



Communiqué

September 2019 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The 111th meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Friday 20 September 2019 in Melbourne.

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Board's meeting, as well as other relevant information.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. We encourage you to distribute it to colleagues and interested parties, including in the organisation you work.

DIY dental services – be aware of your obligations

The Board is aware of an increase in 'do it yourself' (DIY) forms of dental services that has received recent media attention.

The availability of these products has developed rapidly and continues to do so. These products are marketed in different ways using various media - some marketing offers just a product, some offer a product and service, some involve registered dental practitioners and others do not. Some products are marketed through traditional means while others use social media.

Although these might be new products or advertised in different ways (such as through social media), a range of existing regulatory requirements apply.

This type of disruption is happening across all health services, not just dental. While these types of businesses are relatively new to Australia they have been operating overseas, particularly in the USA, for some time.

While the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) regulates the provision of services (i.e. when the sale of the product is coupled with a service) through criminal offences which relate to performing restricted dental acts and unlawful advertising by individuals (including registered health practitioners) and corporate entities, it does not regulate the product itself. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has oversight of therapeutic products.

AHPRA is considering these services including their marketing to determine if the requirements under the National Law are being met.

If a procedure is being performed by a registered dental practitioner, the Board expects the practitioner to act in accordance with the [Code of conduct](#) and comply with the Board's other standards and guidelines.

The Board expects that registered dental practitioners will exercise their professional judgement and work within the scope of their competence, education and training.

The Board has power to enforce restrictions on practice where these are necessary to protect the public.

For information on advertising a regulated health service, see the [Board's website](#).

Practitioner support service – stakeholder roundtable

The Board hosted a roundtable on Wednesday 4 September 2019 with stakeholders to begin a conversation about a practitioner support service for the dental profession.

The support service would be a confidential and independent information and referral service, available nationally for dental practitioners and dental students who may be experiencing health-related issues or life stresses.

The Board were joined by a range of professional associations representing all the registered dental professions, regulatory colleagues from New South Wales, representatives from state and territory health departments, including public dental services and those involved with the education and training of dental practitioners.

The roundtable provided the Board with an opportunity to exchange views and ideas about a support service for dental practitioners. It also provided insights into the opportunities and challenges of developing a support service for dental practitioners in Australia.

Fees set for 2019/2020

The Board has announced the national registration fee for dental practitioners for 2019/20. The Board has increased the registration fee, limited to indexation of 2.7%.

Practitioner registration fees fund the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) and support the Board's continuing efforts to support and develop a safe and mobile Australian workforce for registered health practitioners and the public in the most efficient way possible.

Registration fees also allow the Board to facilitate the provision of high-quality education and training for practitioners.

The Board's decision to increase the fee for the 2019/20 period ensures the Board has sufficient income to allow it to carry out its duties and protect the public.

Fees for New South Wales practitioners are set locally by NSW regulators. This year there has been an increase in the complaint's component of the national registration fee for NSW practitioners. For further information about the NSW fee, please see the [Dental Council of NSW website](#).

The new fees (including NSW) and further information is available on the [Board's website](#).

Registration renewal due by 30 November

Dental practitioners wishing to renew their registration on time must do so by 30 November 2019.

More than 23,500 dental practitioners hold general, specialist or non-practising registration with the Dental Board of Australia (the Board). The quickest and easiest way to renew is [online](#).

Practitioners who do not apply to renew their registration by 31 December 2019 will have lapsed registration. They will be removed from the [Register of Dental Practitioners](#) and will not be able to practise their profession in Australia.

Renewal applications received in December will incur a late payment fee in addition to the annual renewal fee. This is outlined in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

Further information about renewal is available on the [Board's website](#).

Changes to renewal questions about working with blood-borne viruses

Each year at registration renewal, dental practitioners are asked to declare that they are aware of their infection status for blood-borne viruses and comply with the requirements of the Australian national guidelines for the management of healthcare workers living with blood borne viruses and healthcare workers who perform exposure prone procedures at risk of exposure to blood borne viruses (the CDNA guidelines) and the Board's Guidelines on infection control.

The CDNA guidelines have recently been revised, so the Board has updated its compliance questions for this year's registration renewal. Further information about what is changing is available on the [Board's website](#).

Where do I go for more information about the CDNA guidelines?

The CDNA guidelines and helpful resources are available on the Department of Health [website](#). If practitioners are uncertain about whether they perform EPPs, they should contact their employer or professional association for further guidance.

Are your contact details up to date?

It is important that your contact details are up to date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board. You can check your details via the Login icon at the top right of the [AHPRA website](#). Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

Conclusion

The National Board publishes a range of information about registration and the National Board's expectations of practitioners on its website at www.dentalboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

For more information or help with questions about your registration, please send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Dr Murray Thomas
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
21 October 2019