



Communiqué

5 December 2013

The Pharmacy Board of Australia met on 22 November 2013 at the national office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

Health Profession Agreement

The Board and AHPRA have published the health profession agreement (HPA) that outlines the services that AHPRA will provide to the Board in 2013/14. The HPA details the fees payable by pharmacists, the annual budget of the Board and the services provided by AHPRA that enable the Board to carry out its functions under the National Law.

The *2013/14 Pharmacy Board of Australia and AHPRA Health Profession Agreement* is available for review on the Board's [website](#).

Pharmacy renewal now in late period

Pharmacists across Australia were reminded by AHPRA and the Board that their registration was due for renewal **by 30 November 2013**. By 1 December 94 per cent of pharmacists had renewed and 1 per cent had 'opted out'. Of those renewing, 96 per cent had done so online.

If a pharmacist did not renew their registration on time, they can still renew until **31 December 2013**, but a late fee will apply. The quickest and easiest way to renew registration is [online](#).

Under the National Law¹, if registration is not renewed by 31 December 2013 registration will lapse. The name will be removed from the Register of Pharmacists. This means that the person must make a new application for registration. They will **not be able to practise** until their application has been finalised and their details added to the [online public register](#). This has serious implications for pharmacists who are owners of pharmacy businesses.

Pharmacists who do not want to renew their registration to keep practising can simply ignore the reminders from AHPRA or go online to 'opt out' of renewing. Using the 'opt out' service puts a stop to renewal reminders.

An FAQ about renewal is available on the [Pharmacy Board website](#).

Pharmacy Board Newsletter

The Board sent an electronic newsletter providing an update on a range of Board activities and practice related issues to all registered pharmacists in late November. A copy of the newsletter can be accessed on the Board's [website](#).

Directing or inciting unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct

From time-to-time, the Board is advised by pharmacists that during the course of their practice, they are issued directives by non pharmacists or are denied the opportunity to make decisions on certain day-to-day practice issues. Action by non-pharmacists (such as managerial staff) which impinges on the ability of pharmacists' to meet their legal and ethical responsibilities may be subject to action under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National law).

¹ The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Determining:

- the location of scheduled medicines for sale in community pharmacies
- whether to supply generic brands of Schedule 4 medicines (or specific brands), and
- how regulated health services and therapeutic goods are advertised

are some of the examples of practice issues that pharmacists have advised that non-pharmacists have assumed authority for in practice.

Pharmacists who fail to meet their legal, professional and ethical obligations under National Law may be subject to voluntary or mandatory notifications (complaints). These may lead to investigation. As a result of an investigation the Board or its delegate can make a range of decisions based on the allegations, facts and evidence. This could include a finding of unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct as defined in the National Law. Further information can be accessed on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation agency (AHPRA) website (www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Fact-sheets.aspx).

The Board wishes to draw pharmacists' attention to s136 of the National Law which outlines that there are serious consequences for an individual (or corporate entity) who directs or incites a pharmacist to do anything in the course of practising pharmacy that amounts to unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct.

Vaccination

The Board noted the work undertaken on its behalf by the Advanced Practice Framework Steering Committee and has advised that in its opinion vaccination is within the current scope of practice of a pharmacist. However, further work regarding competence to do so, standards, training and where this may take place will need to be completed before vaccination by a pharmacist will be able to occur.

Stephen Marty
Chair
5 December 2013