

## Concerns about health practitioners

---

Are you worried about a health practitioner? **If you are worried about their behaviour, work or health; whether they are qualified, or the way they are advertising**, it could mean there is a problem that Ahpra should know about.

If so, you can call Ahpra to have a confidential conversation.

### Who is Ahpra?

Ahpra is the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. Our job is to keep the public safe by making sure only safe and qualified health practitioners work in Australia.

### What does Ahpra do?

#### We register health practitioners.

In Australia, there is a Law that applies to health practitioners<sup>1</sup> in the following professions:

- ✓ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners
- ✓ Chinese medicine practitioners
- ✓ chiropractors
- ✓ dental practitioners (including dentists)
- ✓ medical practitioners (doctors)
- ✓ medical radiation practitioners
- ✓ nurses
- ✓ midwives
- ✓ occupational therapists
- ✓ optometrists
- ✓ osteopaths
- ✓ paramedics
- ✓ pharmacists
- ✓ physiotherapists
- ✓ podiatrists
- ✓ psychologists

The Law says that for somebody to be registered as a health practitioner in any of these professions, they must:

- have a suitable qualification
- be properly trained, and
- practise safely.

These health practitioners need to be registered with us.

---

<sup>1</sup> Called the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

## **We keep a list of health practitioners. This is called the 'register of practitioners'.**

Ahpra keeps a list of every health practitioner who is registered to practise in Australia in the professions listed above. It is called the register of practitioners (the 'list'). We encourage everyone to check whether their health practitioner is registered so they know their practitioner is qualified. You can find the register [here](#).

To check if your health practitioner is registered, you can look at the the list. When a health practitioner's name appears on the list, you know that they are registered and have met [the requirements for registration](#) and they can practise within the scope of their registration. Sometimes a registered practitioner has conditions limiting what they can do, and these restrictions are also published on the list. We have a different list of health practitioners who are **not allowed** to practise. You can find out more about this list [here](#).

## **We make sure practitioners practise safely.**

If you think a health practitioner is not doing their job safely, you can tell us, and we will look into it to be certain they are safe to practise.

### **Are you worried about a health practitioner?**

You might be worried about:

- **Their behaviour**
  - Did the health practitioner behave in a way that made you feel unsafe?
  - Was their behaviour rude, unprofessional or inappropriate?
- **Their work**
  - Did the health practitioner perform their work in a safe way?
  - Was their performance what you expected?
- **Their health**
  - Did the health practitioner seem to have a health problem that stopped them being safe when treating you?
- **Are they really a health practitioner?**
  - Did they say they were a health practitioner, but their name was not on the online Ahpra public register?
  - Do you think they might be lying about their qualifications?
- **Advertising**
  - Did the health practitioner advertise health services in a way that was misleading?
  - For example, did they advertise miracle cures?
- **Something else**
  - Did something not feel right?

You can call us even if you're not certain there was a problem. See our contact details below.

### **Who can be called a health practitioner?**

The Law makes it illegal for people to say they are a health practitioner in the professions listed above, or pretend to be one, when they are not registered with Ahpra.

Only people who are registered health practitioners can use certain job titles. For example, only a person who is registered as a nurse can be called a nurse.

If someone is not trained and registered with Ahpra, it is illegal for them to call themselves one of these titles.

### **Can health practitioners from other countries practise in Australia?**

Some people who move to Australia may be qualified as health practitioners in other countries. If they are not registered with Ahpra in Australia it is illegal for them to use one of these titles or claim to be qualified to practise here. If they want to practise here, they need to be registered with Ahpra.

### Are there some things that only registered health practitioners are allowed to do?

Yes. The Law says that certain procedures can **only** be done by a registered health practitioner, or if a registered health practitioner is supervising. We call these restricted acts. For example, there are some things only a registered dentist or medical practitioner can do, including any irreversible procedures on human teeth or fitting artificial teeth.

If you think someone has been performing these restricted procedures when they shouldn't be, you should let Ahpra know. See our contact details below.

### Are there rules about how a health practitioner can advertise?

Yes. The Law includes important rules about how a health practitioner can advertise their services. A health practitioner's advertising must not:

- be false, misleading or deceptive
- use gifts, discounts or offer prizes or rewards unless the terms and conditions are stated
- use a recommendation or positive statement by a patient about the care they received from the health practitioner
- create an unreasonable expectation about possible results, like a miracle cure, or
- encourage people to use health services they don't need.

### How to contact us

You can go to our website where there is information about interpreter services: [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

Call us on **1300 419 495** to have a confidential conversation.

### Interpreter services

We work with the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National). If you are a non-English speaker or find it easier to speak in your own language you can use the Translating and Interpreting Service to speak to someone at Ahpra. It's free for you to use this service, just call TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to call Ahpra on 1300 419 495.