

Community Advisory Council communiqué

April 2025

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) met virtually on **Thursday 10 April 2025**. This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the meeting.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the lands on which the meeting was being held and paid respect to their Elders, past and present.

Matters that were considered and discussed by Council members included:

Lgbtqia+ working group

Members noted a presentation with an update on the Lgbtqia+ Equity and Inclusion Strategy project for Ahpra and National Boards. Members further noted the background to why the strategy has been established along with an overview of the vision and purpose.

The strategy will be a three-to-five-year strategy and will be reviewed thereafter. The strategy is being developed to provide a framework to achieve the commitments that have been made to the communities. In developing the draft there has been involvement with an external facilitator and early engagement with key stakeholders, including Transgender Victoria, Thorn Harbour Health, and Pride in Diversity (via ACON in NSW), each contributing insights based on their expertise and community connections. Transgender Victoria provided feedback on the draft's key pillars and strategic vision, Thorn Harbour Health contributed their expertise in health equity and community engagement, and Pride in Diversity, offered insights into national best practices. The next steps involve presenting the draft to the Forum of Chairs and the Ahpra Board's subcommittee People and Remuneration committee, with the possibility of further engagement with National Boards and the Ahpra Board.

A Steering Committee participated in a workshop facilitated externally to create direction for the strategy and overarching strategic pillars for focused operational action plans being:

1. Leadership
2. Safety and rights
3. Disclosure and documentation
4. Learning and language
5. Engagement and visibility

Members provided feedback on the following consultation:

- MPP - Review of registration standards – CPD, ROP and Criminal History
- NMBA - Review of the Endorsement for scheduled medicines for midwives' registration standard

RRU/emerging issues

Members discussed two emerging regulatory concerns relevant to the Rapid Regulatory Response Unit:

1. the rise of unregulated "reassurance clinics" offering ultrasounds to pregnant women. They are often operated by individuals without registration and are considered a serious safety issue. These clinics may provide incorrect or harmful information. Some are being operated in unsafe environments like private homes or vehicles.

2. the group raised the issue of family violence, emphasising the need for health practitioners to be equipped to identify and respond to signs of abuse. A coordinated, community-wide approach was advocated, involving local councils.

Members noted that Ahpra is developing a CPD module on family violence, and a co-regulator working group is collating existing education and training resources. These topics will be addressed further at the May NRAS combined meeting, where the Commissioner will speak and present updates.

Please advise the Community Advisory Council if you have any emerging topics for discussion for their upcoming meetings.

The next meeting of the Community Advisory Council is face to face on Wednesday, 28 May 2025

Patricia Hall

Chair