

Communiqué

The 62nd meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 23 April 2015 at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) national office in Melbourne.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting as well as other points of interest. We publish it on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Consultations

The Board is continuing its schedule of work regarding the review of a number of registration standards and guidelines. The Board approved the progression of the preliminary consultation phase for the *Guidelines for continuing professional development for endorsed and non-endorsed optometrists* and is in the initial stage of reviewing the *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* for consultation.

Registration and Notification Committee extension of appointments

The Board has extended the roles of four existing members of the Registration and Notification Committee to 31 December 2015 to maintain continuity of membership. Their membership was due to expire on 30 June 2015. The Board is awaiting the outcomes of the independent review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) and the National Board re-appointment process currently underway that will impact on the composition of the committee for the three Board members whose appointments expire on the 30 August 2015.

Health Ministers to consider independent review of the National Scheme

Federal and State and Territory Health Ministers have been briefed on the final report of the independent review into the National Scheme.

Ministers met in Sydney on 17 April 2015 at the COAG Health Council to discuss a range of national health issues, including the final report on the independent review by the former director general of health in Western Australia, Kim Snowball.

The review involved an extensive consultation process that included more than 230 written submissions and more than 1,000 individuals participating in consultation forums in each capital city.

The review aimed to identify what was working well in the National Scheme and opportunities to improve and strengthen AHPRA and the National Boards' work to protect the public and facilitate access to health services.

Ministers requested time to consider the review's recommendations and agreed to consider each of the recommendations at their meeting in August 2015.

The [COAG Health Council communiqué](#) is available on the COAG Health Council website.

Top tips for using the register

The online [national register of practitioners](#) has accurate, up-to-date information about the registration status of all registered health practitioners in Australia. It is an important way the National Scheme helps keep the public safe.

To help the public and employers get the most out of the register, a copy of *Top tips: Using the register for public safety checks* can be downloaded from the AHPRA [website](#). In particular, the tips remind anyone responsible for recruiting health practitioners how to use the register to verify a practitioner's registration status.

Further information

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of you as an optometrist on our website at www.optometryboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

For more detail or questions about your registration or renewal please send an online enquiry form or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Colin Waldron

Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

14 May 2015