

Patient and Consumer Health and Safety Impact Assessment – National Boards

March 2022

Assessment purpose

The National Boards' Patient and Consumer Health and Safety Impact Assessment¹ explains the potential impact of a proposed registration standard, code or guideline on the health and safety of the public, members of the community vulnerable to harm and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The four key components considered in the Assessment are:

1. The potential impact of the removal of a registration standard, code or guideline on the health and safety of patients and consumers particularly vulnerable members of the community including approaches to mitigate any potential negative or unintended effects
2. The potential impact of the removal of a registration standard, code or guideline on the health and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples including approaches to mitigate any potential negative or unintended effects
3. Engagement with patients and consumers particularly vulnerable members of the community about the proposal
4. Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples about the proposal.

The National Boards' Health and Safety Impact Assessment aligns with the *National Scheme's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2025](#), [National Scheme engagement strategy 2020-2025](#), [National-Scheme-Strategy 2020-2025](#)* and reflect key aspects of the revised consultation process in the [AManC Procedures for developing registration standards, codes and guidelines and accreditation standards](#).

¹ This assessment has been developed by Ahpra and the National Boards in accordance with section 25(c) and 35(c) of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law* as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). Section 25(c) requires AHPRA to establish procedures for ensuring that the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) operates in accordance with good regulatory practice. Section 35(c) assigns the National Boards functions to develop or approve standards, codes and guidelines for the health profession including the development of registration standards for approval by the COAG Health Council and that provide guidance to health practitioners registered in the profession. Section 40 of the National Law requires National Boards to ensure that there is wide-ranging consultation during the development of a registration standard, code, or guideline.

Below is our assessment of the impact of replacing the Guidelines on infection control with other resources on the health and safety of patients and consumers, particularly members of the community vulnerable to harm, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

1. How will replacing the Guidelines on infection control with other resources impact on patient and consumer health and safety, particularly vulnerable members of the community? What are the actions that have been taken to address or prevent this?

The Dental Board of Australia's (Board) decision to replace the *Guidelines on infection control* (guidelines) with other resources will not have a negative impact on patient and consumer health and safety, particularly members of the community vulnerable to harm. The decision has been carefully considered based on best available evidence, including submissions from stakeholders and the public about potential impacts and benefits, approaches of other regulators, including other National Boards and consideration of the impact of the current guideline.

In line with our **consultation processes**, the Board undertook wide-ranging consultation. Our engagement through consultation has assisted us to meet our responsibilities to protect patient safety and health care quality. The Board consulted with a variety of stakeholders at preliminary and at public consultation, and promoted its proposal widely, including via its newsletter, website and through stakeholder networks.

The Board has carefully considered this feedback to identify any unintended impacts (including potential negative impacts) for replacing the guidelines with other resources. We have fully considered and taken actions to address any potential negative impacts for patients and consumers. We will continue to engage with peak community and consumer groups, patient and consumers in order to get input and views from members of the community vulnerable to harm.

2. How will this proposal impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples? What are the actions that have been taken to address or prevent this?

The Board has carefully considered any potential impact of replacing the guidelines with other resources on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and how the impact compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples might be different. The Board believes replacing the guidelines with other resources will not have a negative impact, and may have a positive impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples health and safety. Our engagement through consultation has further informed the decision to replace the guidelines with other resources to help us to meet our responsibilities to protect patient safety and health care quality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The Board is committed to the National Scheme's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020-2025](#) which focuses on achieving patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the norm, and the inextricably linked elements of clinical and [cultural safety](#). As part of the consultation process, we have undertaken wide-ranging consultation and tried to find the best way to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in a meaningful way. We will continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and stakeholders in order to continue to get their input and views.

Continuing to engage with relevant organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples will help us to identify any other future impacts. We have fully considered and taken actions to address any potential negative impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

3. How will the impact of replacing the guidelines with other resources be actively monitored and evaluated?

Part of the Board's work in keeping the public safe is ensuring that all Board standards, codes and guidelines, or the impact of removing, replacing or changing them, are regularly reviewed.

In keeping with this the Board will evaluate the outcomes of its decision to replace the guidelines with other resources to check that it is working as intended and that there are no unintended impacts. This includes evaluating the reach and effectiveness of the resources developed, as well as monitoring any potential impacts on the way the Board is regulating, or any regulatory insights arising from notifications.