

Recency Of Practice Webinar - FAQ

September 2020

Does the Recency of Practice standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all registered physiotherapists except those with student or non-practising registration.

What must I do to meet the standard if I have had break for family caring, extended leave or illness?

To meet this registration standard, you must complete:

- a minimum of **450 hours** of physiotherapy practice during the three-years before the start of the registration period, **or**
- **150 hours** of physiotherapy practice in the previous registration year.

The standard sets minimum requirements to maintain recency of practice. Meeting these requirements doesn't automatically satisfy your professional and ethical responsibilities to ensure that you recognise and work within the limits of your competence and maintain adequate knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care.

Meeting this registration standard is a requirement of registration for all physiotherapists. During the annual registration renewal process all physiotherapists must declare whether or not they continue to meet this registration standard.

Are there exemptions to this standard?

There are no exemptions to this standard. However, failure to meet this standard does not mean that you are automatically prohibited from returning to practice after a break. More detailed information is provided in the Board's [Guidelines on recency of practice \(link\)](#).

What happens if I don't meet this standard, what do I need to do?

If you want to continue to practise, or return to practice after taking a break, and you don't meet this standard, you will need to provide information to help the Board decide whether you are able to continue to practise.

Supervision

The majority of applicants seeking registration to return to practice after a break of three years or more, or who are applying for renewal but don't meet the recency of practice requirements, are required to be supervised for a period of time.

The Board will consider several factors including what you used to do in your practice, what connection you have retained with the profession and what you propose to do when you return to practice.

Should the Board consider that supervision is a necessary part of your return to practice, you will need to adhere to the [Supervision guidelines for physiotherapy \(link\)](#). This will require a **second**

submission to the Board with information relevant to supervision as well as the documentation detailed in this guideline.

Alternatively, you could provide the completed supervision information with your initial application to return to practice after a break and if the Board decides that you do not need to be supervised, your supervisor would not need to adhere to the supervision requirements. The advantage of applying with a completed supervision plan and associated documents and agreements means that you are less likely to be required to reapply to the Board at a subsequent or future meeting with this information.

If you do not include complete information in accordance with the [Supervision guidelines for physiotherapy \(link\)](#) and the Board determines that supervision is required, processing your application will be delayed

If I am registered as non-practicing physiotherapist, do I need to show evidence of practice if I want to register as practising?

If you have not practised within the three years prior to renewal, you will be required to demonstrate competence to practise and registration will be at the Board's discretion.

Does study, courses, research or non-clinical work count towards practice?

The practice of physiotherapy is not confined to clinical practice, and includes any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients; working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles; and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use their professional skills. Therefore study, research and non-clinical will count if they require use of your professional knowledge and skills.

Are there any refresher courses available?

The physiotherapy Board does not run courses for practitioners. It is suggested that you look for course or specific clinical information to address your learning needs through education providers or your professional association.

Will there be any leniency with practice requirements for this year from AHPRA due to COVID-19?

The Board and Ahpra are aware of the impact of COVID-19 on practitioners, and in some jurisdictions their ability to practice in the same way. COVID-19 may impact those practitioners who wish to demonstrate 150 hours in the past 12 months. All individual circumstance will be assessed on a case by case basis and consider the COVID-19 impact where applicable.

Do internationally trained physiotherapists have to meet this standard to get registered?

No, internationally trained physiotherapists go through a separate process. The Australian Physiotherapy Council assesses the qualifications of overseas-qualified physiotherapists on behalf of the Board. To find out more about this process [please see \(link\)](#).

What are the requirements to re-new a physio registration if I have been overseas? Does my overseas practice count towards recency of practice hours?

If you are an Australian qualified physiotherapist you need to go through the normal Ahpra registration process and your overseas practice experience can be considered as part of recency of practice.

How long is too long before the Board requires someone to return to a program of study. For example, can someone who hasn't practiced for 10 years return to practice and gain registration?

There is no time limit on length of time away from practice. Each application will be assessed on the individual circumstances and include an assessment of such things as your continued connection with the profession during the time away from practice, what you used to do in your practice and what you intend to do on your return.

Will hours worked under the pandemic sub register be considered as recency of practice?

Yes, as long as the work meets the definition of "practice".

What do I need to do when commencing an extended period of leave, occasional or no clinical work and/or clinical teaching?

It is always helpful to plan ahead so that you are able demonstrate the minimum hours of the recency of practice standard when reapplying for registration and to have the evidence to support your application.

If practicing part time, is there part time registration and is practice hours calculated on a pro-rata basis?

There is no part time registration. All practitioners are expected to meet the Board's registration standards however practitioners can accumulate 450 hours over three years or 150 in the previous year to allow for flexibility in relation to part-time or casual work.

What is the process to return to practice after being non practicing?

The process is the same as for any application for returning to practice in that you would need to meet the Recency of practice standard. Recency of practice means that a health practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in the profession since qualifying for, or obtaining registration. The Board considers every application individually. If you consider that your practice during a period of non-practicing registration meets the Recency of practice registration standard, you should provide evidence of this with your application for a return to general registration from non-practicing registration.

For further information please visit our [website](#).