



## ***Ready to work***

***Your obligations as an optometrist***

**Judith Hannan - Chair, Optometry Board of Australia**

**Lynda Pham - Executive Officer, Optometry Board**

7.30pm

Wednesday, 7 September 2022



### ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

Names and regions as used in the *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia* (D Horton, General Editor, published in 1994 by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (Aboriginal Studies Press) GPO Box 963 Canberra, ACT 2601)

- Tribal/Language group name
- Region name
- No published information available

SCALE 1:4 700 000



**Acknowledgement**  
Aboriginal Australia Wall Map, D R Horton, Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS, 1996

**Disclaimer and Warning:**  
Not suitable for use in native title and other land claims  
This map indicates only the general location of large groupings of people which may include smaller groups such as clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. Boundaries are not intended to be exact. For more information about the groups of people in a particular region contact the relevant land councils.

**Map data sources:**  
Map data from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

**Tasmania**  
Parramatta, Tyagarah, Lachlan, Parandarra, Nuccomee

# Our presenter



- Ms Judith Hannan (Irvine)
- Chair
- Practitioner member from NSW

# Today's presentation

1. The National Scheme Overview
  - What the Board does as a regulator
2. Your professional obligations:
  - Code of conduct
  - Registration standards
  - Registration guidelines
3. Notifications
4. Audits
5. Registrations

# **The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme) overview**

# What is regulation?

- Regulation is action by government to limit risk to the public
- The Board and Ahpra work to ensure that risk to the public by registered practitioners is managed by ensuring:
  - only qualified practitioners are registered, and
  - registered practitioners meet ongoing requirements



# National Scheme objectives



# Who does what in the National Scheme?



## Optometry Board of Australia

- Regulatory decision-making to protect public safety.
- Registers optometrists and students.
- Develops regulatory standards, codes and guidelines for the optometry profession.
- Handles notifications, complaints, investigations and disciplinary hearings (except in NSW & Qld)\*.
- Approves accreditation standards and accredited courses of study.

## Ahpra

- The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency administers the National Scheme.
- Supports National Boards.
- First point of contact for all enquiries about registration and complaints from the public, practitioners, employers, governments, media and other stakeholders.
- Refers NSW complaints to HPCA & HCCC\* and Qld complaints to OHO.

## \*HPCA, HCCC & OHO

- There are co-regulatory arrangements in NSW and Queensland.
- The Health Professional Councils Authority (HPCA) and Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) manages NSW professional conduct, performance and health impairment matters.
- In Queensland, the Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) receives all complaints, retains the most serious matters and may refer others.



