

Communiqué

July to December 2022 meetings of the Dental Board of Australia

The Dental Board of Australia (the Board) held its 141st to 146th meetings between July and December 2022. This communiqué highlights some of the main discussions.

Review of the revised [Scope of practice registration standard and guidelines](#)

The Board completed its review of the implementation of its revised [Scope of practice registration standard](#). The Board considered feedback from practitioners and stakeholders to understand the effect of the changes and if our promotion of the changes was effective. No adverse impacts on patient safety, or the quality of care provided by dental practitioners was identified, and the outcomes were communicated to stakeholders and Health Ministers.

Position statement on the Minamata Convention on Mercury

In response to recent developments regarding the Minamata Convention on Mercury that relate to dental practitioners, the Board developed information and guidance for the profession in the form of a [position statement](#). The statement was released in November 2022.

Review of list of approved qualifications from overseas jurisdictions

The Board completed its review of the [list of approved qualifications from overseas jurisdictions](#). The Board decided to update the list to include all comparable divisions of dentistry. This means that individuals with listed dental qualifications from the United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand, from 2010, will be recognised as having a substantially equivalent qualification to an Australian qualification. For those with pre-2010 qualifications, the existing list will remain in force.

Review of Specialist registration standard

The Board progressed its review of the *Specialist registration standard* and considered a draft revised registration standard. The draft will be released for preliminary consultation in early 2023.

Public consultation on review of National Scheme accreditation arrangements

The National Boards, including the Dental Board of Australia, and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) are reviewing the current accreditation arrangements for the national health practitioner regulatory scheme to prepare for the next period to mid-2029. Public consultation is now open and closes on 14 February 2023. For more information see the Board's [Current consultations](#) webpage.

Supervised practice framework

The [Supervised practice framework](#) came into effect on 1 February 2022. It applies to most uses of supervised practice and replaces any previous Board approved supervision guidelines or framework and forms (e.g. supervision agreement, supervision plan, supervision report). The Board extended the transition deadline for all supervisees and supervisors to follow the framework to 1 April 2023.

Pandemic response sub-register

Practitioners included on the pandemic response sub-register were initially given temporary registration for 12 months. However, registration has been extended for practitioners who have opted to stay on the sub-register after its closure date.

The Board approved the three pathways for practitioners on the 2021 sub-register to:

- opt in so their temporary registration was extended to expire at midnight on 21 September 2023, or

- formally apply for registration on the main register (*Register of practitioners*) using a transition pathway, or
- cease registration on the sub register as of **midnight on 21 September 2022**.

CPD triennium end-of-cycle

The Board [affirmed](#) its regulatory response that where practitioners were unable to complete continuing professional development (CPD) requirements during 2020 or 2021 due to the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19 and have not met the Board's *Continuing professional development registration standard* for the CPD cycle 1 December 2019 to 30 November 2022, no regulatory action will be taken. This response is in line with previous commitments made in 2020 and 2021.

Plain English update of fact sheets

The Board carried out work on updating its [fact sheets](#) to a plain English format. This included fact sheets on health records and teeth whitening. The Board also ran a targeted consultation on its fact sheet on obligations regarding use of title, which is expected to be updated early in 2023.

Health Professions Agreement

The Board approved the final Health Professions Agreement schedules for 2022-2023 for publication to the [Dental Board of Australia website](#) and the [Ahpra website](#).

Combined meeting with committee members

In November 2022 the Board held a combined meeting with committee members and co-regulators. The Board heard updates from the Dental Council of New South Wales, Queensland's Health Ombudsman, the Dental Council (New Zealand) and Mr Andrew Brown, the independent reviewer appointed to carry out the [Independent review of the regulation of medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery](#) on behalf of Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia. The combined meeting also included a series of policy workshops with Board and committee members.

Public consultation on draft Data strategy

The Board invites practitioners, members of the community, employers and other stakeholders to give feedback during the [public consultation of Ahpra's draft Data strategy](#). The strategy focuses on the future uses of the data collected and held to administer the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. Public consultation closes on 31 January 2023.

Dental Practitioner Support service

Dental Practitioner Support is a national 24/7 health and wellbeing support service for all dental practitioners, dental students, educators, employers, Australian Dental Council exam candidates and concerned family members and friends. Anyone using it can seek support anonymously.

The service is run independently by [Turning Point](#). Anyone accessing the service can have complete confidence in reaching out for confidential support.

Access Dental Practitioner Support:

- 1800 377 700
- dpsupport.org.au

We ask all our stakeholders to continue to promote the service widely.

Are your contact details up to date?

Your contact details must be 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](#). Your email settings may need to be changed to receive emails from Ahpra or the Board and to avoid misdirection to junk mail.

Conclusion

The Board publishes a range of information about registration and the Board's expectations of practitioners on its website at www.dentalboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au. More information on the Board's work is also available in the Board's regular newsletter. Read the latest edition from [November 2022](#) on our website.

For more information about or help with regulatory issues, please send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact Ahpra on 1300 419 495.

Dr Murray Thomas

Chair, Dental Board of Australia

January 2023