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Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Media release

24 March 2011

Senate inquiry

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) will cooperate with the Senate Inquiry into the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, announced yesterday by the Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing, The Hon. Peter Dutton MP.

“We will take the opportunity to help the Senate better understand the new National Scheme and its benefits for the Australian community and registered health professionals, as well as the complexity of the transition, the effort invested and the initiatives underway to address transition issues,” AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher said.

“On any measure, the transition to national registration was a significant undertaking. There have been start-up issues as a result of the pace and scope of the change that are well documented. AHPRA now has an extensive program of work underway to address these and welcomes the opportunity to help the Senate understand these,” Mr Fletcher said.

Establishing the National Registers for each profession – which are publicly accessible and a cornerstone of the National Scheme – involved bringing more than 1.2 million data items from 85 different sources into one integrated IT system. More than 344,000 health practitioners have renewed their registration since 1 July 2010 and more than 31,500 health practitioners have registered for the first time and are now delivering health services throughout Australia.

The National Law, the nationally consistent legislation which underpins the scheme, replaced 65 different Acts of Parliament and was passed in some state parliaments only weeks or days before the 1 July 2010 national start date. Western Australia joined the scheme in October 2010.

The National Scheme involves significant change for all practitioners, who must now meet new registration standards set by National Boards and endorsed by Ministerial Council. New processes and systems have been established to support these additional requirements.

“AHPRA is firmly focused on ensuring these systems work effectively, that information is clear and accessible and helping practitioners in the health professions understand and meet their new responsibilities,” Mr Fletcher said.

“The National Scheme has patient safety at its heart and our clear target is to realise the potential of the scheme to benefit the Australian community,” he said.

For more information

- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 7 3666 4911 (overseas callers)
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