# Who does what in Optometry?



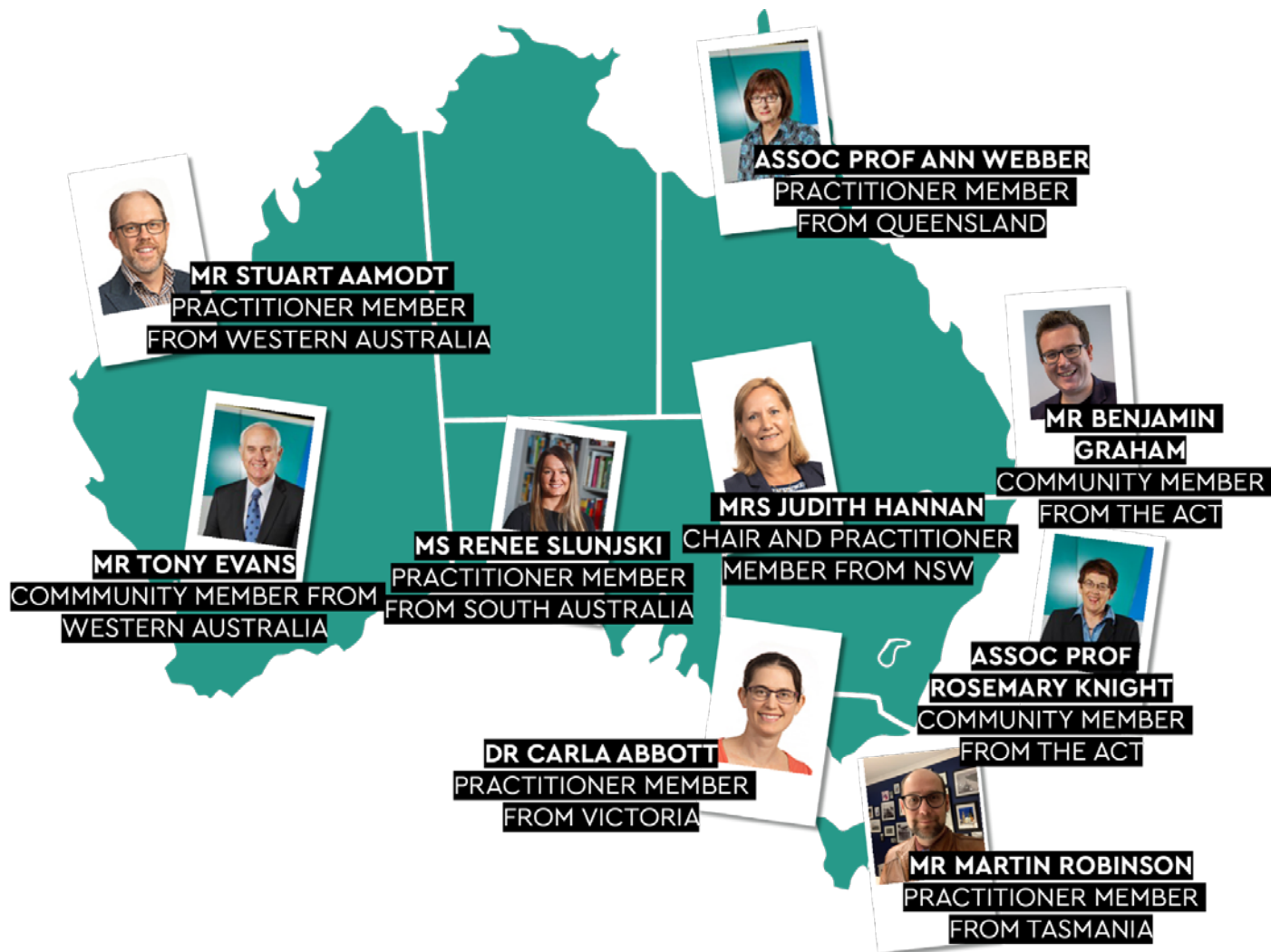
| <b>Optometry Board of Australia (the Board)</b>                           | <b>Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ)</b>                     | <b>Optometry Australia</b>                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Is the regulatory body that regulates optometrists, to protect the public | Is assigned the accreditation functions for the optometry profession by the Board | Is the professional association representing optometrists |

# Optometry Board – our mission and vision



- Mission: to ensure safe and professional optometrists for Australia
- Vision: our communities have trust and confidence in regulated optometrists

# Optometry Board of Australia members



# Snapshot of the profession

June 2022



6,500 registered optometrists

- 96% are general registrants
- 71% of general registrants hold scheduled medicines endorsement
- 58% of registrants are female and 42% male
- 25-29 year old age group is the largest cohort in the profession (20%).



# **Your professional obligations: Code of conduct**

# Code of conduct

- The new revised shared Code of conduct for optometrists came into effect in June 2022.
- Outlines what the Board and the public expects from you, including:
  - Professional behaviour
  - Ways of working with patients and other practitioners within the healthcare system
  - Safe, effective and collaborative practice
  - Respectful and culturally safe practice
  - Ethics, confidentiality and privacy

# Code of conduct resources

## Shared Code of conduct principles

Read the principles that set out expectations of the practitioners the National Boards regulate.

[Read the principles »](#)

## FAQs: Shared Code of conduct

Answers to common questions about the shared *Code of conduct*.

