

Communiqué

September 2020 meeting of the Accreditation Advisory Committee

7 September 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 twelfth meeting, held via Zoom on 7 September 2020. The key focus of this meeting was further discussion about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on accreditation, reporting by accreditation authorities under agreements and terms of reference, a discussion with guests from the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum and updates on the ongoing work of the Committee.

COVID-19 and accreditation

Members discussed accreditation issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including an update on approaches by National Scheme bodies to continue to monitor and respond to downstream impacts of substantial changes to program delivery and scheduled clinical placements on approved programs and graduating students. They noted that despite disruptions, delays to mid-year 2020 graduates had not been as significant as may have been expected and monitoring of the impact on end of year 2020 graduates will continue. The Committee will continue to monitor downstream impacts of the pandemic, including effects of the 2020 disruptions on students in earlier stages of their studies.

Reporting 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 discussed high-level summaries and extracts of the reports and noted these will be shared with all National Boards and accreditation authorities. Members also discussed a proposed approach to the November 2020 reports and will continue to receive updates on work to refine the reporting model through the Accreditation Liaison Group (ALG) including progress on developing a more structured assessment and evidence guide.

Discussion with guests from the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum

Members welcomed the Chair and Deputy Chair from the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF) to their third AAC meeting as regular guest attendees, to discuss mutual items of relevance to the Committee and the HPACF. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Forum updated members on several HPACF projects including their 2020-2023 strategic plan, enhancing collaborative approaches to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans for an interprofessional colloquium in 2021 and guidance for accreditation authorities on reflecting requirements for safe prescribing in accreditation standards. Following attendance by the Forum Chair and Deputy Chair, members reflected on the information presented and noted the importance of continued engagement between the HPACF and the AAC.

Finalising Procedures for development of accreditation standards

Members noted Agency Management Committee has approved the revised procedures and they have been published on the Ahpra website, together with information to support implementation.

Next meeting

The next AAC meeting will be held on 8 December 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