

Community Advisory Council communiqué

April 2023

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) met virtually on Thursday 27 April 2023. This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the meeting.

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the lands on which the meeting was being held and paid respect to their Elders, past and present.

The Chair welcomed four new members to the Community Advisory Council highlighting the knowledge and lived experience the new members bring to the CAC and the need for meetings to be a safe space for discussion.

Business matters

Matters that were considered and discussed by Council members included:

- noting the guidelines for Board and committee members with respect to conflict of interest and with the CAC not being a decision-making committee, the importance for confidentiality,
- a description of the Ahpra style guide founded on the Australian Government style guide and the continued work that is being undertaken to educate Ahpra staff and Boards to ensure better readability of consultation documents,
- the initiative to contribute efforts to increase health literacy and empower consumer choice by raising awareness of the National Register of practitioners and healthcare complaints pathways. Members supported and critiqued a pilot National Scheme Community Newsletter to be trialed in Tasmania,
- noting an update on the review of regulatory settings relating to registration and qualification recognition for overseas health practitioners. The CAC received correspondence from Ms Robyn Kruk thanking us for our submission to the review,
- an update on the current work happening to implement the commitments, as part of the Ahpra Blueprint, that have been made in response to the concerns made about sexual misconduct,
- an overview on the Mob meeting held on 29 March 2023 in Brisbane, where all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Board and committee members attended in addition to several non-Indigenous Ahpra executive. Discussion and debate included issues affecting the National Scheme and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and practitioners,
- noting the update from the Chair on recent media about Ahpra, and the CAC correspondence to the CEO, including support for Ahpra and the National Scheme and recommendations related to greater consumer involvement in, and education about, Ahpra and the National Boards. Members were pleased to hear that Martin Fletcher had replied to our correspondence with the news that the Ahpra Board had recently approved the implementation of two new mandatory criteria for all Board members,
 1. The ability to understand and apply the National Scheme's public safety and protection principles in decision making.
 2. The ability to contribute to the development of a culturally safe and respectful health workforce that is responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their health and contributes to the elimination of racism in the provision of health services.All members applying to be on a Board or Committee will now need to demonstrate their understanding and abilities related these criteria.
- noting the CEO update.

The next meeting of the Community Advisory Council is confirmed for 8 June 2023, via Microsoft Teams.

Patricia Hall

Chair

Community Advisory Council