

# Agency Management Committee

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## Meeting Number 20

9 November 2010

AHPRA, Level 7, 111 Bourke Street, Melbourne

### Final decisions and actions arising

#### **Members present**

Mr Peter Allen (Chair)

Professor Genevieve Gray

Mr Michael Gorton

Professor Constantine Michael

Professor Merrilyn Walton

#### **In attendance**

Mr Martin Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer

Mr Chris Robertson, Director National Board Services

Mr John Ilott, Director Operations

Mr Jim O'Dempsey, National Director Transitional

Mr Nigel Cunningham, Chief Financial Officer (Part Two, Items 2 and 3)

Ms Di Sisely, Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner (Part One, Item 7.1)

Ms Amanda Robinson, Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer, Minute Secretary

#### **Apology**

Ms Dominique Saunders, Senior Legal Adviser

## **PART ONE**

### **Item 1: Record of previous minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2010 were approved by the Committee as a true record of the meeting. The Committee noted that the Minutes for Part One will be routinely posted on the AHPRA website once approved.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 2: Disclosure of any conflicts of interest in relation to agenda items**

In accordance with Section 6(1) of Schedule 2 of the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008* (the Act), members declare any possible conflict of interest in relation to agenda items for consideration by the Committee.

No conflicts of interest were advised by Members.

*ACTION: Nil*

### **Item 3: Current Situation**

#### **Item 3.1: Update from Chair, CEO and Members**

Mr Fletcher reported on:

- National staffing changes:
  - Mr Jim O'Dempsey appointed National Director, Transitional for a period of 3 months.
  - Ms Anne Morrison appointed Queensland State Manager for a period of 3 months.
  - Ms Alyson Smith appointed Executive Officer for the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia for a period of 3 months.

Mr Robertson provided an update of proposals to be considered by the Ministerial Council at their meeting in Adelaide, Friday 12 November 2010 including:

- Approval of project plan for four partially regulated professions to join the National Scheme.
- Proposed English Language Skills Registration standard for nursing and midwifery.
- Recognition of qualifications for overseas medical practitioners.
- Arrangements for changing the role of State and Territory boards beyond the transitional provisions.

The Committee noted the update and agreed:

- The proposal to AHMAC outlining the processes involved in transitioning the four partially regulated professions will be circulated to members and further considered at the next Management Committee meeting.

### **Item 3.1.1: Medical Renewals Update**

Mr Fletcher updated the committee on the current status of medical renewals. The Committee noted:

- The overall outcome has been positive with less than 2% of doctors whose registration expired on 30 September not renewing before the end of the grace period.
- Advice was forwarded to Medicare Australia on Friday 5 November 2010 providing details of medical practitioners not renewing their registration. These practitioners will be contacted informing them that their patients are no longer eligible to bill Medicare.
- A 'hotline' has been set up within AHPRA for any practitioner contacted by Medicare who has queries about their registration status or renewal.
- As at 9 November, around 20,000 medical practitioners are still to renew in NSW (based on their birth date) before June 2011.
- The next registration peak will occur over the November/December 2010 period with 160,000 renewals (mainly nursing and midwifery), and around 30,000 new graduates (all professions) applying for registration for the first time.
- AHPRA has been working closely with education providers to establish procedures for graduates to lodge their application prior to graduation. Education providers have been requested to submit a certified list of graduates directly to AHPRA.
- AHPRA is currently working on solutions to minimise impact of high 'walk in' volumes, for example, ticketing systems and internet kiosks.

The Committee noted:

1. Temporary staff will be used to help manage peak periods. This is consistent with the previous practice of boards.
2. Continued work to ensure the accuracy of AHPRA messaging and mail house processes, noting the complexity of the processes involved and the additional work to improve data quality.
3. Mr O'Dempsey to follow up with Professor Walton on template letters and lessons learned in other settings.

Professor Michael raised an issue in relation to the non-practising categories of registration and potentially unintended impacts, for example, retired practitioners involved in teaching.

The Committee note discussions underway with National Boards in relation to the current definition of 'practicing'.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 3.1.2: Feedback from Professions Reference Group**

Members noted the feedback from Professions Reference Group.

*ACTION: Nil*

### **Item 3.1.3: Draft Actions from the Chairs Forum**

Mr Robertson provided an overview of the recent Chairs' Forum:

- Discussion on formalising relationships between boards, AHPRA and accrediting councils.
- Ms Fran Thorn (CEO of Department of Health in Victoria) met with Chairs at the Forum on behalf of AHMAC to discuss ongoing links between National Boards and governments.

The Committee noted:

- The need for further work on how the Agency can promote information and exchange between National Boards and AHPRA on best practice and innovation. It was agreed that this topic will be further considered by the Management Committee in early 2011.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 3.1.4: Updated Management Calendar**

Members noted the updated Management Calendar, requesting the addition of key milestones for the introduction of the four new professions.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 3.1.5: End of Year functions (verbal Update)**

Mr Fletcher and Mr Ilott provided a verbal update of the current proposal for end of year functions.

