



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Media release

1 November 2013

2012/13 National Scheme Annual Report published

The publication of the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the National Boards of the 14 registered health professions sees a fivefold increase in the data published about the work of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme over the 12 months to 30 June 2013.

Each year, AHPRA and the National Boards report to the Ministerial Council on activities and performance. The annual report provides a national snapshot of the work and finances of the National Scheme and is tabled in the parliaments of each of state and territory and the Commonwealth.

'Our annual report explains the work we do, and accounts to the community, health practitioners and governments about how we do it,' AHPRA Agency Management Committee Chair, Mr Peter Allen, said.

There are now more than 590,000 health practitioners registered to practise in Australia – an increase in all professions and more than ever before – with one in 20 working Australians a registered health practitioner.

'The National Scheme has a significant impact on the lives of all Australians – directly on all health practitioners who are registered to practise, and indirectly through our work in partnership with National Boards to protect public safety and maintain professional standards,' Mr Allen said.

2013 highlights detailed in the report include:

- a 14% increase in notifications (complaints) in the past year (8,648 notifications (including NSW¹) – up from 7,549 last year
- a 41% increase in the number of notifications where agreed action was completed and the notification closed (5,041 matters)
- a 33% increase in mandatory notifications, varied across professions and states and territories. The National Law requires health practitioners, employers and educational providers to report certain types of notifications on a mandatory basis.
- 54% of notifications were about medical practitioners, who make up around 16% of all registered practitioners. 18% of notifications related to nurses and midwives, and 12% to dental practitioners.
- 53% of notifications were about practitioners' conduct, 38% about their performance and 8% about their health.
- National Boards took 'immediate action' on 266 matters – with the practitioner's registration restricted in 228 (86%) cases. Immediate action refers to matters where there may be an immediate risk to public safety that requires a swift response.

¹ NSW is part of the National Scheme but notifications about practitioners' health, performance and conduct are handled by the [HCCC](#) and the NSW health professional councils supported by the [HPCA](#).

- AHPRA received 63,113 applications for registration across all professions and dealt with more than 551,000 registration renewals, 92% online. Online renewals make it much easier for health practitioners to keep their registration up to date.
- 60,053 criminal history checks were conducted, resulting in 3,284 (5%) disclosable court outcomes. As a result 27 practitioners' registration was limited; two registration applications were refused.
- More than 121,122 students were registered.

The Chair of Forum of National Board Chairs and Chair of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, Dr Mary Russell, said effective and proportionate regulation was the constant goal of all National Boards.

'Every decision National Boards make consciously focuses on striking the right balance between public safety and facilitating access to health services,' Dr Russell said.

A fivefold increase in data published in this year's annual report provides more detail, and more transparency about our work, AHPRA CEO Mr Martin Fletcher said.

'Our top priority this year has been to improve our management of notifications. We continue to work closely with National Boards to ensure national regulation is proportionate, effective and timely,' Mr Fletcher said.

'Better measurement and reporting systems have been introduced and AHPRA is committed to meeting agreed performance expectations for managing notifications.'

AHPRA has made many improvements to services, processes and systems in the past year working in close partnership with National Boards.

'We continue to improve services to practitioners and the community, by expanding online services to make it easier for practitioners to renew and apply for registration; streamlining our customer service teams and improving our websites to improve our response to common queries,' Mr Fletcher said.

Other highlights for the year include the smooth introduction of four new health professions into the National Scheme, bringing 40,000 additional practitioners into national regulation – many of them now registered for the first time.

'We have strengthened links with the community and the professions: establishing a Community Reference Group to promote more community input and holding a series of community forums around Australia,' Mr Fletcher said.

'Constructive ongoing liaison has been maintained with professional associations nationally through the Professions Reference Group and within each state and territory,' he said.

The annual report is published on the [AHPRA website](#) under *Legislation and publications*.

It includes a detailed report – including data – for each National Board.

[For more information](#)

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