

Statement of intent

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) is a single, nation-wide scheme for registered health practitioners. The scheme ensures that all regulated health professionals are registered against consistent, high quality, national professional standards and can practise across state and territory borders without having to re-register in each jurisdiction.

This is a statement of intent – between the 15 national health practitioner boards (the [National Boards](#)), the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency ([AHPRA](#)), [accreditation authorities](#) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector leaders and organisations.

We share a joint commitment to the following vision and values:

Vision

Patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is the norm. We recognise that:

- patient safety includes the inextricably linked elements of clinical and cultural safety, and
- this link must be defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Values

- commitment, accountability, shared priorities, collaboration and high-level participation
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and voices in the National Scheme
- reciprocity, which is two-way learning and the benefit of our work and outcomes, and
- self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is defined here as the individual and institutional knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies needed to deliver optimal health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

We acknowledge that there is currently no nationally agreed definition of cultural safety.

Our intent

We will work together to achieve equity in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians to close the gap by 2031.

We share a commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have access to health services that are culturally safe and free from racism so that they can enjoy a healthy life, equal to that of other Australians, enriched by a strong living culture, dignity and justice. We also commit to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are actively leading the design, delivery and control of health services.

We commit, using our leadership and influence, to realising our vision including through our application of the National Law¹ to ensure:

- a culturally safe health workforce supported by nationally consistent standards, codes and guidelines across all professions in the National Scheme
- using our leadership and influence to achieve reciprocal goals
- increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's participation in the registered health workforce
- greater access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to culturally safe services of health professions regulated under the National Scheme, and
- increased participation across all levels of the National Scheme.

Scope of the National Scheme

The National Scheme regulates more than 700,000 registered health practitioners and over 150,000 registered students. It also accredits over 740 approved programs of study delivered by over 330 education providers.

We acknowledge that this work is long-term and involves substantive reform.

'Non-Indigenous Australians must learn to appreciate the discomfort that is a daily experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. You can't experience what we feel every day, but you can accept it is real. You can sit with, and use this, experience of discomfort in this learning to enable much-needed change. Change oneself, and then apply those principles to work in policy development and service delivery.'

Rod Little, Co-Chair of the Congress of Australia's First Peoples

1 Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

We are:

Dr Kali Hayward

President, Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association

Ms Tania Dalton

Chair, The Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association

Mr Ben Gorrie

President, Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives

Ms Nicole Turner

Chairperson, Indigenous Allied Health Australia

Ms Pat Anderson AO

Chairperson, The Lowitja Institute

Mr John Singer

Chairman, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Ms Josslyn Tully

Chairperson, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association

Mr Michael Gorton AM

Chair, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency Management Committee

Ms Renee Owen

Chair, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia

Professor Charlie Xue

Chair, Chinese Medicine Board of Australia

Dr Wayne Minter AM

Chair, Chiropractic Board of Australia

Dr John Lockwood AM

Chair, Dental Board of Australia

Dr Joanna Flynn AM

Chair, Medical Board of Australia

Mr Mark Marcenko

Chair, Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia

Associate Professor Lynette Cusack RN

Chair, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

Ms Julie Brayshaw

Chair, Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

Mr Ian Bluntish

Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

Dr Nikole Grbin

Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia

Associate Professor Stephen Gough ASM

Chair, Paramedicine Board of Australia

Mr William (Bill) Kelly

Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia

Dr Charles Flynn

Chair, Physiotherapy Board of Australia

Ms Catherine Loughry

Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia

Professor Brin Grenyer

Chair, Psychology Board of Australia

Adjunct Professor Elaine Duffy

Chair, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Accreditation Committee

Dr Meeuwis Boelen

Chair, Chinese Medicine Accreditation Committee

Dr Kristin Grace

Chair, Council on Chiropractic Education Australasia

Conjoint Associate Professor Deborah Cockrell

President, Australian Dental Council

Associate Professor Jillian Sewell AM

President, Australian Medical Council

Professor Marilyn Baird

Chair, Medical Radiation Practice Accreditation Committee

Ms Ann Kinnear

Chair, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council

Associate Professor Lynne Adamson

Chair, Occupational Therapy Council (Australia and New Zealand) Ltd

Associate Professor Peter Hendicott

Chair, Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand

Mr Brett Vaughan

Chairperson, Australasian Osteopathic Accreditation Council

Associate Professor Sue Kirsa

President, Australian Pharmacy Council

Associate Professor Shane Patman

Chair, Australian Physiotherapy Council

Dr Rolf Scharfbillig

Chairperson, Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council

Professor Caroline Hunt

Chair, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council