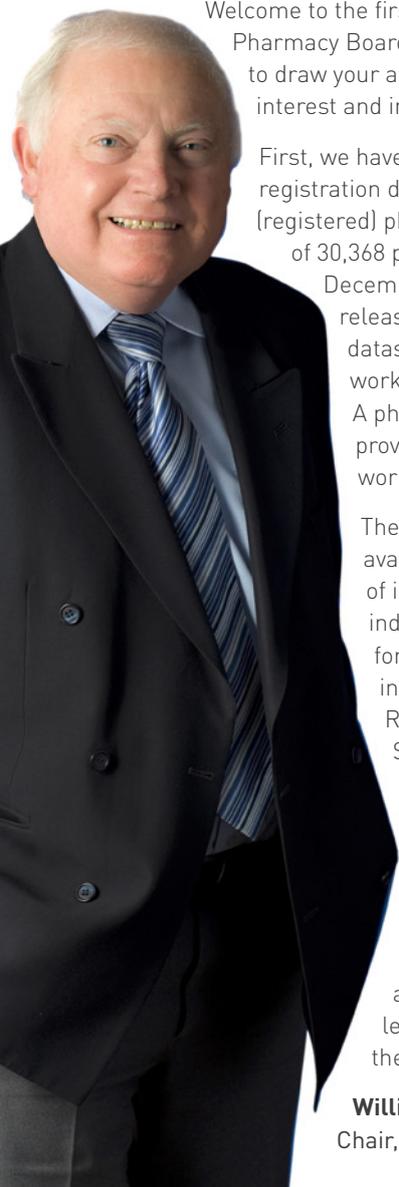


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Chair's message



Welcome to the first newsletter for 2017 from the Pharmacy Board of Australia (the Board). I'd like to draw your attention to a number of items of interest and importance in the newsletter.

First, we have now published the quarterly registration data profiling Australia's (registered) pharmacy workforce with a total of 30,368 pharmacists registered as at 31 December 2016. This coincides with the release of the latest health workforce dataset, which shows how this workforce is composed and employed. A pharmacy profession fact sheet provides this and a host of other workforce data.

The newsletter also outlines the availability of two additional sets of information recently released – individual annual report summaries for each state and territory, offering insights into how the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) is operating in each jurisdiction; and a pharmacy profession-specific summary of Board activities for the financial year 2015-16.

And finally, I'd like to draw your attention to the case summaries and tribunal decisions and the lessons that can be learnt from them.

William Kelly
Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia

Quarterly registration data

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

At December 2016, there were 30,368 registered pharmacists. This total comprises the following number of registrants according to registration type:

- 27,452 – general registration
- 1,777 – provisional registration
- 7 – limited registration, and
- 1,132 – non-practising registration.

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

Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition 2017

The Board participated in the Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition 2017 (APP2017) on 9-12 March 2017. This provided an opportunity to discuss a range of issues and answer questions from pharmacists, interns, students and other delegates about registration, the annual CPD and recency of practice requirements and the Board's guidelines for pharmacists.

The Board was represented by the Chair, the Deputy Chair and the Board's Executive Officer.



Photo: Board Chair William Kelly and Deputy Chair Brett Simmonds (photo courtesy of *Pharmacy Daily*).

Practice advice

Case summaries

From time to time, the Board publishes case summaries to highlight a range of issues arising in practice that have come to the Board as notifications about pharmacists. These summaries serve as a helpful reminder to pharmacists about their obligations, and about the risks arising in practice that require particular attention and management to ensure safe delivery of pharmacy services to the public.

Opioid replacement therapy

Opioid replacement therapy (ORT) is accessed by many individuals in pharmacies across Australia. The Board recently considered notifications regarding dosing errors in prescribed daily and takeaway doses. In one case, the pharmacist incorrectly interpreted doses expressed in mg as mL and supplied doses higher than the prescribed dose.

Careful management of all aspects of supply of ORT is required by pharmacists in accordance with the jurisdictional legislative requirements including any policies and guidelines issued by local authorities. Pharmacists must also ensure compliance with pharmacy practice standards and guidelines published by the Board, including the *Guidelines for dispensing of medicines*.

Professional indemnity insurance (PII) obligations

The Board's *Registration standard: Professional indemnity insurance arrangements* (the standard) explains the Board's requirements for professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements under the National Law¹.

