



Osteopathy registration: what you need to know

2016

Why should you care?

- **No registration, no job as an osteopath**
 - **Cannot use the title “Osteopath”**
 - **Restricted practice: One of only four professions legally able to manipulate the cervical spine**
- **REMINDER:** You cannot work as an osteopath if you are not registered and can be prosecuted for claiming to be an osteopath if not registered.
(just like you cannot drive without a valid driver’s licence)

What is the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme?

A single, national regulatory system for registered health professions

- 14 health profession boards
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Regulated health professions



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice
Chinese medicine practice
Chiropractic
Dental practice
Medical
Medical radiation practice
Nursing and midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

The National Scheme



- **Mobility:** registered osteopaths are able to practise across Australia
- **Uniformity:** consistent national standards – registration and professional conduct
- **Efficiency:** streamlined, effective
- **Collaboration:** sharing, learning and understanding between professions
- **National online registers:** showing current conditions on practice (except health)
- **Includes notifications**
- **Protects the public**

Who does what?



Osteopathy Board of Australia

- Sets national standards, codes and guidelines for osteopathy
- Decides who is registered to be a osteopath
- Approves accredited programs of study
- Oversees assessment of overseas trained practitioners
- Deals with notifications

What is AHPRA?



Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

- Provides support & administration services to National Boards & committees
- Operates one national office with shopfront in each State & Territory
- Employs staff, owns property & enters into contracts on behalf of Boards



Key features of registration



- Mandatory standards that must be met to remain registered:
 - Criminal history
 - Continuing professional development
 - Recency of practice
 - English language skills
 - Professional indemnity insurance

Five mandatory standards

1. English language skills – IELTS 7

- If you are in any doubt you need to check early and do an IELTS test before it expires or your visa expires.

2. Criminal history – including current students who must notify

- every conviction for an offence
- every plea of guilty or finding of guilt by a court of the practitioner for an offence, and whether or not a conviction is recorded for the offence, and
- every charge made against the practitioner for an offence.

Five mandatory standards

3. Recency of practice:

- At least 450 hours of clinical practice in the previous three years in order to maintain recency of practice in the clinical domain (pro-rata for new graduates).

4. Continuing Professional Development:

- 25 hours per year including 4 hours mandatory CPD activity (pro-rata for new graduates – 6 hours for every 3 months of registration remaining)
- plus current senior first aid certificate **before you start practicing**

5. Professional Indemnity Insurance:

- no set minimum of cover and organise before you start practicing.

You must keep records of having met these standards, for five years

The National Law bans specific types of advertising

- makes misleading claims
- offers an inducement such as a gift or discount (unless the relevant terms and conditions are also included)
- uses testimonials, and/or
- creates unreasonable expectations of beneficial treatment, or encourages the indiscriminate or unnecessary use of a service.

Advertising Guidelines

Care must be taken when using certain words in advertising, such as:

- ‘Cure’
- ‘Can help/improve’
- ‘Safe’
- ‘Effective’
- ‘Non-invasive’

Use of the title 'Dr'

- There are no provisions under the National Law that prohibit an osteopath from using the title doctor.
- *If practitioners choose to adopt the title 'doctor' in their advertising and branding, and they are not a registered medical practitioner, then (whether or not they hold a Doctorate degree or PhD) they should make it clear that they do not hold registration as a medical practitioner: Dr Nikole Grbin(Osteopath)*

Social media – your footprint

- The use of social media is not prohibited under the National Law but be mindful that interactions and content can remain in cyberspace for a long time
- Social media is seen as advertising too so be mindful of patient privacy and consent
- Examples such as illegal activity, derogatory comments about people treated in clinic and impairment affecting practice could be problems

Key features of registration



- Student registration
- Initial registration application upon qualification, then apply to renew every year
- Public online register of osteopaths
- Notifications (complaints)
 - Health, performance and conduct
 - Mandatory notifications
 - More at www.ahpra.gov.au/notifications

Why register?

- Registration is a legal requirement
 - main purpose: public protection
 - only suitable persons with approved qualifications, who meet requirements of registration standards, are eligible
- If you want to practise as an osteopath you must be registered
- Qualification is not registration



Why are osteopaths registered?

You must not practise unregistered:
fines of up to \$30,000



What constitutes practice?

Practice is any role where health practitioner skills & knowledge are used whether remunerated or not



Not restricted to direct clinical care - includes working in:

- nonclinical relationship with clients
- management & administration
- education & research
- advisory, regulatory or policy roles
- any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession &/or use professional skills



When things go wrong

- You will be held to account against the Registration Standards and the Osteopathy Code of Conduct
- Common complaints:
 - Communication
 - Boundary issues
 - Behaviour
 - Clinical care
 - Documentation

Voluntary Notifications



Anyone may make notification about an osteopath's **performance, conduct or health** in writing, on-line or by phone

Mandatory Notifications

Practitioners & employers must report osteopaths if reasonable direct knowledge or evidence they have engaged in **notifiable conduct**:

- practising while intoxicated by drugs or alcohol
- engaging in sexual misconduct in professional practice
- placing the public at risk of substantial harm through a physical or mental impairment affecting practice
- placing the public at risk of harm through a substantial departure from accepted professional standards



Becoming registered



- Graduation does not mean automatic registration
- You must apply for registration at AHPRA
- Application can be made online in October (early)
- University provides information to AHPRA
- Pay application and registration fees (vary each year)
- You must meet registration requirements

What are applicant obligations?

- Ensure all information provided is **true & correct**
- **Up-date any changes** to principal place of practice, postal address, name changes during application process
- **If you are unsure whether to disclose information – disclose anyway or call AHPRA for more information**



Serious penalties may apply if an applicant is found to have provided false &/or misleading information, including application being refused

After registration?

Ongoing practitioner responsibilities...

- **Annual renewal** by **30 November** (online renewal encouraged)
 - late fee or reapplication (with all documentation) will be required
- **Declare:**
 - change of contact details
 - principal place of practice
 - criminal proceedings
 - health issues likely to impact on practice
- Minimum **25 hours CPD** each year including 4 hours mandatory CPD activity (pro-rata for new graduates): record & reflect
- Recency of practice: 450 hours over three years
- Adhere to standards
- Mandatory notification requirements



Other Osteopathy organisations



- Australasian Osteopathic Accreditation Council
 - assesses and accredits osteopathic education programs leading to eligibility for registration as an osteopath in Australia
- Osteopathy Australia
 - Peak body representing the interests of osteopaths
- Osteopathy Council of NSW
 - manages notifications (complaints) about the conduct, performance or health of osteopathy practitioners and students in New South Wales

How do I stay informed?



- FAQs:
 - Check website for information
- www.osteopathyboard.gov.au
 - This is your main source of information, make sure to check back regularly for changes affecting your profession
 - If you would like to receive email updates for important changes, make sure to supply your email address when registering
 - Online enquiry form
- Call 1300 419 495
- Osteopathy Board of Australia

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