

## Communiqué

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### November 2019 meeting of the Osteopathy Board of Australia

The 118th meeting of the Osteopathy Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 22 November 2019 in Hobart. The Registration and Notification Committee (RNC) also met on the same day as the Board meeting.

The Board publishes this communiqué on our website and emails it to a broad range of stakeholders. At each meeting the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this communiqué.

#### Registrant engagement breakfast in Hobart

The Board hosted an information sharing breakfast for osteopaths in Hobart on 22 November 2019. The Board values the opportunity to engage with registrants and hear about the issues that are of most interest, including audit and mandatory reporting. Staff from Ahpra joined Board members to present information and answer questions.

#### Capabilities for Osteopathic Practice

The [Capabilities for osteopathic practice \(2019\)](#) (the capabilities) are now in effect and set out the attributes, knowledge and skills required for osteopathic practice in Australia.

Replacing the original 2009 version, the capabilities are a result of an extensive review process and describe the threshold competence for initial and continuing registration as an osteopath in Australia.

The 2019 capabilities specifically acknowledge the need for osteopaths to enhance their individual and institutional knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies needed to deliver optimal health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as determined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, families and communities.

#### New information for osteopaths treating animals

The Board wishes to remind osteopaths that the National Law<sup>1</sup> aims to protect the health and safety of the Australian public. This does not extend to animals. Osteopaths who undertake this practice should read the additional information in the form of a [FAQ](#) published on the Board's website.

#### Osteopathy specific summary of the annual report 2018/19

A profession-specific statistical summary and a report from the Chair that covers the work of the Osteopathy Board of Australia over the 12 months is now available online.

The osteopathy summary provides a snapshot of the profession as at 30 June 2019, and includes the number of applications for registration, outcomes of practitioner audits and segmentation of the registrant base by gender and age. Notifications information is extensive and includes numbers, types and sources of complaints, mandatory notifications, criminal offence complaints and more. Profession-specific data

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

tables are also available for downloading. To access this information please see the Board's [2018/19 summary](#).

### Registration renewal before the late period ends

The late period for registration renewal is in effect until 31 December. If you have not yet renewed the [quickest and easiest way to do so is online](#).

Renewal applications received in December will incur a late payment fee in addition to the annual renewal fee. This is outlined in the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law](#), as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). A [fees schedule](#) is published on the Board's website.

If your application for renewal is received during the one-month late period, you can continue practising while your application is processed.

If you do not apply to renew your registration by 31 December 2019 your registration will lapse. You will be removed from the [Register of Osteopaths](#) and will not be able to practise your profession in Australia.

### Cultural safety definition announcement soon

In July 2018, Ahpra released the [Statement of Intent](#) publishing a [joint commitment](#) with the 15 National Boards, accreditation authorities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector leaders and organisations to make patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the norm.

The Statement of Intent recognises that cultural safety is patient safety and that cultural safety must be defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. A strategic priority of the Statement of Intent is to help embed cultural safety into the health system through consistent regulation with over 740,000 registered health practitioners across Australia.

Last April, Ahpra, National Boards and accreditation authorities partnered with the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group](#) and the National Health Leadership Forum to conduct a public consultation for feedback on a proposed definition of 'cultural safety'. The final definition is now finalised and endorsed as the minimum baseline cultural safety definition for consistency across all functions of the National Scheme. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group will announce the final definition in a [communiqué](#) soon.

### Social research results help to inform our work

The Board noted the release of results from a social research project aimed at helping Ahpra and National Boards understand perceptions about us and our work. The aim of the project was to better understand what the community, regulated health professions, and our stakeholders think and feel about us, particularly in areas of understanding, confidence and trust.

We want to hear what our stakeholders have to say to make sure we are doing the best job we can as regulators. The social research project included a short anonymous survey to a random sample of registered practitioners and to a random sample of the broader community.

The [social research results](#), including a report specific to the Osteopathy Board of Australia, are published on the Board's website.

Our core role is to protect the public and we now have a baseline on which to monitor change to the level of broader community trust in National Boards (63%) and in Ahpra (71%). In comparison, 62% of practitioners surveyed said they trust their National Board while 56% trust Ahpra. A total of 63% of the broader community (from the 59% with some knowledge of at least one board) said they trust the board.

Of the 29% of community respondents with some knowledge of Ahpra, 72% were confident Ahpra is doing everything it can to keep the public safe. National Boards rated 58% on the public safety/confidence question among the broader community. A total of 51% of practitioners expressed confidence in the work of Ahpra and 56% felt confident that their National Board is doing all it can to keep the public safe.

As expected, there are variances in both the understanding and perceptions of the roles and functions of Ahpra and the National Boards. Half (50%) of the community respondents expressed interest in improving

their understanding. Not surprisingly, all surveyed practitioners are aware of Ahpra and 79% are interested in learning more about our role and functions.

Our aim is that these insights will inform continued improvements across all areas of our work. The results have given us a baseline to build on and inform how we follow the [regulatory principles](#) that underpin our work as a risk-based regulator. We have surveyed practitioners and the community again in 2019 and these survey results will be released in 2020.

### Follow Ahpra on social media

Connect with Ahpra on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to receive up to date information about important topics for your profession and participate in the discussion.



### Keeping in touch with the Board

The Board publishes a range of information and resources about registration and the Board's expectations of practitioners on their website at [www.osteopathyboard.gov.au](http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au). Osteopaths are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policies and guidelines affecting their profession.

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

### Dr Nikole Grbin (Osteopath)

Chair  
Osteopathy Board of Australia  
5 December 2019