



HEALTH  
PROFESSIONS  
ACCREDITATION  
COLLABORATIVE  
FORUM

Australia's accreditation authorities  
for regulated health professionals

## Update Communiqué: Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum, April 2020

The Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (the Forum), is the Forum of the 15 accreditation authorities with the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the Scheme).

This Communiqué outlines recent activity of the Forum, particularly related to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Forum members are acutely aware of the impact of the pandemic on our accredited education providers and assessment candidates and we thank all health practitioners around the globe who are working tirelessly on the frontline to provide care to their communities.

### **National Principles for Clinical Education during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The Australian Government, through the Health and Education portfolios, and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), National Boards and the Forum, representing all Accreditation Authorities, released a joint statement on 17 April 2020: *National principles for clinical education during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

The statement can be found on the Forum's website <http://hpacf.org.au/news/> and on the Ahpra website

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/News/COVID-19/National-principles-for-clinical-education-during-COVID-19.aspx>

The purpose of the statement is to set out national principles to guide the decisions of professions, accreditation authorities, education providers and health services about student clinical education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Collective Position with respect to accreditation programs and the impact of COVID-19**

The Forum is closely monitoring the evolving situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic as a public health risk. Forum members understand that the operations of education providers and their accredited programs across the regulated health professions are significantly effected by measures to minimise the impacts of COVID-19, including ongoing ability to meet the accreditation standards for their specific profession.

The Forum position is guided by publicly available information from the Australian Government Department of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Forum will also consider the statements of its MoU partner, the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Authority (TEQSA), and other education and health service standards bodies to ensure consistency of approaches.

The statement made in March 2020 is available on the Forum's website <http://hpacf.org.au/news/>

## **Analysis of Forum Member Responses to changes in accreditation due to COVID19**

### **Intent and purpose**

The Forum has been working collaboratively with the Health Professions Education Standing Group (HPESG) of Universities Australia. As part of this, the Forum has collated and analysed the approaches by Forum members regarding their accreditation functions during the COVID19 pandemic. These approaches demonstrate some of the flexible, adaptive and practical methods that Accreditation Authorities within the National Registration and Accreditation (NRAS) scheme are in exercising their accreditation roles.

### **Forum's Strategic Plans**

Following workshop development and consultation with members, the Forum is finalising its Strategic Plan for 2020-2025, and the activities within this. It will be available on the Forum's website shortly.

The current work plan of the Forum is articulated in the current Forum's Strategic Plan and is available on the Forum's website here: <http://www.hpacf.org.au/statementsandpositionpapers>.

### **Next Meeting**

The Forum will progress its strategic priorities at its next scheduled meeting in early August 2020.

Stay safe all

**Ms Bronwyn Clark**

**Chair**

**Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum**

22 April 2020

Future communiqués will be published on the Forum's website <http://www.hpacf.org.au> and sent to interested stakeholders.

Please feel free to forward the communiqués to colleagues who may be interested in the Forum's work, or email [info@hpacf.org.au](mailto:info@hpacf.org.au) for inclusion or to unsubscribe from this mailing list.