



Communiqué

Sixth Meeting of the Pharmacy Board of Australia 26 March 2010

The sixth meeting of the Pharmacy Board of Australia was held on 26 March 2010 in Melbourne. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*.

As in previous meetings, in its sixth meeting the Board focused on the matters it had to resolve before the commencement of the national registration and accreditation scheme on 1 July 2010.

Guidelines consultation

The Board released guidelines for consultation in March and submissions close on 7 April 2010. The Board will consider feedback provided through the consultation process at its April meeting and use this to inform the final guidelines that will be published on its website. The Board is also considering development of additional guidelines through its Policies, Codes and Guidelines Committee.

Accreditation

The Board continued its work on developing an accreditation agreement with the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC). The agreement is anticipated to include services such as the accreditation of pharmacy programs of study leading to qualification for registration, accreditation of intern training programs, accreditation of preceptor training programs, organisations to accredit providers of continuing professional development (CPD) programs and the assessment of overseas trained pharmacists seeking registration. The Board approved the accreditation standards for intern training programs, which the APC will use to assess programs that commence in 2011.

Registration examinations

The Board confirmed the registration examination requirements for interns which will apply from 1 July 2010. Minimal changes will be made to the examinations process for the current cohort of interns who will undertake registration examinations under the new scheme during 2010.

Oral examinations will be conducted in each jurisdiction by staff who transition to state and territory offices of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Transitioning staff will also be a point of contact for interns and preceptors about supervised practice matters of a serious nature, which will be reported to the Board

Interns in 2010 will be required to pass the Australian Pharmacy Competency Assessment Tool (APCAT) before being eligible to undertake the oral examination. Eligibility criteria, examination rules and other information about the examinations will be published by the Board after 1 July 2010. The Board through its Examinations Committee will develop a national oral examination to commence from 1 January 2011.

Transition information

The Board considered the 2010 - 2011 registration fees at its March meeting and will announce fees in April.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia will be writing to every registered pharmacist in late April, to support the transition of all registrants into the national scheme. The letter will explain each practitioner's registration type from 1 July 2010. The letter will detail the information that will appear on the online national Register of Pharmacists. The Board is urging all pharmacists to make sure the contact details held by their current State or Territory Board are accurate and up to date before 30 June 2010.

The Board made a range of decisions about this transition process. In general, pharmacists will transition to the category of registration that matches their current registration. All registrants should check the registration category allocated to them in the April letter and provide feedback to AHPRA if they believe there are any errors.

A committee of the Board will consider cases in which registrants believe there is an error in the proposed registration type allocated to them, so these issues can be finalised before 1 July 2010.

Current State and Territory Boards

The Board previously decided that it would not require state and territory boards. However, it recognises the skill and experience of current board members and is keen to retain this in the transition to the national scheme. The Board will write to current Board members seeking expressions of interest to serve on panels under the national registration scheme.

Proof of identity

From 1 July 2010, new applicants for registration will be required to meet the Board's proof of identity requirements which relies on a 100-point check, consistent with the Attorney General's standard. A list of Authorised Officers will be provided to enable applicants to have their documents certified.

Stephen Marty
Chair
6 April 2010