



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

Community Reference Group Communique

Q2 / 2018 meeting

The Community Reference Group (CRG) met at the AHPRA National office in Melbourne on Thursday 26 April 2018.

AHPRA update

AHPRA CEO, Martin Fletcher, updated the group on the following:

- Tranche 1 amendments to the National Law have been passed, and came in to effect from 1 March 2018 in all jurisdictions except Western Australia.
- AHPRA commissioned research in to vexatious complaints, with the research finding there is more risk from people not reporting concerns than from making dubious complaints.

Regulatory operations

Members were updated by Susan Biggar, National Engagement Advisor, on AHPRA's notifications engagement work to date, and the CRG's involvement. The group heard that a fundamental issue for AHPRA is public confidence, and AHPRA needs this in order to do its work well. The group heard that AHPRA's research has found notifiers' key concerns are wanting more transparency; more updates on the status of their notifications; timely results; wanting to feel heard; and wanting satisfactory outcomes to their notifications.

The group discussed ways to help address these concerns, including AHPRA staff helping notifiers contact other relevant agencies at the first point of contact, if AHPRA is not the appropriate body to raise their issue with. Ms Biggar and the group discussed equipping AHPRA staff with the appropriate tools and training to help improve communications with notifiers and practitioners, especially in very challenging scenarios.

New online functionalities and future digital work

Members were updated by Sarndrah Horsfall, Executive Director, Business Services, on upcoming upgrades to AHPRA's regulatory system. This will involve a new online notifications portal, and new smart forms for registration, where people will be able to upload all relevant documentation online, rather than hard copy.

The group will be involved in testing new systems when they are ready.

Consultations

Members were updated on the accreditation review, which is currently open to public consultation, and members have submitted their feedback. Members also provided feedback on a preliminary consultation on the *Registration Standard: Endorsement for scheduled medicines for registered nurses prescribing in partnership*, which will be released for public consultation soon.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy

Members were updated by Gilbert Hennequin, Program Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy, and CRG member Jacqui Gibson-Roos on the vision of this Strategy to close the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Members heard that patient safety includes the inextricably linked elements of clinical and cultural safety, and that stakeholders are working together to achieve equity in health outcomes by 2031.

Members were supportive of the Strategy, and also encouraged organisations to develop their own Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP) in order to progress ideas in to action. The group looks forward to further updates as the Strategy progresses.

NRAS Research Framework

Members heard from Paul Shinkfield, National Director, Strategy and Research, that the NRAS Research Framework seeks to help AHPRA to strategically identify priority areas for research. The Framework is reviewed annually.

Mr Shinkfield said the Research Evaluation Committee (REC) provides advice and recommendations to the AHPRA National Executive on the strategic use of data and research to inform policy development. He encouraged CRG members to nominate if they would like to be on the selection panel when the REC recruits a Community Member.

The next meeting of the CRG will be held at the AHPRA National office in August 2018.

Darlene Cox

Acting Chair
Community Reference Group