



# Pharmacist registration: what you need to know

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# What is the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme?

A single, national regulatory system for registered health professions

- 14 Health Profession Boards
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

# The National Scheme

- **Mobility:** registered pharmacists are able to practise across Australia
- **Uniformity:** consistent national standards – registration and professional conduct
- **Efficiency:** streamlined, effective
- **Collaboration:** sharing, learning and understanding between professions
- **National online registers:** showing current conditions on practice (except health)

# Regulated health professions

Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander health practice

Chinese medicine practice

Chiropractic

Dental practice

Medical radiation practice

Medical

Nursing and midwifery

Occupational therapy

Optometry

Osteopathy

**Pharmacy**

Physiotherapy

Podiatry

Psychology

# Who does what?

## Pharmacy Board of Australia

- Made up of practitioner and community members appointed by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council
- The regulatory decision-maker for the pharmacy profession
- Sets national standards, codes and guidelines
- Decides who is registered to be a pharmacist

# Who does what?

## Pharmacy Board of Australia

- Oversees the assessment of overseas-trained pharmacists
- Reviews and conducts investigations where necessary into notifications (complaints) made by the public or other health professionals
- Manages panel hearings
- Approves accredited programs of study

# What is AHPRA?

## Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

- Provides support and administration services to National Boards and committees
- Operates in each state and territory and has a national office in Melbourne
- Employs staff, owns property and enters into contracts on behalf of Boards
- Manages the online registers of practitioners

# Key features of registration

- Mandatory standards that must be met to remain registered:
  - Criminal history
  - Continuing professional development
  - Recency of practice
  - English language skills
  - Professional indemnity insurance arrangements

# Key features of registration

- Student registration
- Provisional registration upon qualification (to undertake internship)
- General registration after internship
- Registration renewed annually
- Public online register of pharmacists
- Notifications (complaints)
  - Health, performance and conduct
  - Mandatory notifications
  - More at [www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications)

# Student registration

- No need to apply if you are enrolled in an approved program of study
  - Education provider gives your details to the Board for student registration (no fees)
- If you intend to do a clinical placement and are NOT enrolled in an approved program and do NOT hold student registration in the pharmacy profession, AHPRA must be told
- You must contact the education provider if your name changes after enrolment to update records

# Why have registration?

- Registration is a legal requirement
  - main purpose: public protection
  - only suitable persons with approved qualifications, who meet requirements of registration standards, are eligible
- If you want to practise as a pharmacist you must be registered with the Pharmacy Board of Australia
- Qualification is not registration

# Why are pharmacists registered?

- To protect the public by ensuring that only suitably trained and qualified pharmacists are registered.

**You must not practise unregistered:  
fines of up to \$30,000**

# What constitutes practice?

Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a pharmacist in their profession. Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care.

# What constitutes practice?

It also includes working in:

- a direct non-clinical relationship with clients
- management and administration
- education and research
- advisory, regulatory or policy roles
- any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession

# Why should you care?

- **No registration, no job as a pharmacist**
  - Cannot use the title ‘pharmacist’ or ‘pharmaceutical chemist’
  - Graduates cannot practise until they hold provisional registration and their supervised practice arrangements are approved by Board
- **REMINDER:** You cannot work as a pharmacist if you are not registered (provisional or general)

# When things go wrong

- You will be held to account against the Pharmacy Board of Australia's registration standards, guidelines and Code of Conduct for pharmacists
- Common notifications against pharmacists:
  - Communication
  - Dispensing errors
  - Boundary issues
  - Behaviour
  - Documentation
  - Impairment

# Pharmacy Board guidelines

- Guidelines on compounding of medicines
- Guidelines on continuing professional development
- Guidelines for dispensing of medicines
- Guidelines on practice-specific issues
- Guidelines for proprietor pharmacists
- Guidelines on dose administration aids and staged supply of dispensed medicines
- Guidelines for mandatory notifications
- Guidelines for advertising regulated health services

# Voluntary notifications

**Anyone** may make a notification about a pharmacist's **performance, conduct** or **health** in writing, online or by phone

# Mandatory notifications

**Practitioners and employers** must report pharmacists if a reasonable belief they have engaged in **notifiable conduct**:

- practising while intoxicated by drugs or alcohol
- engaging in sexual misconduct in professional practice
- placing the public at risk of substantial harm through a physical or mental impairment affecting practice
- placing the public at risk of harm through a substantial departure from accepted professional standards

# Mandatory notifications



# Becoming registered (provisional)

- Graduation does not mean automatic registration
- Apply online for provisional registration at least 4-6 weeks before you complete your program of study (universities provide graduate lists to AHPRA)
- Your application must include a supervised practice arrangements application to do an internship

## **IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:**

**You must meet registration requirements and have your supervision arrangements approved by the Board before you start practising**

# Important forms

- Important forms are available on the Board's website, including:
  - Provisional registration (graduates of an Australian approved program of study can also apply online)
  - Application for approval of supervised practice as a pharmacist
  - Statutory declaration of weekly record of supervised practice hours

# What are applicant obligations?

- Ensure all information provided is **true and correct**
- **Update any changes** to principal place of practice, postal address, name changes during application process
- If you are **unsure whether to disclose information** – disclose anyway or call AHPRA for more information

**Serious penalties may apply if an applicant is found to have provided false and/or misleading information, including application being refused**

# After securing general registration

## Ongoing practitioner responsibilities...

- **Annual renewal** by **30 November** (online renewal encouraged)
  - late fee or reapplication (with all documentation) will be required
- **Declare:**
  - change of contact details or principal place of practice
  - criminal proceedings
  - health issues likely to impact on practice
- Minimum **40 CPD credits each year**: Plan Do Record Reflect
- Recency of practice: Board review of evidence of competence if not practised for 450 hours within the previous three years or 150 hours within the previous 12 months
- Adhere to standards
- Mandatory notification requirements

# How do I stay informed?

- Go to [www.pharmacyboard.gov.au](http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au) for more about registration and notifications
- Check the Board's website for newsletters, standards, codes, guidelines and other important information for the pharmacy profession
- Join in consultations about emerging issues
- [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)
  - See *Registration* for information for students and graduates, including how to apply online
  - See *Notifications* for more on complaints