Random audits of pharmacists' compliance with registration standards are conducted by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) on behalf of the Board. Audits are an important way for all practitioners to demonstrate to the Boards and the public that they understand, have met, and will continue to meet the mandatory registration standards relevant to their profession.

At registration renewal, each pharmacist submits their annual statement declaring their compliance with these standards.

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

When an audit finds that a pharmacist has not demonstrated full compliance with the audited standards, the Board follows an approach consistent with the regulatory principles, which adopts an educational approach seeking to balance the protection of the public with the use of appropriate regulatory force.

The Board's action is determined on a case by case basis, having taken into account all available information and the specific circumstances of the pharmacist.

In the course of an audit of compliance with the Board's registration standards, it was established that a practising pharmacist had not held appropriate PII for their period of practice during the registration period. The pharmacist held general registration, was practising the profession during this period and, as such, was required to maintain PII during that period.

The Board found that the pharmacist's conduct was unsatisfactory, by way of declaring compliance with the standard when renewing their registration despite not meeting the standard.

Tribunal decisions

There are important lessons for registered pharmacists from tribunal decisions. The Board refers the most serious concerns to tribunals in each state and territory. Cases published since December 2016 include:

Pharmacist's registration cancelled for professional misconduct

A registered pharmacist has had his registration cancelled and been disqualified from reapplying for three years for behaving in a way that constitutes professional misconduct.

It was alleged to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tribunal) that Gyu Sung Lee had engaged in an unlawful and dishonest course of conduct by misappropriating prescription pads from a hospital, producing false prescriptions and presenting the false prescriptions to various other pharmacists; and/or dishonestly obtaining, or attempting to obtain, prescription medications for his own use.

At the time of the Pharmacy Board of Australia's referral to the tribunal Dr Lee held registration as a pharmacist and as a medical practitioner.

The tribunal found Dr Lee's conduct constituted professional misconduct and warranted cancellation of his registration as a pharmacist and that his disqualification from reapplying for three years was appropriate because:

- the tribunal accepted the opinion of a psychologist that Dr Lee was at high risk 'for at least the next 12 months to two years', and the period allowed a buffer once that risk subsides
- it gave Dr Lee an unambiguous message concerning the severe ramifications of his conduct
- it delivers the clearest message possible to members of the profession as to the consequences of failing one's professional obligations in this manner, and
- it protects the reputation of the profession.

For more information please read the [news item](#).

Tribunal reprimands pharmacist for unprofessional conduct

A pharmacist has been reprimanded with conditions imposed on his registration for unprofessional conduct.

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tribunal) has reprimanded pharmacist Mr Hayden Swan and imposed conditions on his registration after finding he engaged in unprofessional conduct by inappropriately dispensing Sustanon 250 (testosterone) to a patient.

Mr Swan admitted that he engaged in unprofessional conduct and the tribunal found that his actions were in breach of his professional obligations under the various applicable codes, standards and guidelines. Mr Swan was reprimanded and had conditions placed on his registration requiring him to complete an education course on professional ethics and dispensing.

For more information please read the [news item](#).

Pharmacist's registration suspended for unlawful supply of medications

A pharmacist's registration was suspended by a tribunal for unlawfully and/or inappropriately supplying scheduled medications and for inadequate record keeping.

The Health Practitioners Tribunal of Tasmania found Michael Meaney guilty of professional misconduct, reprimanded him and ordered that his registration be suspended for six weeks, ending on 5 March 2017. A condition was imposed on his registration that he complete the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia course, *Ethics and Dispensing in Pharmacy Practice*.

It was alleged that Mr Meaney:

- unlawfully and/or inappropriately supplied narcotics (Schedule 8, 4 and 4D medications) on numerous occasions
- had inadequate record keeping of narcotic medications
- inappropriately saved previously dispensed and returned medications, and
- resupplied as unused medications those that were previously dispensed and returned to the pharmacy, including without a valid prescription.

For more information please read the [news item](#).

Pharmacy regulation at work: Protecting the public in 2015/16

A profession-specific annual report summary that looks into the work of the Pharmacy Board of Australia (the Board) over the 12 months to 30 June 2016 has now been published.

