

## Communiqué

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### July 2020 Paramedicine Accreditation Committee meeting

In March 2019, the Paramedicine Board of Australia (the National Board) established the Paramedicine Accreditation Committee (the Committee) under the National Law to undertake the accreditation functions for the paramedicine profession.

This communiqué provides information about the Committee's recent activities. The Committee publishes this communiqué on the National 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 pandemic and its potential impacts on accredited and approved programs. The Committee has released statements outlining its plans for its accreditation activities for the remainder of 2020, on the ['News and updates'](#) accreditation webpage.

#### **Congratulations to Queen's Birthday 2020 Honouree Alan Morrison**

The Committee congratulates co-Deputy Chair Alan Morrison who was the recipient of a Queen's Birthday Honour for 2020. Alan has been awarded the Ambulance Service Medal for his commitment to both NSW Ambulance, and the paramedic profession nationally, through his development of, and support for, a professional education system across Australia and New Zealand.

### **Accreditation Committee meeting**

The seventh meeting of the Committee was held on 16 July 2020 via Zoom. The Committee has two remaining meetings scheduled in 2020.

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

#### **Accreditation standards for paramedicine**

The Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing the 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.

As many stakeholders would be aware, the Committee undertook a period of extensive public consultation with stakeholders on the draft proposed accreditation standards from December 2019 – March 2020. The Committee's appointed Expert Reference Group (ERG) considered all stakeholder feedback and made relevant updates to the draft accreditation standards.

At its July 2020 meeting, the Committee confirmed the proposed accreditation standards for paramedicine as ready to submit to the Paramedicine Board of Australia for consideration (and approval) in mid-late 2020.

## Accreditation assessments against approved paramedicine accreditation standards

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the completion date for the project to develop the paramedicine accreditation standards was slightly delayed. As soon as the accreditation standards have been approved by the Board, they will be published on the Committee's accreditation webpages and disseminated to education providers.

As a result of the delay in project timeframes, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on education providers, the Committee agreed to delay initial accreditation assessments against the approved accreditation standards until mid-2021. All education providers will be advised of their estimated accreditation assessment dates later in 2020.

## Guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs

The Committee has recently concluded a project to develop its accreditation process in conjunction with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice and Podiatry Accreditation Committees. The accreditation process, the [Guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs](#) (guidelines) are now available on the Committee's webpages.

## Monitoring approved programs of study

Under section 50 of the National Law, the Committee has a statutory responsibility to monitor approved programs of study and the education providers offering them. Until such time that the accreditation standards for paramedicine are approved by the Board, the Committee must monitor approved programs of study and the education providers offering them to ensure that the Committee and the National Board can be assured that a program of study approved under section 310 of the National Law continues to provide a qualification for the purposes of registration in paramedicine.

At its July 2020 meeting the Committee continued with consideration of further information requested from education providers resulting from the inaugural round of paramedicine education providers' routine annual monitoring submissions, as part of its responsibility to monitor education providers and their programs in 2019/2020.

## COVID-19 special monitoring for all paramedicine education providers

As forecast in its [11 May 2020 statement](#), the Committee is now carrying out special COVID-19 monitoring of all paramedicine Board-approved programs of study.

In an out-of-session meeting in June 2020, the Committee agreed on its framework to collect information from education providers about changes impacting final year students in 2020, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Program Accreditation Team has distributed the COVID-19 reporting template to education providers for completion by the end of July 2020.

## Stakeholder engagement

The Program Accreditation Team on behalf of the Committee continues to engage with education providers via the Committee's [accreditation webpage](#) and through correspondence on email and phone contact, and communiques via the Program Accreditation Team.

## Call for accreditation assessor applications

In March 2020, the Committee commenced a campaign to recruit accreditation assessors, which recently closed. Due to COVID-19, the timeframes for selection and appointment of accreditation assessors were extended and the Selection Advisory Panel (SAP) appointed by the Committee has now evaluated all accreditation assessor applications. Any interviews required are being conducted throughout July and August 2020. The Committee will consider the recommendations from the SAP at its October 2020 meeting and make its selections in late-2020. All successfully appointed accreditation assessors will be required to undergo assessor training in early 2021.

## Contact information

For any queries related to paramedicine program accreditation, please contact the 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 National Board's accreditation webpage. Further information will be added to the website as the Committee's accreditation functions progress.

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