



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Increasing the levels for entry into the health professions in Australia

**Mr Chris Robertson, Executive Director, Strategy and Policy
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency**

Overview

- The National Registration and Accreditation System for the health professions in Australia
- Case examples of increasing the level of entry requirements of health professions in Australia
- Observations on increasing professionalism



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

The National Scheme

- Commenced in 2010 as an agreement between 8 states and territories in Australia.
- Regulates approximately 650,000 practitioners in 14 professions
- Key functions are:
 - Registration
 - Notifications regarding health, conduct and performance
 - Compliance with standards
 - Accreditation of entry level training programs



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Our objectives (in the National Law)

- Public protection
- Workforce mobility
- Quality education and training of health practitioners
- Rigorous assessment of overseas trained practitioners
- Facilitate access to services by practitioners
- Enable development of a flexible, responsive and sustainable health workforce



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Who does what? Working together

National Boards

- Primary role is regulatory decision-making in the public interest
 - Set national registration requirements and standards
- Oversee various regulatory processes including registration, and the receipt, assessment and investigation of notifications (complaints)*
- Approve accreditation standards for the professions
 - Approve qualifications for entry into the profession

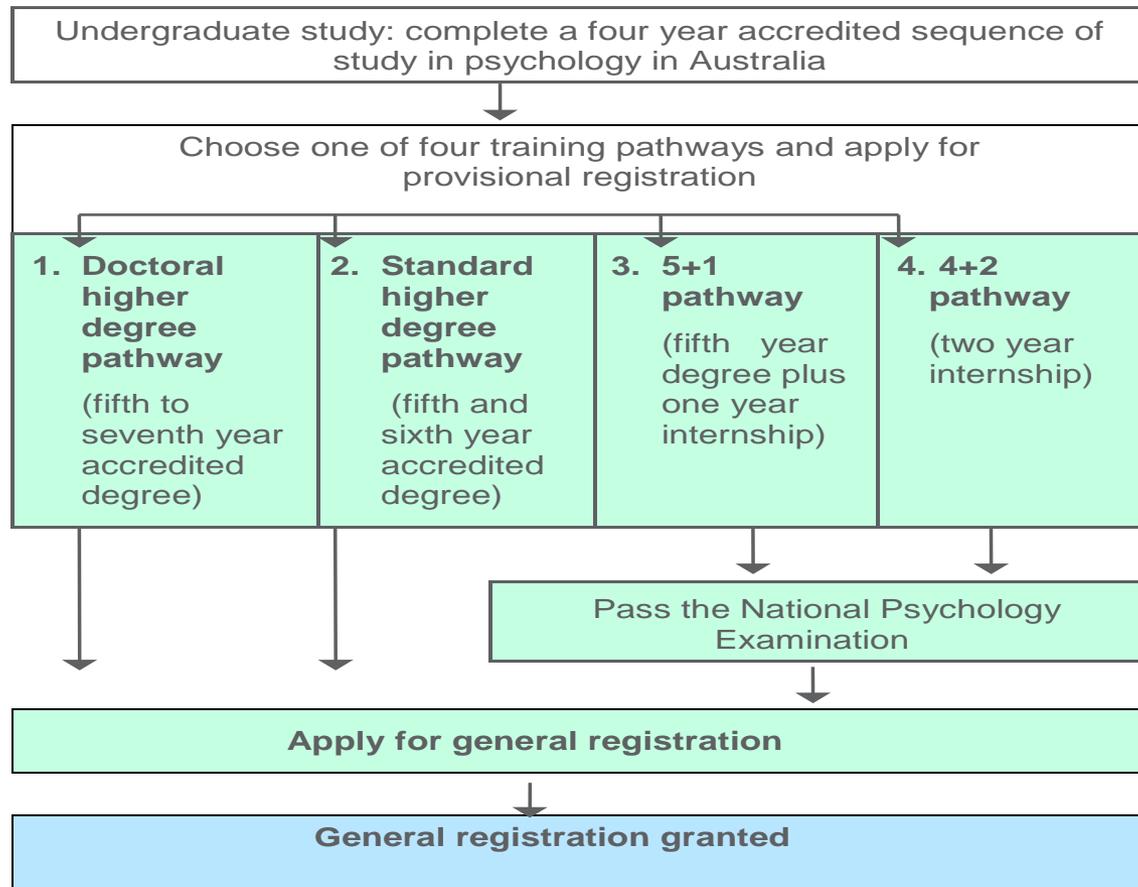
AHPRA

- Administers the Scheme
- Supports National Board decision-making
- Establishes and administers procedures for managing registration and notification matters
- Provides legal interpretation
- Makes recommendations to the Boards and Committees
- Is the first contact point for all enquiries about registration, notifications from practitioners, employers, governments and stakeholders

Accreditation agencies

- Assigned accreditation functions by the National Board
- Develop accreditation standards for board approval
- Accredit programs of study
- Submit accredited programs of study to Board for approval
- Monitor approved programs of study
- Assess overseas trained practitioners applying for registration in Australia

Case example 1 – Psychology Registration Pathway



Outcomes since 2010

- Significant growth in the 5+1 pathway – growing acceptance.
- Main concerns – costs and access to supervision under 5+1 pathway – particularly as supervisor requirements have increased.
- No quantifiable effect on wages of psychologists demonstrated (in public services).
- Some concerns that access to training in public services is reducing – may lead to substitution to other professions (eg social work) in the field



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Case example 2 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners

- Evolution of a health workforce to address poor access to service
- 2012 – government sought to improve standards of care and practice through national registration and standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners
- Slow uptake due to
 - A lack of registered training organisations
 - A lack of financial incentives for practitioners

Outcomes since 2012

- Numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners have entered a period of rapid growth from a low base (doubled since 2012).
- Slow growth in registered training organisations.
- Outcomes in health care quality?
- Has required significant investments to develop the training pipeline.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Observations

- Trends to increase professionalism and standards for entry into health professions
- Multi-factorial drivers of this:
 - Profession demands.
 - System needs, especially safety and quality.
 - Uncoupling of education and health policies, risk of producing higher qualification offerings and requirements.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Observations

- Cost drivers of increased professionalism are both
 - overt (eg cost of the entry level qualification to the student and the system), as well as
 - ‘hidden’ or hard to quantify costs (supervision, productivity loss in the field, administration of the regulators)
- Continuing tension between government and professions over entry standards.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology