



# Communiqué

**2 March 2012**

The Pharmacy Board of Australia met on 24 February 2012 at the national office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

## **Dispensing PBS prescriptions at pharmacies not approved to dispense pharmaceutical benefits**

The Board has a policy addressing the issue of supply of medications from pharmacies not approved to dispense pharmaceutical benefits, as has been advised in previous communiqués.

The National Health Act 1953 and the National Health (Pharmaceutical Benefits) Regulations dictate that only pharmacists practising at 'approved' pharmacies can supply pharmaceutical benefits.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Division of the Department of Health and Ageing have agreed to fund the production of signage to be displayed at pharmacies which, although licensed under relevant State/Territory laws and regulations as pharmacies, are not approved to supply pharmaceutical benefits (these premises are referred to as 'unapproved' pharmacies).

Information leaflets will also be produced for patients having their medication dispensed at such pharmacies. These will explain how these patients may be affected by not having access to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme by frequenting unapproved pharmacies.

The explanatory material will be funded by Medicare Australia and distributed to the unapproved pharmacies by the pharmacy approval authorities in each state and territory.

Unapproved pharmacies are to display this signage and make the information leaflets available to their patients.

**Any supply arrangements which infringe on patient rights or put the patient at risk and which may result in a poor health outcome (for instance by not providing an opportunity for adequate communication of essential information between patient and pharmacist), may be grounds for investigation and action by the Board under the National Law.**

## **Code of conduct for registered health practitioners**

The Board has decided to consult on an amendment to the *Code of conduct for registered health practitioners* which will be published shortly for comment. The Board will seek feedback on whether the code of conduct should include an amendment (the addition of a paragraph) which addresses the relevance of codes of ethics to pharmacists in practice. The Board will not consult on the current content of the *Code of conduct for registered health practitioners* during this consultation period as it will be reviewing this document by June 2013.

## **Compounding Working Party**

The Board's Compounding Working Party reported to the Board in February. The Working Party is in the process of developing an indicative curriculum for complex compounding. The work plan of the working party includes the mapping of the indicative curriculum to

competency standards. The working party is making ongoing progress in developing the Board's current guideline on extemporaneous dispensing (compounding).

#### **Pharmacy degree program accreditation standards review**

The Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) has commenced a review of the accreditation standards for pharmacy programs in Australia. The Board directed APC to conduct the review which will build on existing accreditation standards and will include a comparison against international standards. Details of the review are available on APC's website ([www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/content/index.php?id=37](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/content/index.php?id=37)) and include the dates and locations of public consultation workshops. APC will complete the review and submit revised accreditation standards to the Board for approval by 30 November 2012.

#### **Labelling of Dose Administration Aids (DAAs)**

The Board previously advised an amendment to Guideline 1 (Dose Administration Aids) of the *Guidelines on specialised supply arrangements* in relation to labelling of Dose Administration Aids (DAAs). The Board advised that best practice is to include both active ingredient and brand name but when circumstances necessitate such as space limitations, that the active ingredient/Australian approved name be used. The Board amended the *Guidelines on specialised supply arrangements* which provides this clarification. The guidelines are published on the Board's website ([www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx](http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx)).

Stephen Marty  
Chair  
2 March 2012