

## Communiqué

**25 November 2015**

The Pharmacy Board of Australia (the Board) meets each month to consider and decide on any matters related to its regulatory function under the National Law<sup>1</sup> and within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the work of the Board and matters regarding the National Scheme. Please forward it on to colleagues and employees who may be interested in its content.

### November 2015 Board meeting

The Board's November meeting was held in Melbourne on 19 and 20 November 2015. In addition to addressing routine matters, the board conducted a planning session to initiate work to develop its regulatory work plan for 2016-17. This work, which will continue in the coming months, will inform the development of the Board's budget for 2016-17.

### Reminder: renewal of registration for 2015/16 is due 30 November 2015

There are only a few days remaining for pharmacists to renew their registration by the 30 November 2015 registration expiry date. At 25 November 2015, 74 per cent of pharmacists had renewed, of which 98.7 per cent had done so online.

Pharmacists who do not renew registration by then will be able to renew their registration during December 2015; however, a late fee must be paid in addition to the renewal of registration fee.

Under the National Law, if registration is not renewed by 31 December 2015 registration will lapse. The individual's 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.

### Video and PowerPoint for pharmacy students and graduates released

The Board has launched a three minute video which outlines the steps graduates need to take to gain provisional registration and complete an internship to be eligible to apply for general registration.

The video is a quick and easy way for graduates and students close to finishing their studies to find out what they need to do before applying for provisional registration and starting their supervised practice.

In addition to outlining the standards graduates must meet to become registered, the video also includes information about the ongoing obligations for pharmacists.

The Board has also released a PowerPoint, 'Provisional registration for internship – Requirements and responsibilities'. It explains in further detail the information touched on in the video.

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<sup>1</sup> The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law)

The video and PowerPoint are available on the [Internships](#) page of the Board's website.

### **Revised standards and CPD guidelines for pharmacists effective 1 December 2015**

Pharmacists are reminded that the following [revised standards and guidelines](#) for pharmacists come into effect on 1 December 2015:

- Registration standard: Continuing professional development (CPD)
- Guidelines on continuing professional development
- Registration standard: Recency of practice (RoP)
- Registration standard: Supervised practice arrangements, and
- Registration standard: Examinations for eligibility for general registration.

Pharmacists holding general registration will need to meet the obligations of the revised CPD and RoP standards by the next registration renewal period on 30 November 2016.

The Board conducts random audits of pharmacists' compliance with its registration standards. Pharmacists must therefore maintain suitable records to ensure that if audited, satisfactory evidence of compliance can be provided. If selected for audit, a pharmacist will receive a letter during the registration period (subsequent to the renewal period) with further instructions about providing the required information.

### **Revised guidelines effective 7 December 2015**

Revised guidelines published by the Board in September will come into effect on 7 December 2015.

The revised guidelines provide guidance to the profession on a range of issues. The early release of the guidelines was so pharmacists could become familiar with their content before implementation.

The revised guidelines are the:

- Guidelines for dispensing of medicines
- Guidelines on practice-specific issues
  - Guideline 1 Reference texts for pharmacists
- Guidelines on dose administration aids and staged supply of dispensed medicines, and
- Guidelines for proprietor pharmacists.

Some of the changes to the guidelines were [highlighted](#) by the Board in September.

Under section 41 of the National Law<sup>1</sup>, Board guidelines can be used in disciplinary proceedings under the National Law or law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction, as evidence of what constitutes appropriate professional conduct or practice for pharmacists.

When considering notifications (complaints) against pharmacists, the Board may give consideration to whether a breach of Board guidelines has taken place.

The revised guidelines are available in the [Codes and guidelines](#) section of the Board's website.

### **National drug screening protocol**

From November 2015, all pharmacists who have restrictions placed on their registration by the Board as a result of past substance misuse will have routine quarterly hair testing, in addition to random urine testing.

The introduction of routine hair testing is based on expert advice about modern screening methods. Routine hair testing helps provide comprehensive information about the use – over time – of a wide range of drugs (not just based on the practitioner's drug taking history).

The drug screening protocol is part of a wider, national strategy to effectively manage compliance and monitoring across the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. More information is in the [statement](#) published on the Board's website.

### **Quarterly registration data**

The Board publishes quarterly data profiling Australia's pharmacy workforce.

At September 2015, there were a total of 29,150 registered pharmacists comprising the following number of registrants according to registration type:

- 26,377 – general registration
- 1,750 – provisional registration
- 14 – limited registration
- 1,009 – non-practising registration

The quarterly registration data at September 2015 for the pharmacy profession are published on the Board's website under [About>Statistics](#). The report includes a number of statistical breakdowns.

### 2014/15 National Scheme annual report

AHPRA and the National Boards have released their 2014/15 annual report on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), providing a comprehensive record of the operations of the National Scheme for the 12 months ending 30 June 2015.

The annual report provides a national snapshot of the work and finances of the National Scheme and is tabled in the parliaments of each state and territory and the Commonwealth.

The annual report is published at [www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015). It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Pharmacy Board of Australia. A media release about the report – with data across professions and jurisdictions – is published on the [AHPRA website](#). A report, which presents the data specific to pharmacy practice, will be published on the Board's website before the end of the calendar year.

### Pharmacy Board newsletter

An electronic newsletter providing an update on a range of Board activities and practice related issues will be emailed in December to all registered pharmacists. Pharmacists who have not provided an email address can do so through the [online services for practitioners](#). A copy of the newsletter will be available on the Board's [website](#) in the next few weeks.

### Further information

The Board publishes a range of information for pharmacists on its website at [www.pharmacyboard.gov.au](http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au).

For more information about registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme also refer to information published on [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) or send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

William Kelly  
Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia  
27 November 2015

*The Pharmacy Board of Australia is the regulator of pharmacists in Australia and acts to protect the public by ensuring that suitably qualified and competent pharmacists are registered. The Board is responsible for developing registration standards, codes and guidelines for pharmacists and managing notifications (complaints)\* about pharmacists and pharmacy students. The Board does this through its powers under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory, and the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). The Board's work in regulating Australia's pharmacists in the public interest is underpinned by [regulatory principles](#), which encourage a responsive, risk-based approach to regulation.*

*\*Except in NSW and QLD which have co-regulatory arrangements.*