The report draws on data from [the 2015/16 annual report](#) by AHPRA and the National Boards. This information provides a snapshot of the profession as at 30 June 2016, and includes the number of applications for registration as a pharmacist, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, age and principal place of practice.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or concerns received about pharmacists, matters opened and closed during the year, types of complaint, monitoring and compliance and matters involving immediate action.

Find out more in the full [news item](#) on the Board's website.

To download this report, or to view the main 2015/16 annual report and summary reports by profession and state or territory, visit our annual report [microsite](#).

National Scheme news

AHPRA online portal for complaints or concerns launches

AHPRA has launched a new online portal to the public offering a clearer and simpler process when making a complaint or raising a concern about registered health practitioners and students.

The portal is an additional channel available through the AHPRA [website](#). Alternatively, individuals can still call 1300 419 495 to make a complaint or raise a concern, while a PDF form also remains available for complainants.

The same standard applies to information and evidence regardless of whether the concern is raised online or by email, phone or form. The portal includes the requirement for a complainant to declare that the information provided in a complaint or concern is true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief.

The online portal guides users to provide information that more readily enables proper assessment of their concerns. Automated correspondence is issued to all users of the portal, including a copy of their complaint or concern and advice that they will be contacted by a member of the AHPRA team within four days.

The portal is supported by website content about the way AHPRA manages complaints or concerns about health practitioners and students. Consultations revealed the term 'notification' is not commonly understood by the broader community. In response the term 'complaint or concern' replaces the term 'notification' in the portal and the website content.

Further enhancements will be made to the portal based on user feedback.

Local insights, National Scheme: State and territory summaries published

Individual annual report summaries for each state and territory, offering insights into how the National Scheme is operating in each jurisdiction, have now been published.

Based on the AHPRA and National Boards annual report for 2015/16, the summaries are available online on AHPRA's [website](#).

Information includes applications for registration by profession, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, profession and specialty.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or

concerns received by AHPRA by profession, types of complaint, matters involving immediate action, monitoring and compliance, panels and tribunals, and statutory offence complaints.

To download any or all of the state and territory reports, or to view the main 2015/16 annual report, visit our [microsite](#).

Health workforce dataset released

AHPRA in conjunction with the National Boards is responsible for the national registration process for 14 health professions. A subset of data from this annual registration process, together with data from a workforce survey that is voluntarily completed at the time of registration, forms the National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS).

The NHWDS includes demographic and professional practice information for registered health professionals and is de-identified before it can be made publically available.

The NHWDS Allied Health 2015 data has recently been released as a series of fact sheets on each allied health profession, including pharmacy, and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners across all allied health professions, the [NHWDS allied health fact sheets 2015](#). They were published on a new-look website, the [Health Workforce Data website](#), by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The fact sheets present information specific to each profession, such as information relating to scope of practice, specialties and endorsements where applicable. Aggregate data are also accessible via the [Health Workforce Online Data Tool](#).

The data included are generated through Workforce Surveys, which are provided by AHPRA on behalf of the Department of Health to all health professionals as part of their yearly re-registration. Each survey is slightly different and is tailored to obtain data specific to that profession.

You can find the factsheet on pharmacy practice on the website under [Publications](#).

AHPRA performance report October-December 2016

The October to December 2016 quarterly performance reports for AHPRA and the National Boards are now available.

The reports, which are part of an ongoing drive by AHPRA and the National Boards to increase their accountability and transparency, include data specific to each state and territory.

Each report covers AHPRA and the National Boards' main areas of activity:

- managing applications for registration as a health practitioner
- managing notifications about the health, performance and conduct of registered health practitioners and offences against the National Law, and
- monitoring health practitioners and students with restrictions on their registration.

The reports are available on AHPRA's [Statistics page](#).

To provide feedback on the reports please email: reportingfeedback@ahpra.gov.au.

Keep in touch with the Board

- Visit www.pharmacyboard.gov.au for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines and FAQ. Visiting the website regularly is the best way to stay in touch with news and updates from the Board.
- Lodge an [online enquiry form](#).
- For registration enquiries, call 1300 419 495 (*from within Australia*) or +61 3 9275 9009 (for overseas callers).
- To update your contact details for important registration renewal emails and other Board updates, go to the AHPRA website: [Update contact details](#).
- Address mail correspondence to: William Kelly, Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne, VIC 3001.

