

## Media release

6 November 2015

### 2014/15 National Scheme annual report launched

The [2014/15 annual report: AHPRA and National Boards](#) has been published.

The report details the work of the National Boards and AHPRA in implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme over the 12 months to 30 June 2015.

There are now more than 637,218 health practitioners registered to practise in Australia, from 14 different professions, representing overall growth of 2.9% over the past year.

Optometry Board of Australia Chair Mr Ian Bluntish said increased confidence in our work by the public and professionals and improvements in proportionate regulation remained the focus for National Boards.

‘As National Boards we strive to be a driving force for positive change and leadership in public safety and facilitating access to health services,’ Mr Bluntish said.

‘Our efforts continue to identify a range of activities to improve patient safety and the quality of regulation for health professions. This report helps to inform the public and health practitioners how we meet our objectives and responsibilities on their behalf,’ he said.

‘Information about each of these registered health practitioners is easily available to the community through the national online register,’ said Martin Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer of AHPRA.

‘Maintaining an up to date national register is one of the most important ways in which we protect the public.’

For the optometry profession, the report reveals that:

- 4,915 optometrists were registered at the end of June 2015, an increase of 2.7 per cent from the previous year
- 26 notifications (concerns/complaints) were received about optometrists (excluding NSW where there is a co-regulatory system)<sup>1</sup>
- 27 notifications about optometrists were closed by 30 June 2015
- of the 27 cases closed under the National Scheme, the Optometrist Board of Australia determined:
  - to take no further action or that the case was to be handled by the relevant health complaints entity in the relevant state or territory in 17 cases
  - that conditions be imposed on a practitioner’s registration in two cases
  - cautions to be issued six cases
  - no cases resulted in cancellation or suspension of an optometrist registration
- the Board revised its guidelines for use of scheduled medicines that now enables optometrists to diagnose, initiate, treat and monitor glaucoma patients
- the Board implemented a registration standard for general registration for initial applicants, which acknowledges that the current undergraduate Board –approved programs leading to general registration incorporate ocular therapeutics as part of the undergraduate degree, and

- the Board appointed a program administrator, Optometry Australia, to manage the continuing professional development (CPD) accreditation functions for the optometry profession on behalf of the Board.

The annual report is published at [www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015). It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Optometry Board of Australia.

A media release about the report – with data across professions and jurisdictions – is published on the [AHPRA website](#).

A report, which presents the data specific to optometry practice, will be published on the Board's website before the end of the calendar year.

#### **For more information**

- Go to [www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015)
- Read the National Scheme [media release](#)
- Lodge an [online enquiry form](#)
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200

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<sup>1</sup>NSW is part of the National Scheme but notifications about practitioners' health, performance and conduct are handled by the [HCCC](#) and the NSW health professional councils supported by the [HPCA](#).