

## Media release

---

14 February 2014

### Revised guidelines, code and policy released today, effective from March 2014

Revised guidelines and codes of conduct, and a new social media policy, containing important information for all registered health practitioners have been released today and come into effect from mid-March 2014.<sup>1</sup>

Registered health practitioners need to familiarise themselves with this guidance to ensure their practice meets National Board expectations from mid-March.

The documents were released by the National Boards regulating registered health practitioners in Australia through the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

They are the:

- revised *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services*
- revised *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- revised *Code of conduct*, and
- new *Social media policy*.

The guidelines, *Social media policy* and code were published on National Board websites today and will come into effect in mid-March 2014.

The guidelines and policy are common across all National Boards and apply to all registered health practitioners. Most National Boards have a shared code of conduct while some have different codes (see overleaf).

The documents are the result of a scheduled review three years into the National Scheme and are the first set of revised documents to be released this year, with more to come later in 2014.

Optometry Board of Australia Chair Colin Waldron said National Boards consulted widely late last year on the draft versions of the new guidelines, *Social media policy* and *Code of conduct*.

'The National Boards have an ongoing focus on best practice regulation in the public interest, and in public protection,' Mr Waldron said.

'The experiences from the first three years of the National Scheme were applied when these documents were being reviewed to make sure that they are clear and make it easier for practitioners to understand their obligations, and for members of the community to understand what is expected of health practitioners.'

---

<sup>1</sup> The Psychology Board of Australia reviewed its code last year and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and Optometry Board of Australia are reviewing their codes separately. See table on page 2 for a list of which Boards have a shared and separate code.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Martin Fletcher, said the decision was made to publish the documents now to help practitioners, employers and members of the community understand what National Boards expect from practitioners.

‘It’s important that practitioners know and understand their obligations. By publishing these documents five weeks before they come into effect, practitioners, in particular, can start to be ready for when they come into effect in mid-March. It’s also important for employers of health practitioners and interested members of the community to be able to see and understand this guidance,’ Mr Fletcher said.

### Published today

National Board	Code of conduct (revised)	Advertising guidelines (revised)	Mandatory reporting guidelines (revised)	Social media policy (new)
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice</b>	Shared code	<a href="#">Common to all National Boards</a>	<a href="#">Common to all National Boards</a>	<a href="#">Common to all National Boards</a>
<b>Chinese Medicine</b>	Shared code			
<b>Chiropractic</b>	Shared code with minor modifications			
<b>Dental</b>	Shared code			
<b>Medical</b>	Separate code, <i>Good medical practice</i>			
<b>Medical Radiation Practice</b>	Shared code with minor modifications			
<b>Nursing and Midwifery</b>	Separate code, review progressing separately			
<b>Occupational Therapy</b>	Shared code			
<b>Optometry</b>	Shared code with minor modifications, review progressing separately			
<b>Osteopathy</b>	Shared code			
<b>Pharmacy</b>	Shared code with minor modifications			
<b>Physiotherapy</b>	Shared code			
<b>Podiatry</b>	Shared code			
<b>Psychology</b>	Separate <i>Code of ethics</i> , reviewed last year			

**FAQ and additional information on the Board's [website](#):**

- FAQ on the transition from the current to the new/revised documents.
- Document showing the differences between the current and revised *Mandatory notifications guidelines*.

*For more information*

- Visit [www.optometryboard.gov.au](http://www.optometryboard.gov.au)
- Visit [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200