

## Communiqué

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March 2020

### February 2020 Paramedicine Accreditation Committee meeting

#### Introduction

On 1 December 2018, paramedicine became a regulated profession within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) determined that the accreditation functions for the paramedicine profession would be exercised by a committee established by the Board. In March 2019, the Board established the Paramedicine Accreditation Committee (the Committee) under the National Law.

The Committee publishes this communiqué on the Board's [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 emergency and its potential impacts on accredited and approved programs. The Committee has released a statement on the 'News and updates' accreditation webpage of the Board's website. This will be updated if the Committee's approach to the situation needs to change.

#### About the Paramedicine Accreditation Committee

The Committee's roles include:

- Development of accreditation standards to the Board for approval.
- Assessment and accrediting of programs of study and education providers against the accreditation standards.
- Monitoring approved programs of study.
- Providing advice to the board on issues in paramedicine education and clinical training.

#### Accreditation Committee meetings

The fifth meeting of the Committee was held on 6 February 2020 in Melbourne.

The February meeting was the first meeting for 2020. The Committee has four other meetings scheduled in 2020, being:

- 9 April 2020
- 16 July 2020
- 6 October 2020, and
- 17 December 2020.

## Accreditation Committee activities

In 2020 the Committee will, amongst other things:

- continue to develop accreditation standards and accreditation processes
- continue its evaluation of the routine annual monitoring submissions from all education providers delivering approved paramedicine programs of study
- provide its reports to the Board using new reporting requirements against strategic and quality framework key performance indicators; and
- call for applications to the Paramedicine Accreditation Committee pool of accreditation assessors, based on the approach to establishing assessment team approved at the February meeting.

These topics are covered more thoroughly below.

### Accreditation standards development

The Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing the paramedicine accreditation standards (accreditation standards) against which education providers and their implementation of paramedicine programs of study (programs) are assessed when applying for accreditation under the National Law. The Board is responsible for approving and publishing the accreditation standards.

In mid-2019 the Committee commenced work on the development of the accreditation standards. A targeted preliminary consultation commenced in August 2019, and this closed in early October 2019. Feedback was received from stakeholders and analysed by Ahpra's appointed project team.

In early December 2019 the appointed Expert Reference Group considered the feedback and updated the draft accreditation standards. Public consultation then commenced in mid-December 2019 and closed on 13 March 2020.

The Committee anticipates presenting the accreditation standards to the Board for approval in May 2020.

Following approval and implementation of the accreditation standards, the Committee will commence assessment of all approved (under section 310 of the National Law) paramedicine programs of study against the accreditation standards starting in late 2020. The Committee will be writing to all education providers in the first half of 2020, advising them of anticipated timeframes for assessment against the accreditation standards.

### Stakeholder engagement

The Committee (via the Program Accreditation Team) continues to engage with education providers and other core stakeholders through correspondence via email; phone calls; face-to-face and videoconference meetings; and communiques. The Committee has to date sought stakeholder input on various consultations, including the draft accreditation standards for paramedicine and the draft multi-profession guidelines.

One core stakeholder activity to-date for the Committee has been its paramedicine information sessions, conducted in early 2020.

### Paramedicine accreditation information sessions

At its September 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed to host a series of information sessions for relevant stakeholders across Australia, in February 2020, during public consultation of the draft accreditation standards for paramedicine.



*Attendees listening intently to Tony Hucker present at the Brisbane information session*

The sessions were held in:

- Melbourne, Wednesday 5 February 2020
- Brisbane, Monday 17 February 2020
- Sydney, Tuesday 18 February 2020
- Adelaide, Monday 24 February 2020
- Perth, Tuesday 25 February 2020

The sessions presented the Committee to stakeholders; provided information on its role to undertake paramedicine accreditation functions under the National Law; and introduced the draft accreditation standards. The Committee also introduced the draft Multiprofession Accreditation Guidelines (draft guidelines). There were plenty of opportunities at the sessions for stakeholders to ask questions in relation to the Committee's role in the National Scheme, the draft accreditation standards, and the draft guidelines.



*Marty Nichols discusses the role of the Committee, at the Sydney information session*

A webinar of the Melbourne information session is [now available](#). Feedback during the sessions was positive, and attendees were encouraged to make a submission during the public consultation.

The Expert Reference Group will consider any feedback gathered through the public consultation which closes in mid-March 2020.

### **Development of accreditation processes for paramedicine**

At its September 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed to adopt draft multi-professional guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs (draft guidelines). The guidelines are being developed in conjunction with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice and Podiatry Accreditation Committees.

The guidelines were released for a targeted consultation and it is expected the guidelines will be published in mid-2020.

### **Monitoring approved programs of study**

As per its agreed approach to monitoring, the Committee continues its inaugural round of routine annual monitoring of all 27 paramedicine programs approved by the Board under section 310 of the National Law.

### **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 will submit its first report against the new requirements, to the Board and Ahpra by 31 March 2020. The reporting obligations are outlined in Attachment F and Attachment G of the Accreditation Committee's [Terms of Reference](#).

### **Considered the approach to establishing assessment teams**

At its February 2020 meeting, the Committee agreed on its approach to establishing assessment teams.

Assessment teams will generally comprise three assessors, one of which will be Committee member, and be composed so that each team covers the following criteria (across the three members):

- current registration with the Paramedicine Board of Australia
- sound knowledge of education system and experience in teaching and learning, and
- sound knowledge of paramedicine

## Call for accreditation assessor applications

The Committee agreed to commence a campaign to recruit accreditation assessors starting on 2 March 2020. The campaign is advertised on the [accreditation webpage](#) of the Board's website. The applications for the initial expression of interest will close Wednesday, 15 April at 5.00pm AEST. The Committee has appointed its Selection Advisory Panel to review the applications and interview the shortlisted candidates.

The Committee will consider the Selection Advisory Panel's recommendations of accreditation assessor appointments at its July 2020 meeting. All successfully appointed accreditation assessors will be required to undergo assessor training in the second half of 2020.

The Committee are actively seeking applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates who meet one or more of the criteria.

## Contact information

For any queries related to paramedicine program accreditation, please contact the Paramedicine Accreditation Committee via the Program Accreditation Team at [program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au).

For more information on paramedicine accreditation please visit the Board's [accreditation webpage](#). Further information will be added to the website as the Committee's accreditation functions progress.

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