



## Standing Council on Health (meeting as Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council)

### Communiqué

The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) is pleased to announce that it has approved national health practitioner registration standards recommended by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia, the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia, the Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia, and the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, as follows:

- A suite of mandatory registration standards that will apply to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners, Medical radiation practitioners, and Occupational therapists. These registration standards cover continuing professional development, criminal history screening, English language requirements, professional indemnity insurance arrangements, and recency of practice.
- For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice profession, a registration standard to clarify that only Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons are eligible for registration in this profession.
- Grandparenting registration standards that will also apply to the four professions. These registration standards tailor the broad grandparenting provisions of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act* as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) to ensure the transitional arrangements for qualifications are relevant to each of the professions. This will enable boards to appropriately assess applications from practitioners who have completed a qualification recognised by the Board, or have undertaken other training, further study, or supervised practice in the profession, or if the practitioner has practised the profession for a period of 5 years between 1 July 2002 and 30 June 2012, while providing for the protection of the public.

A complete list of approved registration standards is attached to this Communiqué.

The four National Boards were appointed in July 2011, to undertake important preparatory work to ready the professions for national registration from 1 July 2012. Health Ministers acknowledged the efforts of each National Board in developing the registration standards for their professions, well in advance of the professions joining the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme from 1 July 2012.

The National Boards submitted the registration standards for approval following wide ranging consultation on draft proposals. Ministers also expressed appreciation to the many individuals and organisations who took the time to lodge submissions with the National Boards during their consultation periods. Ministers noted that the boards carefully considered the feedback received, which led to changes being made to

improve the clarity, relevance, and operation of the proposals for each of the four professions.

In approving the registration standards, Ministers noted that the National Boards and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) will monitor their application under the national scheme and be mindful of the need to review the approved registration standards at least every 3 years – or earlier, should that prove necessary to protect the public and/or in the interests of the continued provision of health services to Australians.

The Ministerial Council's approval of the registration standards is in accordance with the National Law. The decision to approve the registration standards now will assist the National Boards to implement the proposals in the lead-up to national registration for the four professions from 1 July 2012. The approval registration standards will come into effect on 1 July 2012 to coincide with the start of national registration for the four professions.

Health Ministers also trust that their approval of the registration standards will provide clarity and certainty to those practitioners who will seek registration for the first time in 2012, and those that will automatically transition into the scheme based on their current State or Territory registration.

Health Ministers' noted advice from the National Board that they expect an estimated 17,000 applications for national registration from eligible practitioners who are not currently required to hold registration in order to practice in a state or territory. Ministers welcomed advice from the National Boards and AHPRA that there will be a call for eligible practitioners to lodge their registration application forms in early 2012, so decisions can be made in order for practitioners to hold national registration effective from 1 July 2012.

The move from partial state and territory regulation of these professions to regulation under a consistent national scheme is a significant milestone for the four professions. Ministers acknowledged the high level of interest and engagement by practitioners, their employers, and educational providers to date.

Practitioners and other interested parties can stay informed about the transition to national registration, by checking the National Board websites for information as it comes to hand. The National Board websites are accessible via AHPRA – [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au). In the meantime, the approved registration standards will be published by the National Boards and will shortly be available on their websites.

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**APPROVED NATIONAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGISTRATION STANDARDS**

<b>National Board</b>	<b>Approved registration standard to take effect on 1/07/2012</b>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing professional development registration standard</li><li>• Criminal history registration standard</li><li>• English language skills registration standard</li><li>• Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard</li><li>• Recency of practice registration standard</li><li>• Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander registration standard</li><li>• Grandparenting provisions registration standard</li></ul>
Chinese Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing professional development registration standard</li><li>• Criminal history registration standard</li><li>• English language skills registration standard</li><li>• Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard</li><li>• Recency of practice registration standard</li><li>• Grandparenting registration standard: transitional arrangements for qualifications</li></ul>
Medical Radiation Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing professional development registration standard</li><li>• Criminal history registration standard</li><li>• English language skills registration standard</li><li>• Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard</li><li>• Recency of practice registration standard</li><li>• Grandparenting and general registration eligibility registration standard</li></ul>
Occupational Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing professional development registration standard</li><li>• Criminal history registration standard</li><li>• English language skills registration standard</li><li>• Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard</li><li>• Recency of practice registration standard</li><li>• Grandparenting registration standard: transitional arrangements for qualifications</li></ul>