



Media release

10 November 2016

Revising and simplifying education and training was a priority for the Psychology Board of Australia in 2015/16

The Psychology Board of Australia's focus in 2015/16 was to review the profession's education and training model, according to information published by AHPRA today in its [2015/16 annual report](#).

The 2015/16 annual report by AHPRA and the national health practitioner boards is a comprehensive record of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the 12 months ending 30 June 2016.

'The Board often receives feedback that psychology training is unnecessarily complex, fragmented and lengthy,' said Professor Brin Grenyer, Chair of the Psychology Board of Australia. 'We made reformation of the education and training model our priority for the year.'

Prof. Grenyer sees education and training reforms as an important next step in developing the regulatory environment for the psychology profession.

'Patient safety underpins the direction of the reforms,' said Prof. Grenyer. 'We've held extensive consultations with the profession, practitioners, AHPRA and other agencies to ensure that the revision of educational standards will benefit the community.'

The Board partnered with the Australian Psychological Society, the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, and the Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association to host a national psychology education forum in Canberra in 2015.

More highlights of the past year include:

- **More health practitioners overall:** There were almost 20,000 more registrants in 2015/16 across the 14 regulated professions than there were last year, totalling 657,621 health practitioners nationally. Student registrations increased by more than 11,000 registrants year-on-year, totalling 153,710.
- **A simplified renewal process:** Online registration renewals reached a new high across all professions – with over 98% of all registrants renewing online and on time, making it easier for health practitioners to renew their registration each year.
- **Increased registration for the psychology profession:** As of 30 June 2016, there were 33,907 registered psychologists across Australia, an increase of 3.5% from the previous year. Psychologists made up 5.2% of all registered health practitioners in Australia.
- **10% increase in new applications for registration:** There were 4,759 new applications for registration as a psychologist in 2015/16.
- **Greater awareness of the National Scheme:** A nationwide campaign aimed at employers, practitioners and the general public rolled out across social media and in print advertising.

- **Growth in notifications:** There were 10,082 notifications received during the year across all 14 health professions, an increase of 19.7% nationally (representing 1.5% of the registration base). The top three notifier complaints related to clinical care (41.8%), medication issues (11.5%) and health impairment (10.7%). Just under half of all notifications were made by a patient, relative or member of the public. AHPRA closed 5,227 matters in the year.
- **Increased notifications about psychologists:** There were 528 notifications received about psychologists nationally in 2015/16 (including data from the Health Professional Councils Authority in NSW), an increase of 22.2% from the previous year. This contingent made up 5.5% of all notifications received by AHPRA (excluding HPCA).
- **Greater awareness around mandatory notifications:** There was a 23% increase in mandatory notifications in 2015/16 from the previous year across all health professions, with 72 made about psychologists (up from 42 in 2014/15). Data suggests that notifiers are making more appropriate mandatory notifications, having assessed that the risk to the public warrants the notification being made. AHPRA's awareness-raising campaigns aimed at practitioners and their employers may have contributed to this.
- **Less than 7% of all statutory offence matters related to psychology:** AHPRA received 83 new complaints about possible statutory offences by psychologists in the past year, which constitute 6.2% of all statutory offence matters received across all professions in 2015/16. Almost all new matters related to the use of protected titles or advertising concerns.

For more data and information relating to the Psychology Board of Australia in 2015/16, please see www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2016. The report provides a nationwide snapshot of the work of AHPRA and the Boards and highlights a multi profession approach to risk-based regulation with a clear focus on ensuring that Australians have a safe and competent health workforce.

'The regulation of over 660,000 registered health practitioners across 14 health professions and eight states and territories is an important task,' said AHPRA CEO Mr Martin Fletcher. 'There are many things to consider in regulation – but there is only one main focus, and that is public safety.'

Supplementary tables that break down data across categories such as registrations, notifications, statutory offences, tribunals and appeals, and monitoring and compliance can also be found on the annual report website.

In the coming months, AHPRA and the National Boards will also publish summaries of our work regulating health practitioners in every state and territory, which will be released in late 2016. Expanded, profession-specific summaries will also be released and progressively published from early 2017.

For more information

- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au/annualreport/2016
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