

Health, safety and wellbeing policy

Purpose and scope

Ahpra is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all workers. This policy describes the guiding principles for Ahpra's Health, Safety and Wellbeing policies, procedures, systems and internal controls to meet its legislative responsibilities and minimise the risk of harm to the health, safety and wellbeing of workers, as far as is reasonably practicable.

Ahpra utilises the contemporary term Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) to emphasise its commitment to ensuring the health and wellbeing of workers in addition to their safety, as well as traditional Work, Health and Safety (WHS), Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) responsibilities as described in each Australian State and Territory's legislation.

Coverage

This policy applies to all Ahpra workers, a worker is defined as a person who carries out work with Ahpra including: Agency Management Committee, National Executive, employees, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, interns, work experience staff and statutory employees (board, committee and panel members).

Policy

Ahpra meets its responsibility to minimise the risk of harm to workers through a planned and systematic approach to the management of health, safety and wellbeing outcomes and provides the resources for successful HSW policy implementation and continuous improvement.

Ahpra acknowledges its responsibility under relevant legislative instruments that define its approach to health, safety and wellbeing, including the Model Work Health and Safety Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Vic) and the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 1984, WA and their associated regulations, codes of practice and guidelines.

Ahpra strives for continuous improvement to HSW systems through regular reviews of its systems and practices with the aim of eliminating so far as is reasonably practicable unwanted work-related hazards and injuries. Ahpra is committed to providing a holistically safe environment for all people through the promotion of health, safety and wellbeing programs which are psychologically safe and align with Ahpra's commitment to providing access to culturally safe healthcare for Australia's first nation's people.

Ahpra and its workers will comply with all applicable legislative instruments describing its HSW responsibilities and recognises the responsibility of all workers to take reasonable care to protect the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and others while engaging in their work.

Key principles

- Overall accountability for HSW lies with Ahpra as the Person in Control of the Business or Undertaking (PCBU - comprising the National Executive and Agency Management Committee members), Employer, or Responsible Person, and those who have significant decision making abilities and financial control over the PCBU (Officers). These responsibilities cannot be delegated.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
National Boards

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Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

- State and Territory Managers are not a PCUBU or responsible officers, however they are central contacts in each Ahpra office and coordinate the response or appropriate escalation of identified risks to HSW as far as is reasonably practicable, as outlined in the Ahpra governance structure and associated HSW responsibilities documentation.
- Managers and team-leaders also have duty of care responsibilities to their staff.
- Board and Committee Chairs have a leadership responsibility, along with board and committee members, to facilitate and contribute to a safe and healthy environment for all workers.
- Workers also have important HSW responsibilities within Ahpra workplaces, including the work from home environment.
- Ahpra is committed to the safe, effective, and sustained rehabilitation of workplace injuries, illnesses, and ailments through supportive and structured rehabilitative programs.
- Ahpra is committed to the safe inclusion and support of personal conditions where reasonably practicable in accordance with specialist medical opinion.
- Ahpra remains committed to providing fair and transparent consultation of matters relating to the HSW of its internal and external stakeholders including the promotion of workplace representation through effective health and safety committees and elected and registered health and safety representatives.

Responsibilities

Ahpra will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:

- the provision and maintenance of a safe work environment that is free of racism, discrimination, incivility, bullying, harassment and violence, without risks to health, safety and wellbeing
- the provision and maintenance of safe plant, equipment and structures
- the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work
- the safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
- the provision and maintenance of accessible and adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers undertaking work for Ahpra
- the provision of culturally safe and indigenous-led wellbeing, and health programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- the provision of a safe and inclusive work environment for all workers regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation, or any other protected attribute as defined under the Fair Work Act
- that the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers in the workplace.

The Agency Management Committee and Ahpra National Executive will:

- exercise due diligence to ensure Ahpra complies with its HSW duties under the relevant legislative instruments outlined in this policy
- set and monitor strategic objectives and targets for Ahpra's HSW performance consistent with this policy and will ensure so far as reasonably practicable that those targets and objectives are met
- monitor Ahpra's Health and safety performance through proactive assurance reporting mechanisms, recommend and support performance improvement strategies as appropriate and identified
- ensure appropriate organisational and resourcing support for Ahpra and the National Executive to execute their HSW responsibilities
- ensure that Ahpra continues to implement appropriately resourced processes to comply with relevant legislation to achieve positive HSW outcomes
- ensure that Ahpra continues to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, through indigenous-led, and culturally-safe programs to collect, analyse and address information relating to racist incidents
- ensure that Ahpra has appropriate methods for collecting, analysing, and addressing incidents, hazards, injuries, and near-hit incidences (including racism, discrimination, incivility, bullying, harassment and violence) to prevent the further occurrence in all Ahpra workplaces, including remote working environments, in a timely manner
- employ or engage suitably qualified or experienced HSW personnel to provide advice regarding Ahpra's health, safety and wellbeing culture, performance and improvement opportunities
- ensure effective consultative structures and frameworks exist to allow for effective workplace consultation of HSW matters with all staff.

