

Action plan

16 June 2015

Setting things right: 10 steps to improve our customer service

Improving customer service, and making it easy for people to interact with us, is important to us.

This document outlines 10 steps we have taken to improve consumer and practitioner experience when they make contact with the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, whether via National Boards or AHPRA.

This work is ongoing and this updates outlines progress since September 2014.

Our work with the [Community Reference Group](#) and the [Professions Reference Group](#) has helped inform these actions.

What we have done so far

- 1. Re-written the official letters we send to people who have made a notification (complaint) drawing on consumer and plain English expertise.** The letters use simpler and clearer language to better explain the process and what happens next. The updated letters are now progressively being implemented, with many already in use.
- 2. Reviewed our web content** across the National Boards and AHPRA websites and publishing that information in a way that is easier to read. Our work continues towards better accessibility and compliance with [WCAG](#) standards.
- 3. Expanded our social media channels** to provide more ways for practitioners and consumers to communicate with us. We are now on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#), with more social media channels in the pipeline.
- 4. Improved our timeframes for dealing with matters**, leading to a 40% reduction over three years in the number of open assessments, even though we received more notifications than we ever had during that period. Overall we have reduced open notifications by 22%, from 30 June 2014 to 31 March 2015.
- 5. Developed a simple form** to make complaints about [advertising](#) or [use of protected titles](#) (such as 'medical practitioner' or 'physiotherapist'). These kinds of complaints are dealt with under a different section of the National Law to notifications, which means a shorter, easier form has been developed. The accompanying web information has also been simplified, and both will be published online soon.
- 6. Training our staff on plain language communication.** Every person who works at AHPRA gets training on good communication and using plain language principles. This is part of the formal induction program for all staff.
- 7. Trialing new ways to keep notifiers updated on their complaint**, including establishing roles that will give consumers who make a notification (complaint) a single point of contact.
- 8. Working in partnership with health complaints entities** across Australia to continue to build local arrangements which are well understood by the community and work smoothly.
- 9. Publishing tribunal outcomes in media releases and newsletters** as professional learning for practitioners and information on how the system works for consumers.
- 10. Implemented a shared regulatory philosophy for National Boards and AHPRA, and invited views on how they are working.** The principles will further support decision making which is consistent and proportionate. The survey results will inform the evaluation of the principles and what further work is required to support their successful implementation.

What we will focus on next

- **Continue improving our letters and information materials** to make them clearer and easier to understand.
- **Providing specialist training for staff** who will be the first contact for people making a notification (complaint) about a practitioner so they have enhanced skills to help people through the process. Staff will be trained to provide straightforward information about what we do and what to expect in the process. We'll also be working to understand the outcome people are looking for and provide help to get the issue to the right place if we are not able to deliver the outcome they are after. We'll also be clearer about what we can and what we can't do.
- **Establishing an editorial panel to help us make our information clearer.** The panel will include health literacy expertise and will review our information and let us know if we can make it better and easier to understand.
- **Improving the search function on our websites.** A new search tool is close to being implemented, which will make it easier to find the right information from the 15 National Board and AHPRA websites.

What can we do better?

If you have a suggestion on how we can improve, or would like to provide feedback on our information, please email communications@ahpra.gov.au.

You can also follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

For more information

- The Health Issues Centre of Victoria (HIC) report and recommendations, and AHPRA's updates on work in addressing the recommendations, are published on the [AHPRA website](#).
- Lodge an [online enquiry form](#)
- For registration enquiries call: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (for overseas callers)
- For media enquiries call: (03) 8708 9200