[Read the FAQs »](#)

## Case studies: Shared Code of conduct

Read the case studies to help you understand how to apply the code.

[Read the case studies »](#)

Additional resources on [www.ahpra.gov.au/Resources/Code-of-conduct](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Resources/Code-of-conduct)

# **Your professional obligations: Registration standards**



# Registration standards



- Set out the qualifications and requirements that you need to meet to be registered

# Continuing professional development (CPD)



- You need to complete 20 hours for your general registration, and an additional 10 hours scheduled medicines CPD each year
- CPD must contribute to improving your competence
- Minimum requirement for interactive CPD
- CPR once every three years
- Portfolio of learning goals, planned activities and your reflection on these activities

# Continuing professional development (CPD)



- At registration renewal, you'll be asked if you've done your requisite CPD each year
- You must keep records, and you may be audited on your CPD

# CPD scenario

In 2022, Marnie planned, recorded and reflected on:

- 6 hours of journal reading (4 general, and 2 medicines)
- 10 hours of online lectures (8 general and 2 medicines)
- A half day pre-conference workshop (4 hours medicines)
- Monthly 30 min catch ups with her workplace mentor to discuss her more complex cases (4 hours general, 2 hours medicines)
- 2 hours of training on a new piece of equipment acquired by her practice
- Half day cultural safety training (4 hours)

Marnie did a total of 10 hours medicines and 22 hours general CPD, meeting the registration standard.

# Criminal history

- You must inform the Board within 7 days if you are:
  - charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or
  - convicted or found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment in Australia and/or overseas.
- This doesn't automatically disqualify you from practice; this criminal history standard describes how the Board will consider and make a decision on your declaration.
- At registration renewal, you must disclose any changes to your criminal history.

# Criminal history scenarios

- Received a parking ticket and paid by the due date?
  - You don't need to tell Ahpra
- Charged with culpable driving for injuring a person in a road accident while over the legal blood alcohol limit?
  - You need to call Ahpra within seven days and notify them
- If in doubt – call Ahpra and seek advice

# Recency of practice (RoP)



- New grads must register with 24 months of graduating from their program of study
- Once registered, you must complete a minimum of 450 hours of practice within your regular scope of practice over the past 3 years
- At registration renewal, you must declare if you have met the Recency of practice requirements

# Recency of practice (RoP)



What is 'practice'?

- Means any role, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as an optometrist
- Includes clinical care, management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles

What does changing scope of practice mean?

- Narrowing, e.g. clinical care to management
- Extending, e.g. teaching to clinical care
- You must inform the Board if you are *extending* your scope of practice and provide a professional development plan



# RoP scenarios

1. James' work pattern over the previous 36 months was:

- full time practice as an optometrist - 9 months
- parental leave, during which he kept up with his CPD and maintained contact with his optometry practice – 18 months
- full time practice for the next 12 months

James met the standard for the preceding RoP period.

2. Justine's work pattern over the previous 36 months was:

- Part time practice as an optometrist (1 day per week) for 18 months (195 hours)
- Leave from optometry practice to launch an unrelated business for 18 months

Justine met the standard for the preceding RoP period as she worked 585 hours.

However, Justine will need to recommence practice soon to meet her obligations at her next renewal.

# Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII)



- You must hold appropriate PII to practise
- At registration renewal, you must declare if you've met the PII requirements

# English language skills

- You must demonstrate your English language competency
- Applies to initial applications only

# Audits

- Audits of random samples of optometrists will occur periodically throughout the year
- If selected for audit, you will receive an audit notice in the mail from Ahpra. You will need to provide supporting documentation to demonstrate that you've met the standard being audited
- Any of the four registration standards where an annual declaration is required may be audited:
  - Criminal history
  - Continuing Professional Development
  - Recency of Practice
  - Professional Indemnity Insurance

# Code and Registration Standards

Questions

# **Your professional obligations: Board guidelines**

# Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines

- Quality use of medicines
- Antimicrobial resistance
- Collaborative care
- Chronic glaucoma and emergency management of acute primary angle closure
- List of topical medicines for endorsed optometrists

# Advertising a regulated health service



- Health claims in advertising (rather than information provided in a patient consultation) may be easily misinterpreted or taken out of context, and therefore become misleading
- Claims in advertising must be supported by acceptable evidence – this is a higher level of evidence than the evidence to support clinical decision making



# Advertising a regulated health service - resources

## Advertising hub

Advertising is an important way health practitioners and providers of regulated health services promote their services to the public.

