



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Media release

30 March 2012

Four more health professions regulated nationally from 1 July 2012

Better public protection: practitioners must meet national professional standards and register to practise

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners***
- **Chinese Medicine practitioners** - includes Chinese medicine practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese herbal medicine practitioners, Chinese herbal dispensers and oriental medicine practitioners
- **Medical radiation practitioners** - includes diagnostic radiographers, radiation therapists and nuclear medicine technologists
- **Occupational therapists**

From 1 July, practitioners in these four professions will join the 10 health professions already regulated through the national regulatory scheme. In some states and territories, this will be the first time that these professions are regulated.

Practitioners in these professions must register with their National Board, meet nationally consistent professional standards and be qualified to be able to practise*. By registering once and renewing yearly, most practitioners can then work across all Australian states and territories.

Bringing these professions in to the National Scheme means that all Australian health consumers will have access to adequately qualified practitioners who are required to meet certain standards in order to practise. It also means health consumers can lodge a notification (or complaint) about the health, conduct or performance of a registered practitioner. Under the National Law, a National Board can take a range of actions against a practitioner who poses a serious risk to the community through their practice, including by taking immediate action such as suspending or limiting their registration.

From 1 July, members of the public can check the registration status of all registered practitioners of the four new professions on the National Register of Practitioners, which is published on the AHPRA website. Published data includes conditions or special requirements associated with their registration.

Practitioners in these four professions are urged to go to the AHPRA website **now** to find out what they need to do to meet the new legal requirements for registration in the National Scheme. All practitioners not currently registered with a state or territory board are also urged to submit their registration application as soon as possible to ensure they are registered on 1 July and to minimise potential disruptions to their practise.

AHPRA Chief Executive Officer Martin Fletcher said including four new professions in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) better protects the community.

"Including these four new professions in the National Scheme is good for Australian health consumers and patients as well as practitioners. The National Scheme is robust as there are nationally consistent standards that practitioners must meet and a national framework to protect the public," Mr. Fletcher said.

Continues...

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

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National Scheme fast facts

- The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme) functions under the National Health Practitioner Registration National Law, as in force in each state and territory (National Law). The National Law came in to effect on 1 July 2010 (18 October 2010 in WA).
- There are more than 530,000 registered health practitioners across 10 professions in Australia, and with the four new professions joining the national scheme, a further 35,000 practitioners are expected to become regulated. 1 in 20 working Australians is a registered health practitioner.
- Australia is unique in its health practitioner regulation scheme, which is a partnership between the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and National Boards.
- The currently regulated professions are: chiropractic, dental, medical, nursing and midwifery, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practice, Chinese medicine, medical radiation practice and occupational therapy are joining the scheme on 1 July 2012.
- The purpose of health practitioner regulation is to protect the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who have the skills, qualifications and knowledge to provide safe care are registered.
- The National Law works on protected titles – from 1 July 2012, if you are not registered with the relevant National Board, it is illegal to call yourself a(n):
 - **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner***
 - **Chinese Medicine practitioner** - includes Chinese medicine practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese herbal medicine practitioners, Chinese herbal dispensers and oriental medicine practitioners.
 - **Medical radiation practitioner** - includes diagnostic radiographers, radiation therapists and nuclear medicine technologists
 - **Occupational therapist**
- It is also a breach of the National Law to hold yourself out to be registered in these or any of the registered health professions if you are not registered.

This will be the first time that these four professions will be regulated in the following states:

	VIC	NSW	ACT	QLD	NT	WA	SA	TAS
Medical radiation practice		✓					✓	
Occupational therapy	✓	✓	✓					✓
Chinese medicine		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice*	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Interview opportunities:

If you would like to interview a spokesperson please call 0417 127 822. Please note that while every effort will be made to accommodate interview requests, interviews will be scheduled subject to availability.

For more information:

- For all media enquiries: 0417 127 822
- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au for links to the National Boards' websites
- Visit the individual Boards' websites via the AHPRA homepage for registration information and FAQs
- Practitioners with registration enquiries can call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia), or +61 3 8708 9001 (from overseas)

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners working in the NT are required to register in the National Scheme. For those outside the NT, only those required by their employer to be registered must do so. All other practitioners working outside the NT can keep working after 1 July 2012 using their existing titles e.g. Aboriginal Health Worker, Drug and Alcohol Worker or Mental Health Worker, without being registered.