

## Patient and Consumer Health and Safety Impact Assessment – Medical Board of Australia’s proposed revised Registration standard: specialist registration

---

7 August 2024

### Assessment purpose

The National Boards’ Patient and Consumer Health and Safety Impact Assessment<sup>1</sup> explains the potential impact of a proposed registration standard, code or guideline on the health and safety of the public, vulnerable members of the community and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The four key components considered in the Assessment are:

1. The potential impact of the revised 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 revised 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](#).

---

<sup>1</sup> 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 the proposed revised *Registration standard: specialist registration* on the health and safety of patients and consumers, particularly vulnerable members of the community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.**

**1. How will the proposed revised registration standard 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 Medical Board of Australia (the MBA) has carefully considered the impacts that the proposed revisions to the *Registration Standard: Specialist Registration* (the registration standard) could have on patient and consumer health and safety, particularly vulnerable members of the community.

The MBA's current specialist registration standard has been in effect since 2018. While the content of the revised registration standard has been substantially changed, the MBA has taken the opportunity to remove duplication, improve readability and clarify some of the existing requirements. These changes are expected to strengthen the effectiveness of the standard and support the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme's key objective by ensuring that only practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are granted specialist registration.

In line with our consultation processes, the MBA undertook wide-ranging, though shortened consultation including with peak community and consumer groups. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the proposed revised registration standard and no potential adverse impacts on patient and consumer safety were identified during consultation.

The MBA has carefully considered the consultation feedback to identify any unintended impacts (including potential negative impacts) of the proposed revised registration standard.

Our assessment is that there will be no negative impact on the health and safety of patients and consumers, particularly vulnerable members of the community. The proposed changes enable the promotion of access to specialist services and considers the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health needs and cultural safety by ensuring that all individuals are appropriately orientated to the Australian health care system and complete cultural safety training, if not done so previously.

Submissions will be published on the Board's [Past consultations page](#).

**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 MBA has carefully considered any potential impact of the revised registration standard on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and how the impact compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples might be different. The MBA does not expect that the proposed revised registration standard will have a negative impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples health and safety.

The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health needs has been considered in the development of the new expedited specialist pathway and in proposing revisions to the specialist registration standard, a requirement that individuals undertake a comprehensive orientation to the Australian healthcare system which includes cultural safety training has been added.

The MBA 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](#). Our engagement through consultation has further informed the proposed revised registration standard to help us to meet our responsibilities to protect patient safety and health care quality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and we will continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and stakeholders in order to continue to get their input and views to help us to identify any other future impacts.

**3. How will the impact of the revised registration standard be actively monitored and evaluated?**

Part of the MBA's work in keeping the public safe is ensuring that all MBA standards, codes and guidelines are regularly reviewed.

In keeping with this, the MBA will monitor the operationalisation of the registration standard to ensure that it is working as intended. The MBA will respond to any issues which arise or new evidence which emerges to ensure the standard's continued relevance, workability and maintenance of public safety standards. In particular, the MBA will review the registration standard if unintended consequences on the health and safety of the public, vulnerable members of the community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples were to arise.