

## Communiqué

June 2020

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee meeting – May 2020

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee (the Committee) undertakes accreditation functions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice in the national scheme regulating health practitioners.

The Committee publishes this communiqué on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Board of Australia (the Board) [accreditation webpage](#). Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

#### Committee's response to COVID-19

The Committee and Ahpra are closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impacts on accredited and approved programs. The Committee has released a statement outlining its plans for its accreditation activities for the remainder of 2020, on the ['News and updates'](#) accreditation webpage of the Board's website.

#### 2020 Accreditation Committee activities

The 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee was held on 12 May 2020 via Zoom. The Committee has scheduled two further meetings in 2020.

Some activities that were discussed at the Committee's May 2020 meeting are outlined more thoroughly below.

#### Accreditation standards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice

In 2019 the Committee completed its project to revise its current accreditation standards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice (2013 accreditation standards). The Board approved the revised accreditation standards [here](#) (2019 accreditation standards) in February 2019, and they take effect on 1 June 2020, alongside the professional capabilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners [here](#).

The 2019 accreditation standards will continue to provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only graduates with the knowledge, skills and professional attributes necessary to practise in a competent and ethical manner qualify for registration in the profession.

#### 2019 accreditation standards – deferral of implementation

As you are aware, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia (the Board) approved [Accreditation standards: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice 2019](#) (2019 accreditation standards), which education providers and their approved programs of study will be assessed against under the National Law. The 2019 accreditation standards take effect on 1 June 2020.

As indicated above the Committee has deferred transition arrangements for all education providers accreditation against the 2019 accreditation standards. The Committee's planned schedule of full accreditation assessments against the 2019 accreditation standards, for all education providers between 2020 and 2022, is also under review.

The Program Accreditation Team will be able to advise education providers of their specific transition requirements later in the year.

## Monitoring approved programs of study

The Committee will continue to monitor accredited programs of study throughout 2020, however due to COVID-19 it has revised its monitoring activities in 2020, including routine annual monitoring. The Committee encourages all education providers to read its updated [statement](#) on the accreditation pages of the Board's webpages. The Program Accreditation Team will write to all education providers later in 2020 advising them of the monitoring requirement to submit information about any changes to their programs in response to COVID-19.

## Development of accreditation processes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice

In October 2019, a project commenced to develop a common accreditation process across the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice, Podiatry and Paramedicine professions (the five professions). The common process document entitled *Guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs* (multi-profession guidelines) for the five professions underwent a targeted consultation between December 2019 and February 2020.

At its May 2020 meeting, the Committee agreed to adopt the multi-profession guidelines document. The multi-profession guidelines will be published on the accreditation webpages of the Board's website.

Profession-specific guidance (such as assessment team composition and assessment site visit requirements) will be developed and published as required.

## Stakeholder engagement

In December 2019, the Program Accreditation Team, on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice, Paramedicine and Podiatry Accreditation Committees (the five Committees), commenced a project to develop a common accreditation stakeholder engagement framework (the framework). The framework aims to support the five Committees to plan and engage strategically with stakeholders at key points during accreditation projects.

The Chairs of the five Accreditation Committees considered a first draft of the framework at their meeting in February 2020. The project will continue throughout 2020.

## New arrangements for reporting to the Board and Ahpra

In November 2019, Ahpra's Agency Management Committee (AManC) finalised the initial reporting model for the current accreditation agreements and terms of reference, due dates for reports during the period of the current agreements and terms of reference, and initial report templates. The Committee has submitted its first report against the new requirements. The reporting obligations are outlined in Attachment F (Reporting and Documentation) and Attachment G (Key Performance Indicators) of the Committee's [Terms of Reference](#).

## Contact information

For any queries related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice program accreditation, please contact the Program Accreditation Team via email at [program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au).

For more information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice accreditation please visit the Board's [accreditation](#) webpage.

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