



Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council

COMMUNIQUÉ 5 August 2011

Health Workforce Ministers meeting today in Darwin discussed national health workforce issues and were updated on recent progress on the National Registration Scheme by the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) which has been in operation since July 2010. The meeting of the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council, was chaired by WA Health Minister, Dr Kim Hames.

AHPRA Updates

The Agency reported that more than 529,000 health practitioners across the 10 different professions are registered and information about them is published on the online National Registers.

There have been continued improvements to the registrant services, including an expanded renewals strategy with direct email reminders, advertising of renewal messages through employers and professional associations, designated customer service teams in each state and territory office and streamlined renewals and approvals systems.

The Agency reported on the successful registration renewal of over 210,000 nurses and midwives. Health Ministers congratulated AHPRA on this outcome and the strong progress being made overall.

Applications for Unregistered Professions to be Considered for Entry into the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

Currently the National Scheme encompasses 10 health professions with four new professions being included from 1 July 2012. These are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, medical radiation practice and occupational therapy.

Ministers have commissioned work on unregistered professions and future directions for national registration. Given this, Ministers agreed to defer consideration of the inclusion of additional professions into the NRAS. Ministers agreed that it would be premature to consider further applications for the scheme until this work has been completed, other than paramedics.

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia – Revised English Language Skills Registration Standard

Ministers today endorsed the revised English language registration standard from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the Board). The Board consulted extensively with the profession on this revised standard which responds to a range of issues raised by stakeholders and is now more closely aligned with the other nine registered health professions. The new standard will come into force from September 2011.

Dental Board of Australia – Scope of Registration Practice

At the AHWMC meeting of 22 April 2010, Ministers asked that the roles and scope of practice of dental therapists, oral health therapists and dental hygienists be reviewed. Health Workforce Australia (HWA) is reviewing the role and scope of practice of therapists and hygienists. Ministers noted today that a draft final report is due to be provided in September 2011.

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