



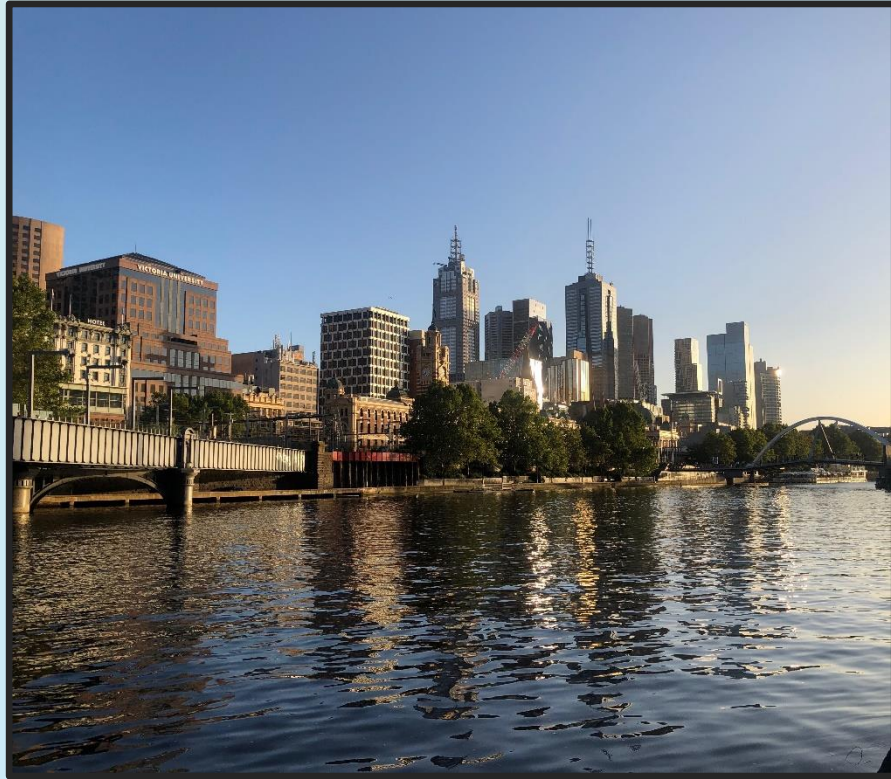
Ahpra
& National
Boards

Change as the new normal – adapting to deliver value in a dynamic environment

Martin Fletcher
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

5 March 2020

Greetings from Australia!



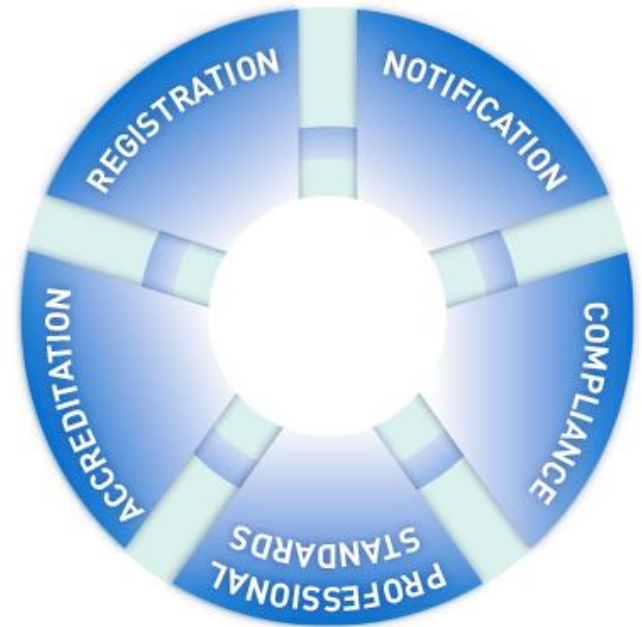
750,000 registered health practitioners

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners
- Chinese Medicine Practitioners
- Chiropractors
- Dental practitioners
- Medical Doctors
- Medical Radiation Practitioners
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Occupational Therapists
- Optometrists
- Osteopaths
- Paramedics
- Pharmacists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Psychologists

National, multi-profession scheme

Ahpra works in partnership with 15 National Health Practitioner Boards and accreditation authorities to:

- Set professional standards
- Register and renew practitioners
- Maintain national register
- Manage notifications (complaints)
- Accredite programs of study
- Prosecute offences



National Law is title protection based and has both public protection and workforce objectives

A unique and substantial achievement:
Ten years of national health practitioner
regulation in Australia



**Ahpra
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Boards**

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“Fundamental rethinking of regulation is needed more often than we expect”

Professor Zubin Austin, Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto

What are we rethinking?