Advertising can influence a consumer's decision-making about their health care needs. It is important that consumers have access to information that is accurate, not misleading, and is supported by acceptable evidence.

The advertising hub contains the laws and other guidance about how to advertise, resources to help advertisers understand their advertising obligations and to check their advertising is correct, and information for the public including about how to make a complaint and how we manage complaints.

### Advertising guidelines and other guidance

Read the advertising guidelines and other guidance about the advertising requirements

[Find out more »](#)

### Resources for advertisers

Practical tools and examples to help understand and apply the advertising requirements

[Find out more »](#)

### Information for the public

Helpful information for consumers and the public about advertising of regulated health services

[Find out more »](#)

### Advertising complaints

Information about how to make a complaint and the complaints process

[Find out more »](#)

### Frequently asked questions

Answers to common questions about advertising

[Find out more »](#)

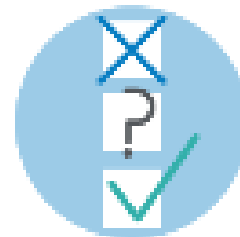
### Make a complaint

Make a complaint about advertising

[Find out more »](#)

# Advertising words to be wary of

- ‘Cure’
- ‘can help/improve/treat’ or ‘effectively treats’
- ‘safe’
- ‘effective’



# Guidelines for mandatory notifications

There are separate guidelines applicable to registered health practitioners and registered students

## *Who can be reported?*

- Registered health practitioners
- Registered students

## *Who has an obligation to report?*

- Registered health practitioners
- Employers
- Education providers.



[Guidelines: Mandatory notifications about registered students](#) (150KB,PDF\*\*)



[Guidelines: Mandatory notifications about registered health practitioners](#) (250KB,PDF\*)

# Guidelines for mandatory notifications

*What must be reported?*

- Impairment – that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect the person’s capacity to practise the profession
- Intoxication while practising
- Significant departure from professionally accepted standards
- Sexual misconduct

# Other policies

## Guidelines:

- Guidelines on the prescription of optical appliances
- CPD
- Informing a National Board about where you practise

## Position statements:

- No place for sexism, sexual harassment or violence in healthcare
- COVID-19 vaccination position statement
- Facilitating access to care in a COVID-19 environment: Guidance for health practitioners

## Others:

- Supervised practice framework
- Telehealth guidance for practitioners
- Ahpra FAQ
- Return to practice guidance for optometrists

# Guidelines

## Questions

# Notifications

# Notifications (Complaints)

Notifications can be made about a practitioner's:

- Health
- Conduct
- Performance
- Advertising
- Use of protected titles – optometrist



