloyd's underwriter (APRA's website contains a list of registered general insurers), and
- b. their professional indemnity insurance is provided through a contract of insurance.

Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 27 August 2015.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide-ranging consultation.

Definitions

Automatic reinstatement is a provision in policies which allows for the limit of indemnity (amount insured) to be reinstated for new, unrelated claims, after one or more claims has been paid to the limit of the indemnity.

Civil liability insurance means insurance that covers the costs of liability incurred by the insured arising from civil claims seeking compensation for personal injury, harm or loss incurred, where the claim arises directly from an alleged act, error or omission committed in the conduct of the practitioner's practice or professional business during the policy period. Civil liability cover includes cover for legal expenses incurred in defence or settlement of a civil claim and for damages payable.

Claims made policy means a policy that is in place at the time the claim is made, or when the circumstances that gave rise to the claim were notified to the insurer with prior events covered by continuity of cover, retroactive clauses, and/or run-off cover, whichever is applicable in the circumstances.

National Law means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

Occurrence-based policy means a policy that is in place when the event which is the subject of the claim occurred, even if the policy has not been renewed.

Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a pharmacist in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients; working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles; and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

Professional indemnity insurance arrangements means arrangements that secure for the practitioner's professional practice insurance against civil liability incurred by, or loss arising from, a claim that is made as a result of a negligent act, error or omission in the conduct of the practitioner. This type of insurance is available to practitioners and organisations across a range of industries and covers the cost and expenses of defending a legal claim, as well as any damages payable. Some government organisations under policies of the owning government are self-insured for the same range of matters.

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Retroactive cover means PII arrangements which cover the insured against claims arising out of or in consequence of activities that were undertaken in the course of the practitioner's professional practice, prior to the date of the commencement of the insurance.

Run-off cover means insurance that protects a practitioner who has ceased a particular practice against claims that arise out of or are a consequence of activities that were undertaken when he/she was conducting that practice. This type of cover may be included in a PII policy or may need to be purchased separately.

Third party cover means the cover that an individual holds through a third party's insurance arrangement, such as through an employer, education provider or union.

Review

This standard will be reviewed at least every five years.

Last reviewed: 1 July 2016

This standard replaces the previous registration standard dated 1 July 2010.