



Communiqué

28 June 2013

The Pharmacy Board of Australia (the Board) met on 21 June 2013 at the national office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

Guides on notifications (complaints)

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has published new guides for health practitioners and the community about how notifications are managed in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

The *Guide for practitioners* and a series of information sheets aim to explain to practitioners what happens when AHPRA receives a notification on behalf of a National Board. The information complements the direct correspondence that individuals receive if a notification is made about them.

AHPRA has also developed a guide for the community about making a complaint (or notification) about a health practitioner. This *Guide for notifiers: Do you have a concern about a health practitioner? A guide for people raising a concern* will be a focus of review by the newly-established Community Reference Group for AHPRA and the National Boards.

Both guides are published online on the AHPRA [website](#) in a revised section on complaints and notifications. AHPRA collaborated with the professional associations for practitioners registered in the National Scheme to develop the guide for practitioners.

Community Reference Group

Community voices will be heard at the very heart of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme) with the establishment of a Community Reference Group to work with AHPRA and the National Boards - the first time a national group of this kind has been established in Australia.

Seven members from the community, who are not health practitioners, have been appointed to the group, which will be chaired by Mr Paul Laris, a community member on two Boards in the National Scheme.

The group will have a number of roles, including providing feedback, information and advice on strategies for building better knowledge in the community about health practitioner regulation, but also advising AHPRA on how to better understand, and most importantly, meet, community needs.

Further information can be accessed on the AHPRA [website](#).

Supervised practice arrangements registration standard – preceptor training

The Board advised in its December 2012 communiqué that it has decided to consult on the requirement for preceptor training that was scheduled to automatically begin on 1 July 2013, as stated in the Board's current [Supervised practice arrangements registration standard](#) (the standard).

The current standard outlined that from 1 July 2013, the Board would require preceptors to have completed accredited preceptor training within the previous three years to be eligible to conduct a period of supervised practice. The Board wishes to confirm that its intention to consult on this issue as part of the review of the standard will mean that this requirement will not be introduced on 1 July 2013.

A revised draft standard will be released for consultation in the coming months. Once finalised, subsequent to consideration of consultation feedback, the standard will be submitted to the the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) for approval in accordance with the requirements under the National Law.

In the meantime, preceptors are encouraged to review their learning needs in relation to supervising interns, and access suitable preceptor training courses which address the competencies relevant to supervision, as outlined in the National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia, 2010.

Approval of supervised practice

The [Supervised practice arrangements registration standard](#) (the standard) outlines a number of requirements including:

- an individual must be registered by the Board to undertake the period of supervised practice required for initial general registration
- each period of supervised practice is undertaken under the direction and/or supervision of a preceptor approved by the Board for a minimum period of 152 hours
- (for interns) supervised practice hours may be undertaken from the date of commencement of supervised practice or from the date of publication of final results of an approved pharmacy program, whichever is later.

Supervised practice is accepted by the Board if an *Application - approval of supervised practice as a pharmacist* (available on the Board's [website](#)) has been submitted and approved prior to the commencement of supervised practice. The Board was disappointed to note that a number of interns and their preceptors failed to comply with the requirements of the standard.

The Board confirms that failure to comply with all requirements outlined in the standard, including obtaining Board approval prior to commencement of supervised practice, may result in completed supervised practice hours not being accepted by the Board for general registration. The Board considers a failure to comply with its registration standards to be a serious matter.

Recency of Practice – What is required to satisfy the Board?

Pharmacists are required to maintain regular practice experience in their scope of practice as part of the process of maintaining competence to practise and providing services to the public.

The Board's [Recency of Practice registration standard](#) (the standard) outlines the practice requirements to be met by applicants to be eligible for general registration and renewal of general registration.

The standard outlines that pharmacists who have not practised pharmacy for more than 450 hours within the previous three years are required to provide evidence to satisfy the Board of their current competence to practise. To meet the minimum practice requirements specified in the standard, the applicant's practice must have occurred in Australia and/or New Zealand given the mutual recognition arrangements in place.

Upon considering an application for general registration or renewal of general registration where the applicant has not met the standard (completed 450 hours of practice within the previous three years), the Board (or its delegate) will decide whether to propose to impose conditions on general registration.

The proposed conditions are determined after consideration of information provided by the practitioner and will be a result of reflection on any or all of the following:

- how long since they last practised
- where they last practised
- how often they practised
- which country they last practised in, if not Australia or NZ
- what their scope of practice will entail when they return to practice.

The evidence of competence to practice required by the Board may be in the form of evidence of supervised practice, completion of education courses, and/or assessment. The Board may therefore set conditions on the applicant's general registration, for example, to successfully complete any combination of the following:

- a defined number of approved supervised practice hours
- competency assessment (an oral practice assessment, an oral legislation assessment or any other assessment)
- education courses (for example the annual continuing professional development requirement for pharmacists, or other courses).

All supervised practice must comply with the Board's [Supervised practice arrangements registration standard](#).

The aim of imposing conditions on general registration in these circumstances is to ensure that the pharmacist is able to practise safely within their scope of practice and to satisfy the Board that the public is protected.

The applicant is notified of the proposal to impose conditions on their general registration and is given the opportunity to make a written or verbal submission within 30 days which if made, will be considered by the Board before finalising its decision on the application. Once conditions are imposed, these are noted on the Register of pharmacists which can be accessed through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) [website](#). Conditions are removed by the Board once evidence is provided to AHPRA that the requirements specified in the conditions have been satisfactorily completed.

Stephen Marty
Chair
28 June 2013