



Communiqué

March 2018 meeting of the Dental Board of Australia

The 94th meeting of the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) was held on Friday 23 March 2018 at the National Office of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Melbourne.

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Board's meeting as well as other important 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 in.

Consultation on a proposed revised *Scope of practice registration standard and Guidelines for scope of practice*

We're interested in what you think of the Board's proposed changes to *Scope of practice registration standard* and *Guidelines for scope of practice*.

The proposed revised registration standard and guidelines continues to set out the Board's requirements for scope of practice that aligns with the Board's broad regulatory framework and the needs of all dental practitioners.

The proposed changes include to:

- Remove the requirement for a 'structured professional relationship'. The Board considers that the Code of conduct for dental practitioners details more appropriately the important standards for dental practitioners in understanding the expected ways of working. This includes that dental practitioners must work within the limits of their competence and scope of practice and refer patients for care that is outside their scope of practice.
- Remove the requirements of 'independent practitioner'. At the time of the last review in 2014 the Board agreed that it would incrementally remove the bar on independent practice from the registration standard. This approach was adopted to effectively recognise the professional roles, responsibilities of all dental practitioners and their regulation.
- Remove reference to Programs to extend scope giving effect to the Board's decision to phase out the approval process of these programs. Going forward, these programs can continued to be delivered as continuing professional development (CPD).
- Clarify expectations around education, training and competence. As accreditation standards, competencies and processes for approving programs of study are now well established under the National Scheme¹, the Board proposes to remove the prescriptive terminology from each division description outlined in the guidelines.

To support the changes proposed as part of this review and aid the continuous learning of practitioners through reflective practice, the Board has developed a new reflective tool to help practitioners to assess their individual scope of practice.

¹ National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

Your feedback

Public consultation is an important part of the Board's engagement with the profession. The feedback you provide is greatly valued and informs the Board's development of regulatory documents.

The Board's scope of practice public consultation paper is published on the Board's website - see the *Current Consultations* section of www.dentalboard.gov.au.

You are invited to provide feedback by email to dentalboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au by close of business on 14 May 2018.

Outcome-based assessment model for overseas-trained dental specialists

As part of the Board's work program on specialist registration pathways for overseas-trained dental specialists, last year the Board with AHPRA engaged the Australian Dental Council (ADC) to develop an outcome-based assessment model for overseas-trained dental specialists applying for specialist registration in Australia. The ADC has now completed this project.

The ADC conducted a literature review of best evidence in the assessment of competence of health practitioners, as well as an environmental scan of the processes of other National Boards and comparable international dental regulators in an earlier phase of this engagement.

Based on these findings a number of preliminary models for the assessment of competence of overseas-trained dental specialists were developed. These preliminary models were evaluated by key stakeholders of the dental specialties.

The ADC has recommended to the Board an assessment model that consists of three stages including initial assessment of application, panel assessment and assessment(s) of competence.

The assessments are based on the entry-level competencies for the dental specialties and are applicable for all of the recognised dental specialties in Australia. The ADC has also developed a framework to support the implementation of assessment model.

Over the coming months, the Board will consider the ADC's recommendations and any other requirements that may be needed to support future registration pathways for overseas-trained dental specialist. The Board will provide regular updates as work progresses.

Scheduled review of accreditation assignments

National Boards and AHPRA have started a process to consider accreditation arrangements from mid-2019, when the current term of assignment of accreditation functions ends.

The National Law² sets out the accreditation functions in the National Scheme. These include developing accreditation standards, accrediting programs of study against approved accreditation standards and assessing overseas qualified practitioners.

Public consultation on the existing accreditation arrangements is expected to start during April 2018 for around four weeks. More information will be published on the AHPRA and National Board websites in coming weeks.

Read the full [news item](#).

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.

² Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

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.

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Chair, Dental Board of Australia

9 April 2018