

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

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 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
 - See *Registration* for information for students and graduates, including how to apply online
 - See *Notifications* for more on complaints