



Communiqué: Optometry Board of Australia

February 2017 meeting

The 80th meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 23 February 2017 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.

Public consultation is now open for revised endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard and related guidelines

The Board has released a consultation paper on the review of the *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* and *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines*.

The *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* (the current registration standard) sets out the requirements for an optometrist to have their registration endorsed for scheduled medicines. The *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines* (the guidelines) outline the Board's expectations about the use of scheduled medicines by optometrists.

The Board has reviewed the current registration standard and related guidelines in keeping with good regulatory practice and is seeking feedback from the profession, stakeholders and the community on the proposed revised endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard and related guidelines.

The consultation commenced on 1 February 2017 and closes on 31 March 2017.

More information is available in the consultation paper which is available on the [Current Consultations page](#).

Local insights, National Scheme: State and territory summaries published

Individual annual report summaries for each state and territory, offering insights into how the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme is operating across Australia, have now been published.

Based on the AHPRA and National Boards annual report for 2015/16, the summaries are available online.

Information includes applications for registration by profession, outcomes of criminal history checks and segmentation of the registrant base by gender, profession and specialty.

Notifications information includes the number of complaints or concerns received by profession, types of complaint, matters involving immediate action, monitoring and compliance, panels and tribunals, and statutory offence complaints.

Read more on the [News webpage](#).

Health workforce dataset released

AHPRA in conjunction with the National Boards is responsible for the national registration process for 14 health professions. A subset of data from this annual registration process, together with data from a workforce survey that is voluntarily completed at the time of registration, forms the National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS).

The NHWDS includes demographic and professional practice information for registered health professionals and is de-identified before it can be made publically available.

The NHWDS Allied Health 2015 data has recently been released as a series of fact sheets on each allied health profession, and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners across all allied health professions - the *NHWDS Allied Health Fact Sheets 2015*. They were published on a new look website – the [Health Workforce Data website](#) – by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The fact sheets present information specific to each profession, such as information relating to scope of practice, specialties and endorsements where applicable.

Aggregate data is also accessible via the [Health Workforce Data Online Data Tool \(ODT\)](#).

The data include is generated through Workforce Surveys, which are provided by AHPRA on behalf of the Department of Health to all health professionals as part of their yearly re-registration. Each survey is slightly different and is tailored to obtain data specific to that profession.

You can find the fact sheet on the optometry profession [here](#).

Quarterly registration data

The Board has released its quarterly registration data.

As at December 2016, there were a total of 5,313 registered optometrists comprising of the following number of registrants according to registration type:

- 5,134 – general registration
- 3 – limited registration, and
- 176 – non-practising registration.

The latest report will soon be available on the [Statistics webpage](#).

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.

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 details or help with questions about your registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, refer to information published on www.ahpra.gov.au or [contact AHPRA](#), send an [online enquiry form](#) or call on 1300 419 495.

Ian Bluntish

Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

3 March 2017

The Optometry Board of Australia is the regulator of optometrists in Australia and acts to protect the public by ensuring that suitably qualified and competent optometrists are registered. The Board is responsible for developing registration standards, codes and guidelines for optometrists and managing notifications (complaints) about optometrists and optometry students. The Board does this through its powers under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory, and the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). The Board's work in regulating Australia's optometrists in the public interest is underpinned by [regulatory principles](#), which encourage a responsive, risk-based approach to regulation.*

**Except in NSW and Qld which have co-regulatory arrangements.*