- How community expectations should influence decision making
- How we work as part of a system
- How we solve problems earlier
- How we humanise regulation
- How we lead our regulatory culture

Community expectations

Melbourne doctor who called for women to be raped stood down during investigation

Health district responsible for hospital that employs Dr Christopher Kwan Chen Lee says it takes 'professional misconduct' seriously



▲ Christopher Kwan Chen Lee, an emergency department doctor from Malaysia who worked in Victoria and Tasmania, has been stood down from his job while an investigation is under way into offensive comments he made online. Photograph: Facebook



- What does the community know about us?
- What does the community expect from us?
- How do we factor this into regulatory decisions?
- Issues:
 - Community engagement
 - Regulatory principles
 - Sanction guidelines
 - Community members as regulatory decision makers
 - Grappling with transparency

Working as part of a system



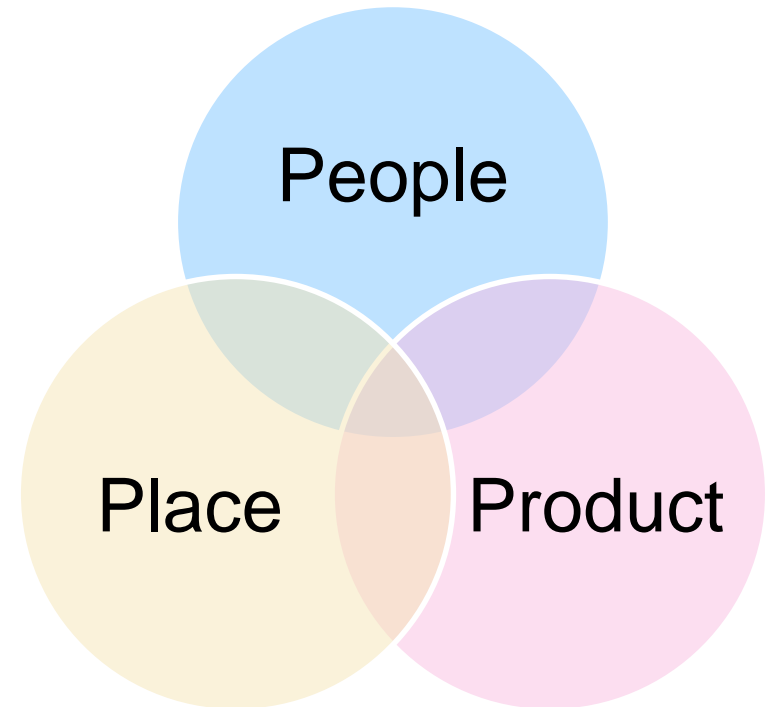
Victoria to overhaul health system after hospital safety review over baby deaths

Review ordered after 11 newborn and stillborn deaths at Bacchus Marsh hospital were found to have been potentially avoidable

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Oakden nursing home abuse continued after whistle was blown, senate inquiry finds

Posted 13 Feb 2018, 9:14pm



How do we solve problems earlier?

- Leverage our data:
 - quantify high and low risk
 - evaluate impact
 - predictive analytics
 - confirm intuition
 - dispel myths
- Focus on *applied* research:
 - in-house and partnership
- Share information openly to enable the governance role of others



Preventing harm and humanising regulation



- High levels of stress
- Practitioners (and notifiers) value:
 - fairness
 - transparency
 - communication
 - timeliness
 - empathic contact
- Strategies:
 - survey practitioners and notifiers
 - setting expectations early
 - providing outcome data
 - new skills for staff
 - engagement outside a problem

“How can we make health regulation more humane? A quality improvement approach.
(Biggar et al., *JMR* 2020, accepted)

The notifications process: How AHPRA handles notifications



Did you know?

- **Less than 1% of notifications about practitioners result in their registration being cancelled or suspended.**
- **More than 70%** of notifications result in no further action by the relevant Board.
- **11%** of notifications result in a practitioner being cautioned.
- **12%** of notifications result in a practitioner having restrictions placed on their practice.

63% of notifications don't proceed beyond initial assessment. 40% of all notifications are closed within 90 days.

37% of notifications reach this stage. 44% of these investigations take more than 12 months to complete.

Web www.ahpra.gov.au
Phone 1300 419 495

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A notification was made about me

We realise that being the subject of a notification can be very distressing.

The National Boards work with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) to protect patients and the public. We aim to do this while minimising the stress, anxiety and uncertainty of this experience for everyone involved.

Please be assured that there is no assumption of guilt. Our role is to gather information and put it before the relevant National Board.

Finding yourself here doesn't mean there was a serious incident or that your career is in jeopardy.

When a concern is raised with us, we are **required** by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to consider it.

You will be able to continue practising unless there is a risk to public safety.

You will be assigned an AHPRA case officer who you may contact at any time with questions about the process.

All practitioners who are the subject of a notification should contact their indemnity insurer. They have experience managing notifications and can provide independent advice and support.

All notifications are seen by a practitioner from your profession. They will decide how the notification should be managed.



702,741 health practitioners were registered in Australia, across 14 professions, at 30 June 2018.

