

## Media release

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November 2011

### First national medical regulation data released

#### **The first national data on medical regulation is now available with the release of Medical Board of Australia information in the AHPRA and National Boards' annual report**

The release of the 2010-11 annual report by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the national boards gives an essential, first-ever insight into Australia's 530,115 health practitioners across 10 professions regulated under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme). One in 44 Australians is a registered health practitioner.

As well as profiling the professions and practitioners, the report provides the first national data on notifications involving health practitioners and the actions taken by national boards to protect public safety.

Chair of the Medical Board of Australia, Dr Joanna Flynn AM, said the 2010-11 annual report demonstrated transparent and accountable reporting by AHPRA and the national board about their work in regulating the profession and protecting the public.

"The introduction of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010 represents an unparalleled reform of health practitioner regulation. This annual report provides comprehensive data about the first year of operation of the national scheme, across all areas of operation of AHPRA and the national boards," Dr Flynn said.

"There is now clear evidence that the national scheme is sound, robust and a great asset for the Australian community," she said.

Important information about the medical profession published in the report includes:

- There are 88,293 registered medical practitioners in Australia, which is about 17% of total registrants in the National Scheme
- There are 16,839 registered medical students in Australia, which is 17% of the student register
- There are 6,221 medical practitioners with limited registration, most of these International Medical Graduates registered to practise in areas of need; and nearly 51,000 medical specialists (ie: practitioners with specialist only or general and specialist registration)
- 26% of practitioners (23,265) are aged between 30 and 39 years; 24% (20,810) are aged between 40 and 49 years; 20% (17,802) are aged between 50 and 59 years; and 1,801 aged over 80 years (Table 7)
- About 62% of the profession is male and 30% of practitioners are based in NSW, 24% in Victoria and 19% in Queensland (Table 8)

- There were 4,122 notifications against medical practitioners received during the year, representing about 51% of all notifications received under the National Law These 4122 notifications were made about 4% of all registered medical practitioners (Tables 13 and 14, Annual Report)
- The Medical Board of Australia (or the Medical Council of NSW) took immediate action on the registration of 62 practitioners during the year, and imposed conditions or accepted undertakings on the registration of about 75% of these practitioners as a result (see Table 21, Annual Report)
- There were 144 mandatory notifications received about medical practitioners, which is 33.6% of the 428 mandatory notifications received for all professions, and a rate of 16.3 per 10,000 practitioners (Table 22 and 23)
- Of all mandatory notifications received, 59.1% were about a departure from standards, 29.9% related to impairment, 6.8% about sexual misconduct and 4.2% about drug and alcohol issues (Table 24)
- The Medical Board took immediate action in relation to 16 mandatory notifications and as a result imposed conditions, accepted an undertaking or suspended the practitioners registration in all cases (Table 27)

Dr Flynn said while comparisons with the previous regulatory schemes could only be made cautiously, the rate of notifications about medical practitioners appeared broadly consistent with previous years.

The annual report is an important source of information about the Board's activities in 2010-11. Achievements for the Medical Board of Australia during the year are detailed from page 83. The Board has also published a **financial overview** to explain in more detail the costs of national registration, the transition to the national scheme and the Board's budget approach. This is published on the Board's [website](#).

Dr Flynn encouraged medical practitioners, patients, employers, medical educators and the Australian community to read the 2010-11 annual report, published at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Legislation and publications > AHPRA publications*.

### More information about the National Scheme

More summaries of annual report data are published on the AHPRA website:

- [registrations](#)
- [criminal records checks](#)
- [notifications](#)
- [state and territory roundup: breakdown by profession and](#)
- [national information about other regulated health practitioner professions.](#)

*For more information*

- Refer to the [AHPRA Annual Report](#)
- Visit [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200

*\*AHPRA and the National Boards are responsible for the management of notifications against practitioners across Australia, except in NSW, where the Health Professional Councils, supported by the Health Professions Council Authority (HPCA), are responsible.*