Ahpra Managers will:

- provide a safe working environment for their workers which is free of hazards or risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of all Ahpra workers
- ensure their own behaviour, acts and omissions contribute to a safe working environment that is free of racism, incivility, bullying, harassment and violence
- facilitate the timely and accurate reporting and investigation of any injuries, illnesses, incidents, hazards, and near-hit incidences arising within the workplace affecting their staff
- ensure the effective consultation of HSW matters with their workers through HSW Committees, elected and registered Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and other direct forms of communication
- advise workers of how to raise any feedback or complaints about HSW matters at Ahpra
- provide appropriate training, supervision, feedback and support necessary to support their teams to conduct their work effectively and without risk of harm to themselves or others
- respond timely to any matters concerning unsafe behaviours or actions with their team
- escalate any unresolvable safety issues to their manager, or via Ahpra's HSW issue resolution procedure if required
- make sure that their teams are following safe working instructions, including the safe use of equipment, furniture, and chemicals
- provide support and supervision to any injured workers to achieve recovery or maintain safety in the workplace in accordance with their return to work or health support plan
- provide appropriate safety equipment and personal protection equipment as identified in Job Safety Analysis documentation.

Ahpra workers will:

- ensure their own behaviour contributes to a positive working environment that is physically and psychologically safe, is free of racism, discrimination, incivility, bullying, harassment and violence
- take reasonable care to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and others
- make sure their actions do not cause or threaten harm to the health, safety and wellbeing of others
- follow Ahpra's HSW policies, procedures, instructions, and rules including Ahpra's Code of Conduct or relevant Board and Committee Codes of Conduct.
- participate in safety training, emergency response exercises and debriefings as directed
- report any HSW incidents, injuries, hazards, or near-hit instances in writing using Ahpra's incident reporting methods
- use safety equipment and personal protective equipment as instructed.

Commitment

This policy has been endorsed and will be upheld by Ahpra's National Executive and Agency Management Committee members:

Ms Gill Callister PSM
AManC Chair



Signature

Mr Martin Fletcher
Ahpra CEO



Signature

Relevant legislation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following legislation

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA)

- Each State and Territory also has a set of Regulations and Codes of Practice to support the legislation which must be complied with by Ahpra.

Definitions

Term	Definitions
Cultural safety for First Nations Peoples	<p>Cultural safety is determined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities. Culturally safe practise is the ongoing critical reflection of health practitioner knowledge, skills, attitudes, practising behaviours and power differentials in delivering safe, accessible and responsive healthcare free of racism.</p> <p><i>From the National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020 -2025</i></p>
Due diligence	<p>Taking reasonable steps to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquire and keep up to date knowledge of health, safety and wellbeing matters 2. gain an understanding of the nature of the operations of Ahpra and generally of the hazards and risks associated with those operations 3. ensure that Ahpra has available for use appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety from work carried out as part of its operations and undertakings 4. ensure that Ahpra has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards and risks, and responding in a timely manner to that information 5. ensure that Ahpra has and implements, processes for complying with its legislative duties and obligations as a PCBU under relevant legislative instruments for workplace health, safety and wellbeing verify the provision and use of the resources and processes referred to in 3 and 5 above.
Legislative instrument	<p>A piece of legislation, regulation code of practice or formal guideline published by the federal, state or territory parliament of Australia.</p>
Reasonably practicable	<p>That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned occurring; and • the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk, and • what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know about the hazard or risk, and about the ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and • the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and • after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.
Visitor	<p>A person who is not a worker who is attending an Ahpra workplace for any purpose.</p>
Worker	<p>A person who carries out work for Ahpra, including: National Executive; employees; contractors and agency staff; volunteers; interns; work experience staff; and statutory appointees (board, committee and panel members).</p>
Workplace	<p>Any place or location where a worker conducts work on behalf of Ahpra including an Ahpra controlled office, field-work locations and the work-from-home environment.</p>

Document control

Approver	Agency Management Committee
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Responsible officer	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Specialist
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