

Communiqué

June 2020 meeting of the Accreditation Advisory Committee

9 June 2020

The Accreditation Advisory Committee (AAC) was established by Ahpra's Agency Management Committee in early 2018 to provide oversight and leadership on accreditation governance, accountability and transparency issues, and a whole of Scheme perspective on Ahpra's management of contracts for the performance of the accreditation functions.

The AAC issues a communiqué after each meeting to keep stakeholders informed about its work.

This communiqué provides information about the AAC's eleventh meeting, held via Zoom on 9 June 2020. The key focus of this meeting was discussion of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on accreditation, finalising the revised *Procedures for the development of accreditation standards* and updates on the ongoing work of the Committee.

COVID-19 and accreditation

Members discussed accreditation issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including approaches by National Scheme bodies to monitor impacts of substantial changes to program delivery and scheduled clinical placements and manage associated risks. They also noted suggested future approaches to maintain relationships developed between UA, professional accreditation bodies and Ahpra during the pandemic; and innovations introduced by education providers in online and virtual methods of teaching. The Committee will continue to monitor downstream impacts of the pandemic.

Overview of first reports by accreditation authorities under new agreements and terms of reference

Accreditation authorities (councils and committees) submitted their first reports under the new agreements/terms of reference at the end of March 2020. Members noted that the full March 2020 reports will be shared with all National Boards and accreditation authorities. A more structured assessment and evidence guide will be developed through the Accreditation Liaison Group (ALG).

Establishment of Education provider reference group

Ahpra has progressed work to establish the Education Provider Reference Group (EPRG). The AAC Chair met with members of the UA HPESG in March to discuss accreditation-related issues, including clarifying the role and membership of the EPRG and exploring opportunities to strengthen engagement between UA HPESG and Ahpra. Members noted the invitation which will be sent to relevant organisations to nominate representatives.

Update on 2020-21 accreditation authority proposed workplans and funding requests

National Boards considered the work plans and funding requests from accreditation authorities at their February and March meetings. A confirmation letter was sent to each accreditation authority that submitted their request prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and invited these authorities to submit an updated proposed work plan and funding request to reflect changes in activity due to the pandemic. Ahpra will publish the funding arrangements and work plans for the 2020-21 financial year when they are confirmed.

Update on implementation of Ministers' decisions on Accreditation Systems Review recommendations

Ahpra has progressed work likely to be needed to implement the policy direction and Ministers' decisions on the ASR recommendations, drawing on information in the Health Ministers' endorsed response outlined in the consultation report.

Specific areas of work include:

- drafting terms of reference for the new Independent Accreditation Committee (IAC), noting Ministers' February 2020 announcement identified Ahpra should develop these, in consultation with proposed members, with the final membership and Terms of Reference being approved by the Jurisdictional Advisory Committee
- drafting papers for consideration by the new IAC including briefing papers on Ministers' decisions on the ASR recommendations and potential approaches to deliver on relevant reforms, and
- drafting a stakeholder engagement plan for consideration by the IAC.

Finalising Procedures for development of accreditation standards

Further work has been completed since the March meeting and the proposed revised accreditation standards procedures and registration standards will be submitted to the Agency Management Committee's June 2020 meeting for final approval.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020-2025 launched in February of this year and the recent Ministerial policy directions were taken into account in developing the final proposed revised accreditation standards procedures.

Next meeting

The next AAC meeting will be held on 7 September 2020 via Zoom

More information

Queries regarding the work of the AAC may be directed to Ms Helen Townley, National Director, Policy and Accreditation on Helen.Townley@ahpra.gov.au or phone 03 8708 9111.

Membership

Gill Callister PSM (*Chair*)
Associate Professor Lynette Cusack
Adjunct Professor Karen Crawshaw PSM
Emeritus Professor Christine Ewan AM
Dr Susan (Sue) Gould

Brett Simmonds

Dr Susan Young

Chair, Agency Management Committee
Chair, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Agency Management Committee
Independent expert
Community member, Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia
Co-Chair Accreditation Liaison Group, Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia
Agency Management Committee

Invited experts

Dr Heather Buchan
Dr Karen Treloar
Professor Ian Wronski AO

Australian Commission on Safety & Quality in Health Care
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
University of Australia's Health Professions Education Standing Group