

Communiqué

November 2015 meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Board meets face-to-face each month to consider and decide on any matters related to its regulatory function within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the work of the Board.

Planning

The Board is continuing its planning process for the 2016/2017 financial year. This activity is necessary for all of the regulatory partners in the National Scheme to develop and align their work and to avoid unnecessary duplication. All National Boards are committed to being as efficient and effective as they can be in their work.

Registration standards review

The Board received a project update regarding its review of the registration standards for continuing professional development, recency of practice and professional indemnity insurance arrangements. The preparatory phase of the review has been completed and draft standards developed. The Board anticipates preliminary consultation starting in late 2015 or early 2016.

National drug screening protocol

From November 2015, all occupational therapists who have restrictions placed on their registration by the Board as a result of past substance misuse will have routine quarterly hair testing, in addition to random urine testing.

The introduction of routine hair testing is based on expert advice about modern screening methods. Routine hair testing helps provide comprehensive information about the use – over time – of a wide range of drugs (not just based on the practitioner's drug taking history).

The drug screening protocol is part of a wider, national strategy to effectively manage compliance and monitoring across the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. More information is in the [statement](#) published on the Board's website.

2014/15 National Scheme annual report

AHPRA and the National Boards have released their 2014/15 annual report on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), providing a comprehensive record of the operations of the National Scheme for the 12 months ending 30 June 2015.

The annual report provides a national snapshot of the work and finances of the National Scheme and is tabled in the parliaments of each state and territory and the Commonwealth.

The annual report is published at www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2015. It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia. A media release about the report – with data across professions and jurisdictions – is published on the [AHPRA website](#). A report, which

presents the data specific to occupational therapy practice, will be published on the Board's website before the end of the calendar year.

University of South Australia programs added to list of approved programs

The Board has agreed to add the Bachelor of Occupational Therapy and the Bachelor of Applied Science to be offered at the University of South Australia, to its list of approved programs. This decision was based on advice received from the [Occupational Therapy Council \(Australia and New Zealand\)](#).

Keeping in touch with the Board

The Board publishes a range of information about registration and its expectations of practitioners on its website at www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au. Practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on policy and guidelines affecting their profession.

Julie Brayshaw

Presiding member

Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

17 November 2015