



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander health practice
Chinese medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical radiation practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Consultation report: Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

30 October 2015

1. Introduction

The National Law¹ requires National Boards to develop registration standards about the requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for registered health practitioners.

Ten National Boards have now reviewed their CPD arrangements, as part of a planned review of the five core registration standards². National Boards reviewing their CPD registration standard have largely included the requirements, definitions and evidence provisions from a standard template which adopts clearer wording and structure to make it easier for registrants to understand. As a result, there is now some increased consistency across the CPD registration standards.

The Optometry Board of Australia did not participate in this review as its current standard came into effect in January 2013 following an earlier review. It has now commenced a review of the 2013 standard.

2. Consultation

National Boards undertook an eight-week public consultation process between May and July 2014, following on from a preliminary consultation round with key stakeholders in January 2014 to ensure public exposure to proposed changes – a requirement under the National Law. The Commonwealth Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR) was also consulted during preliminary consultation in order to assess the potential for any significant regulatory impacts. The OBPR determined that a regulation impact statement was not required.

Public consultation documents are published under the *News* tab of each National Board website. Submissions (except those made in confidence) have also now been published.

The table below lists the number of responses that each National Board received during the public consultation on its revised CPD registration standard.

National Board	No. of responses	National Board	No. of responses
Chiropractic	7	Osteopathy	5

¹ The *National Health Practitioner Regulation Law* as in force in each state and territory.

² Continuing professional development, Professional Indemnity Insurance, Criminal history, English language skills and Recency of practice.

National Board	No. of responses	National Board	No. of responses
Dental	12	Pharmacy	12
Medical radiation practice	5	Physiotherapy	8
Medicine	37	Podiatry	15
Nursing and midwifery	15	Psychology	10

The revisions proposed by National Boards focused on improving clarity and workability of the current CPD standards and were broadly supported by respondents. National Boards also received feedback from the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council Health Workforce Principal Committee, which helped to inform the proposed standards.

3. Issues

Although there was a high level of cross-Board collaboration in the development of the new standards, some Boards have retained profession-specific requirements that remain relevant to and/or embedded in professional practices.

Research commissioned to inform the review was inconclusive in recommending particular structures of CPD or minimum numbers of hours. In the absence of clear evidence to support change, National Boards largely opted to maintain their current approaches.

Where feedback raised cross-professional matters, National Boards worked together to establish a consistent approach wherever possible. Overall, some greater consistency across requirements has been achieved in the new standards.

4. Conclusion

National Boards consider that the revised registration standards provide a well balanced approach to addressing the majority of the issues raised during the public consultation and improving the workability of the requirements, while continuing to ensure high levels of public protection.

The National Boards and AHPRA will continue to undertake research and consider international benchmarking to support good practice and more convergence where appropriate in the National Boards' CPD registration standards in the future. Further research has already been undertaken to inform the review of the CPD registration standards currently being undertaken by the four remaining National Boards (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Occupational Therapy and Optometry Boards of Australia).