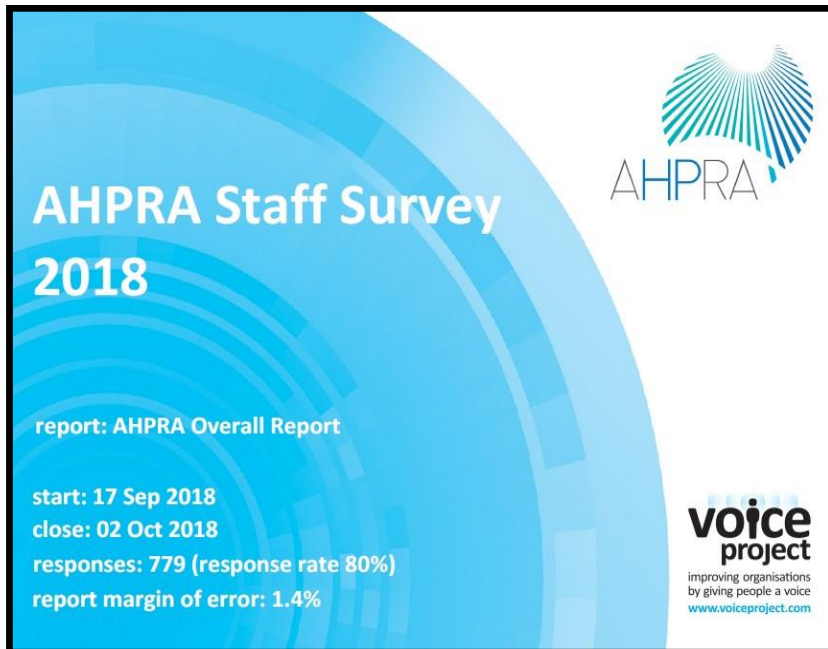
We received **7,276** notifications about health practitioners in 2017/18.

More than **70%** of notifications result in no further action.

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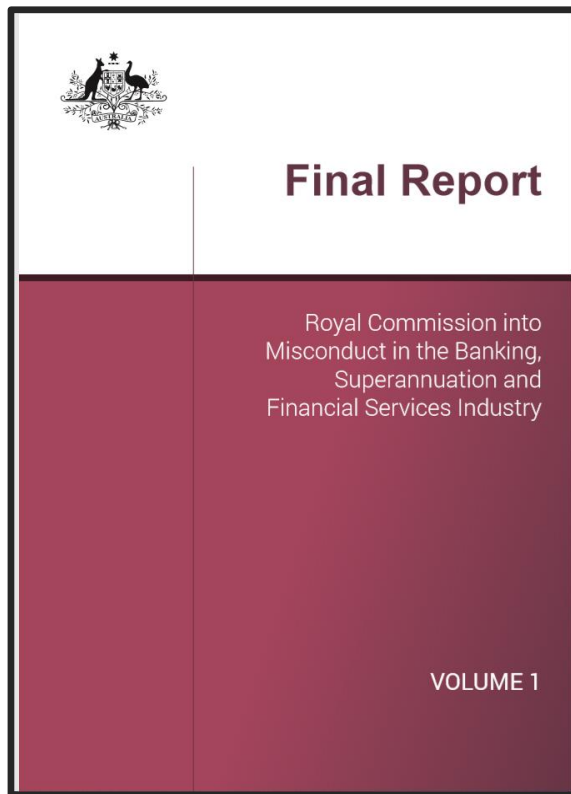
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What makes a good regulatory culture?



- Strong focus on mission... but what is the mission?
- Leadership...leading with care
- Positive performance orientation...tackling blame culture
- Teamwork...safe and inclusive ways of working
- Outward looking...roles and information flows

Lessons from regulation of banking



- Regulators better at dealing with traditional risk rather than new and emerging risks
- Internal culture and complacency is a barrier to adaptation
- Aversion to transparency blunts impact
- Be prepared to enforce the law – as a starting point
- Regulated entities are not clients

What makes a good regulator?



*Professor Valerie Braithwaite
Professor of Regulatory Studies,
Australian National University*

- The best stories about the opportunities seized to advance statutory objectives
- Exhibit both a risk management and opportunity orientation
- Demonstrate leadership from above and below
- Close the gap with those they want to protect from harm
- Engage with integrity to build trust and confidence

Vision: A community that has trust and confidence in regulated health practitioners

Values:
Integrity
Respect
Collaboration
Achievement

Mission: Safe and professional health practitioners for Australia



Regulatory effectiveness

- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of core regulatory functions
- Strengthened responsiveness of accreditation systems
- Strengthened risk-based regulatory practices
- Sustainable financial framework
- Uplifted digital capability



Trust and confidence

- Promoted and enhanced cultural safety
- Supported professional learning and practice
- Enhanced collaboration, engagement and communication with key stakeholders
- Strengthened contribution to sustainable health care



Evidence and innovation

- Enhanced consistency and evidence-base for standards, codes and guidelines
- Strengthened proactive use of our data and intelligence
- Enhanced capability to improve our regulatory model



Capability and culture

- Strengthened service focus
- Safe and inclusive work culture
- Enhanced capability, learning and development of our people



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