# Notifications in a year

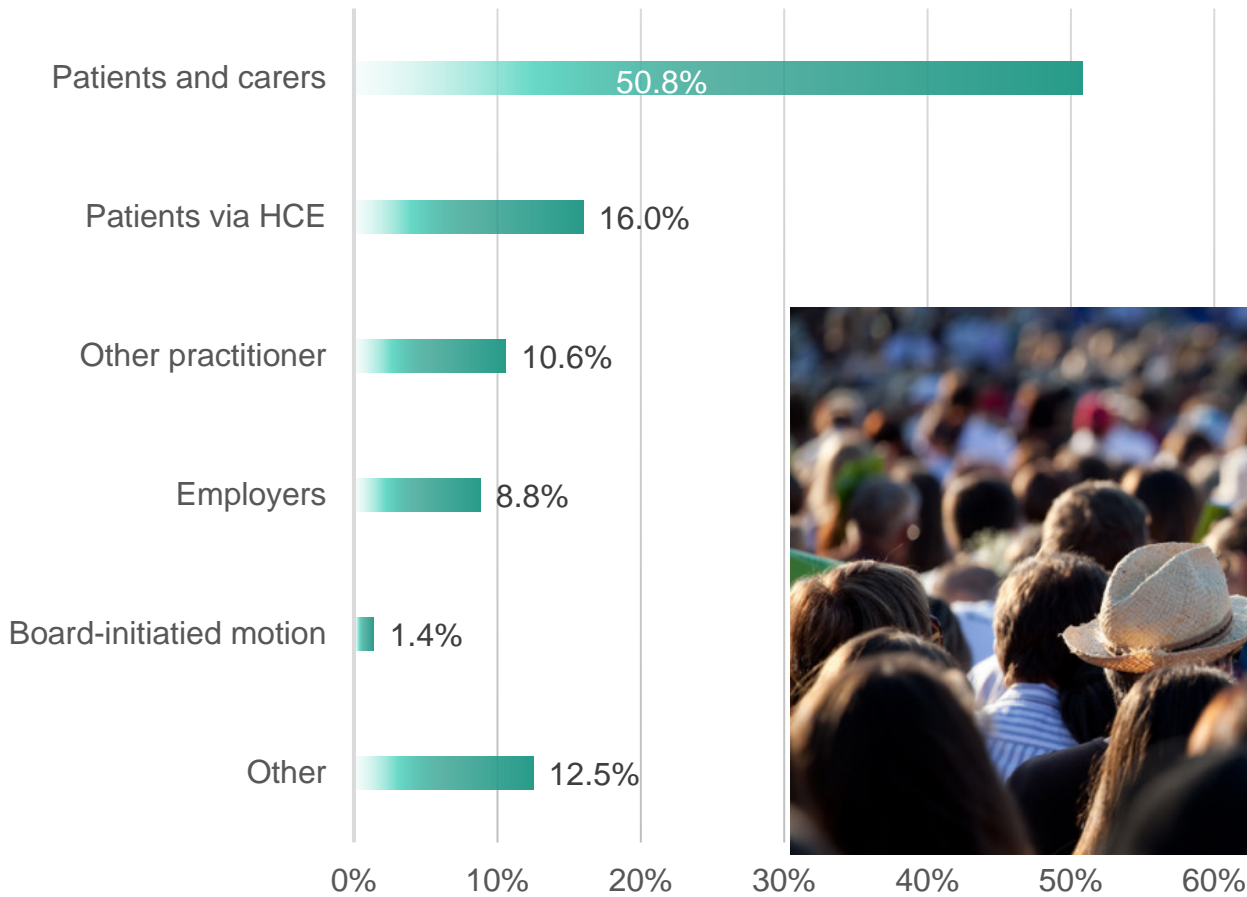
Total notifications made to Ahpra = 10,147

