



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL
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AMA submission to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency- Public Consultation: *Review of Criminal history registration standard and English language skills registration standard.*

Via email: standard.consultation@ahpra.gov.au

Criminal history registration standard

The AMA is supportive of the proposal to maintain the existing *Criminal history registration standard*. The AMA has no objection to the new proposed review timeframe of 5 years.

English language skills registration standard

The AMA supports a robust process of assessment of International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and international health practitioners.

Clear and accurate communication between health practitioners and their patients is critical to safe, quality patient care. There is a risk of increased morbidity and mortality if poor language skills lead to delays in diagnosis, misdiagnosis and/or patients misunderstanding the advice of their treating clinician. All registrants under the National Law must be able to demonstrate a high standard of English language skills. This is particularly necessary for medical practitioners, but also for the other health practitioners as their respective Boards seek to expand their scopes of practice. Any proposal to relax the English language proficiency standards at this point in time will compromise the National Law objective to protect the public.

The AMA is strongly opposed to proposed changes which will effectively lower the existing English language standard. Specifically, we do not support the proposals to:

- accept test results from multiple sittings of the IELTS test;
- accept test results obtained more than two years prior to applying for registration.

The AMA is not aware of any evidence that would suggest additional countries should be recognised in their English language skills registration standard. We are satisfied that the current list of recognised countries maintains an appropriate standard for medical practitioners. This position will be reviewed if suitable evidence to the contrary becomes available.

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Contact

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