

Communiqué

April 2023 meeting of the Accreditation Committee

The Ahpra Board established the Accreditation Committee (the committee) consistent with [Ministerial Council Policy Direction 2020-1](#) to provide independent and expert advice on accreditation reform and other National Scheme accreditation matters to National Scheme entities (National Boards, Accreditation Authorities and Ahpra). Other external entities performing accreditation roles as part of the National Scheme, such as specialist colleges and postgraduate medical councils should have regard for the committee's advice, where relevant.

The Accreditation Committee issues a communiqué after each meeting to keep stakeholders informed about its work.

The Accreditation Committee held its seventh meeting via videoconference on 5 April 2023. The Committee welcomed Honorary Associate Professor Carmen Parter as an observer to the meeting. The key areas considered by the Committee reflected its workplan including consultations on the proposed initial glossary of accreditation terms and proposed interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP) statement of intent; and deep dive papers that provide an informed evidence base and support discussion about issues relevant to other areas.

Government workforce initiatives

National Cabinet commissioned independent review of health practitioner regulatory settings

Members noted an update on the National Cabinet commissioned independent review of regulatory settings for health professionals led by Ms Robyn Kruk AO. Ms Kruk's interim report is expected to be provided to National Cabinet in late April with a final report expected by mid-2023. Members considered implications for the Committee and its work and noted the National Scheme was only one part of the regulatory systems for international practitioners who want to join Australia's health workforce but there is potential for streamlining with other systems such as migration and Medicare provider numbers.

Australian Government – Australian Universities Accord Panel Discussion Paper

The Australian Government is working to establish an Australian Universities Accord to drive lasting alignment between Australia's high quality higher education system and national needs. Members discussed the Australian Universities Accord Panel Discussion Paper and noted the consultation covers multiple areas relevant to the National Scheme, including cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, population need and drivers of health workforce demand, issues impacting on workforce supply such as international students, and funding issues, and programs relevant to National Scheme professions such as Job Ready Graduates. Members provided input to Ahpra and the National Boards' joint consultation response, noting alignment of the Accord work with the National Scheme objectives and accreditation priorities and several areas of the Committee's work.

Proposed format and structure of the committee's advice

Consistent with the Ministerial Council [Policy Direction 2020-01](#), all National Scheme entities, including Ahpra, National Boards and accreditation authorities will need to take into account the committee's advice when exercising their functions. Ahpra and the National Boards are to require accreditation authorities to document the outcome of their consideration. As the Committee nears publication of draft advice and good practice guidance on several topics, it is timely to consider the format and structure of its advice.

Members discussed and broadly supported a proposed approach to the format and structure of the Committee's advice and requested that a worked example be provided for further consideration at the next meeting.

Development of a glossary of terms across the spectrum of accreditation

The Committee's initial work to develop a glossary of agreed terms and meanings across accreditation and related issues remains on track. The committee's glossary is intended to establish shared language and understanding of its advice across different professions, National Scheme entities, and external stakeholders. It will also support consistent approaches to implementing the committee's advice and ensure that the committee's work builds on the progress already made in many areas.

The committee conducted a preliminary phase of confidential consultation on its draft proposed initial glossary from January to March 2023 to test and refine the proposed glossary and consultation materials with key stakeholders before proceeding to public consultation. The proposed initial glossary focuses on providing an initial tranche of terms across the areas of work in the committee's work plan. It builds on the terms already defined in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (National Law) and the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum's (HPACF) *Glossary of Terms for annual program monitoring reports*.

Members noted the feedback received from preliminary consultation and approved the release of the proposed initial glossary for an eight-week period of public consultation ending in late June. Once the public consultation period ends, the committee will consider the consultation feedback and any proposed refinements to the proposed initial glossary before publishing the document on the committee's website.

Embedding interprofessional education and collaborative practice in education

One of the Committee's first priorities is a National Scheme statement of intent for interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP). The approach to this work provides an opportunity for stakeholders including the 15 National Boards, accreditation authorities, Ahpra and health and education sector leaders and organisations, to consider how to encourage action to support IPCP in education, training, clinical governance and practice. Members discussed feedback from preliminary consultation on the proposed IPCP statement of intent and noted the feedback provided strong support for the statement, with three key themes emerging for further consideration:

- adding a definition of IPCP to the statement
- highlighting the benefits and importance of IPCP
- updating the content, structure and language of the statement with greater focus on the consumer and patient-centred care.

Members noted the IPCP working group will update the proposed statement before seeking input from Ahpra's Community Advisory Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Unit. The proposed statement will be released for public consultation in late May/early June.

Embedding diverse clinical placements and evidence-based technological advances in health practitioner education

Deliverable 9 in the Committee's published work plan is the development of advice for National Scheme accreditation entities to support good practice in embedding diverse clinical placements and evidence-based technological advances in health practitioner education. Members discussed the updated detailed work to support good practice approaches to embedding diverse clinical placements and evidence-based technological advances in health practitioner education. Members provided feedback on the updated work and requested that information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student 'training in place' be added. The detailed work will be published on the Committee's webpage later in the year. The Committee will consider draft guidance to support good practice at the next meeting.

Strengthening consumer involvement in accreditation

Deliverable 7 of the Committee's published work plan is to provide advice for National Scheme accreditation bodies on good practice guidance for strengthening the involvement of consumers in accreditation. This advice will reflect the best available evidence to support the guidance.

Following consideration of initial work in June 2022, members discussed a deep dive paper that further explored how consumers are involved in the accreditation of health care services in Australia, and accreditation of health education programs both in Australia and in the UK; the definition of the consumer in the context of accreditation; the challenges to consumer involvement – particularly for rural and remote communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from diverse cultural backgrounds; and how consumers can be supported to be involved in accreditation. Members agreed to seek advice from the Consumer Advisory Council on the deep dive paper. Ahpra will work with nominated experts from the Committee to develop draft proposed shared principles to enhance meaningful consumer involvement in accreditation for consideration at the next meeting.

Advice on the use of outcome-based approaches to accreditation

Deliverable 8 of the Committee's work plan is to provide advice for National Scheme accreditation entities on good practice in the use of outcome-based approaches to accreditation. Following consideration of initial work in June 2022, members discussed a deep dive paper that further explored the meaning of 'outcome-based accreditation' and how current accreditation standards reflect an outcomes-based approach. Members highlighted the need to balance outcomes-based standards with process-based approaches, especially for emerging areas which are yet to be clearly defined and agreed to have more in-depth discussion on these issues at the next meeting.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Accreditation Committee will be held face-to-face in **June 2023**.

More information

Questions about the committee's work may be directed to the secretariat via email to: ahpra.secretariat@ahpra.gov.au.

Members

Professor Andrew Wilson	Independent Chair
Ms Alison Barnes	Nominee of the National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group
Mr Brett Simmonds	National Boards representative
Professor Brian Jolly	Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF)
Dr Hamza Vayani	Consumer representative
Dr Heather Buchan	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
Ms Katrina Quinn	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
Emeritus Professor Ian Wronski AO	Universities Australia
Mr Jeffrey Moffet	Member of Ahpra Board
Mrs Kay Leatherland	Private healthcare employer
Professor Maree O'Keefe	Accreditation/education expert
Ms Narelle Mills	Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF)
Dr Susan Young	Member of Ahpra Board
Adjunct Professor Veronica Casey AM	National Boards representative
Ms Nicole Argall	Jurisdictional Representative