Most State Offices are organising an end of year function for state and national board members, staff and key stakeholders to acknowledge the achievements of 2010.

In addition, most State Offices, through their social clubs are organising staff related events. It has been proposed that the Agency make a small donation to each social club. This has been supported by national Board Chairs

Mr Allen reported the strong endorsement by national Board Chairs for an end of year function and stressed AHPRA responsibility to ensure appropriate budget management.

Mr Fletcher and Mr Gorton reported positive feedback from the first Agency Management Committee Roadshow held in Hobart, noting indications from staff they would like to have more visibility of the Agency Management Committee.

Members agreed:

- To support the proposed approach to end of year functions and a donation of \$500 to each social club, noting the endorsement of national Board Chairs.
- During 2011, to hold periodic Agency Management Committee meetings in one of the AHPRA state and territory offices, pending consideration of costs.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 3.2 Action Summary**

The Committee reviewed the action summary noting:

- Proposals for ways of strengthening criminal history checks for applicants from overseas will be considered at the February meeting.
- AHPRA funds are now being held in a short term deposit. The Investment Policy will be reviewed at an upcoming meeting, in the light of final feedback from National Boards.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 4: Items for decision**

#### **Item 4.1: Business Management**

#### **Item 4.2: Registration and Renewals**

The Committee noted the paper on registration and renewals.

Members noted:

- Clear communication needs to be delivered to registrants outlining the registration and renewal process – online renewal is the fastest and most effective method.
- Measures to be implemented to manage potential high volumes of ‘walk in’ renewals, for example, access to computer terminals to complete online renewal or a ‘deposit drop box’ system for application forms.
- Steps to ensure the External Contact Centre is prepared for high call volumes in December/January peak period.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 4.3: Policies**

#### **Item 4.3.1 Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

The Committee approved the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy noting:

- Wording on objectionable material to be altered to ‘something described or depicted in a manner that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult’.
- Wording for system monitoring be altered to include ‘The system belongs to AHPRA. We reserve the right to audit or monitor usage of the system’
- The policy be amended, clearly outlining expectations of AHPRA mobile phone users in relation to availability out of hours.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

### **Item 4.4: Other Items**

#### **Item 4.4.1: Entry of Western Australia to the National Scheme**

The Committee noted the successful management of the transition of Western Australia to the National Scheme.

Professor Michael queried the 1300 number as the main point of contact for stakeholders to AHPRA staff. Mr Fletcher advised that State Offices have been encouraged to provide key stakeholders with direct staff contact details.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

#### **Item 4.4.2: Future Directions on Accreditation**

Mr Robertson provided a report on the future directions with accreditation arrangements

Members were recommended to:

1. Agree to establish a Working Party with representatives of accrediting organisations, National Boards, AManC and AHPRA to establish shared goals and quality mechanisms including:
  - a. development of a formal agreement for accreditation services,
  - b. further development of a quality framework at Attachment A for accreditation services,
  - c. revision of the AManC procedures for the development of accreditation standards dated 16 November 2009 at Attachment B,
2. Agree that the working party return final drafts of these items to National Boards for feedback and AManC for approval by March 2011,
3. Note that subject to feedback from AManC, a paper similar to this one will be presented to the November Board meetings.

The Committee supported the recommendations. Professor Walton, Professor Michael and Professor Gray expressed interest in assisting with the working party for establishing goals and quality mechanisms

*ACTION: AHPRA*

#### **Item 5: Performance Reporting and Risk Management**

##### **Item 5.1: Operational Update**

The Committee noted the Operational Update.

*ACTION: Nil*

#### **Item 6: Items for Information**

##### **Item 6.1: Key issues from October board meetings**

Mr Robertson updated the Committee on key issues arising from the October Board meetings:

1. The need to promote consistency in Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition arrangements between boards.
2. Transitional update for Western Australia.
3. Boards are seeking further detail in routine reports on registration matters.
4. Progress on achieving accurate and complete payment for board members.
5. Feedback from Board members survey, with the possibility of extending the survey to state board members in future years.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

**Item 7: Briefing**

**Item 7.1: Briefing from Ms Di Sisely, Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner**

Ms Di Sisely provided an overview and update of the work to establish her role as the Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner under the National Law. Her first report to the Ministerial Council is due in January 2011.

Members agreed:

- To meet again with Ms Sisely once she has prepared her initial report to the Ministerial Council;
- That the Agency should regularly report to the Management Committee information about complaints which are being received and dealt with internally.

*ACTION: AHPRA*

**Item 8: Other business**

Professor Walton updated Members on the work being undertaken with nominees of National Boards to develop an overall strategic plan for the National Scheme. The engagement and commitment of National Board nominees has been a particular strength.

Members agreed on the need to ensure that the outcomes of the planning process reflected the core roles, responsibilities and priorities of the National Scheme in terms of professional regulation.

It was agreed that Professor Walton should chair the upcoming 'face-face' meeting of the planning group.

*ACTION: AHPRA*