Total notifications made about optometrists = 44

0.7% of optometrists had a notification made about them

Data is for 2020/21

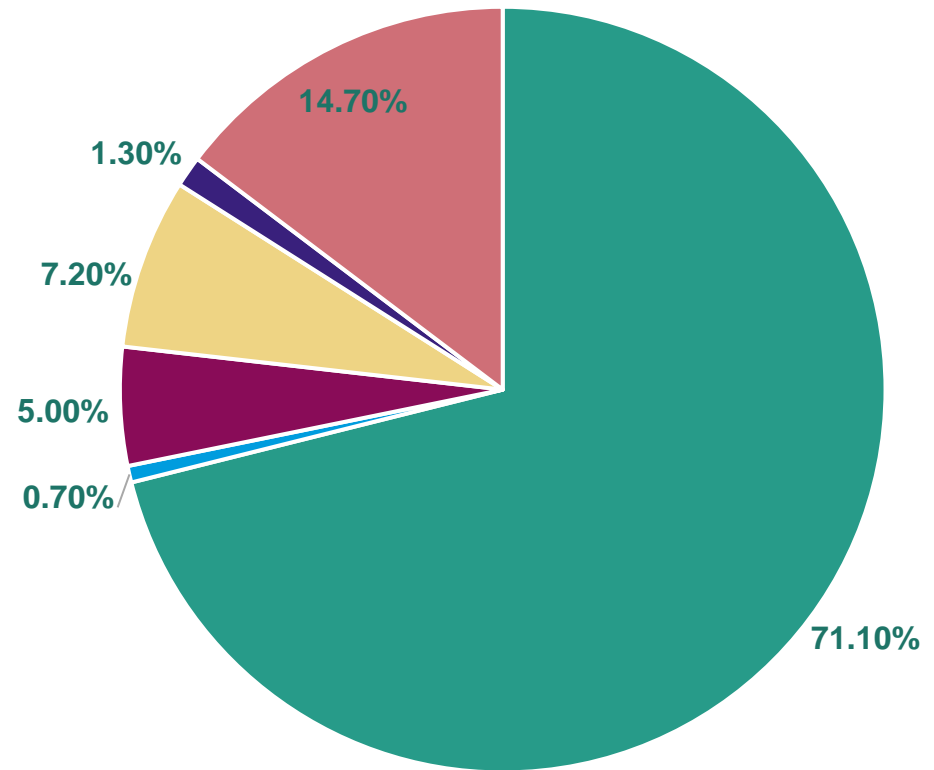
# Who makes notifications?



# What are the outcomes of notifications?

All practitioners (2020/21)

- No further action
- Registration surrendered, cancelled or suspended
- Caution
- Impose conditions
- Accept undertaking
- Refer to another organisation



# What do I do if I get a notification?

**Talk to the  
assigned  
case officer**

**Contact  
your  
indemnity  
insurer**

**Seek  
support**

**Facts not  
fear**

# What can you learn from the notification?



*‘Identify and analyse the situation, learn from it, change behaviour with set actionable task to demonstrate learning and how to avoid that situation again.’*  
*- Health practitioner after a notification*

# Notifications

## Questions

# Registration to practice

# Why register?

- No registration = can't practise
- If you have successfully completed a Board-approved program of study you are deemed suitably qualified and competent to practise
- Successful completion of an approved qualification is not registration.
- If not registered, can't use a protected title such as Optometrist





# How to apply for registration

Create an online account using the online service portal on the Ahpra website and complete your application.



Upload your required documents and pay registration and application fee. Check that you have provided everything including certified copies of your proof of identity.



Wait for Ahpra to receive your results from your education provider.

# Applying for registration

- You can **apply up to 12 weeks before** completing your studies
- You don't need to wait until your education provider sends us your results to apply
- Receiving your application early means we can complete our assessment and get everything ready for when we receive information from your education provider
- Don't leave it to the last minute – it takes us time to assess the application and we may need to ask you for more information

# Common issues with applications

- Names that don't exactly match in all your documents
- Incorrectly certified document
- Missing ID documents
- Late applications – particularly if you apply just before you are due to start work
- Incomplete English language requirements

# When can I start working?



- You can't practice until your name appears on the public register of practitioners
- You will receive an email update when your application is completed, which will advise you of your registration number and provide your self-service login details

# Ongoing practitioner responsibilities

- Annual renewal each year (renew online)
  - Late fee or reapplication (with all documentation) will be required if you miss the renewal date
- Declare:
  - change of contact details
  - principal place of practice
  - criminal proceedings
  - health issues likely to impact on practice
- Compliance with registration standards

# Registration Q & A

# Become a Board or Committee member

- Ministerial Council appoints Board members
  - Board appoints Committee members
- 
- Details can be found at <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/NationalBoardsrecruitment>
  - Call for applications advertised on [www.optometryboard.gov.au/news](http://www.optometryboard.gov.au/news)
  - For further information or to receive notice of advertised Board or Committee vacancies, contact [statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au)

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