



Media release

21 February 2012

Registration applications now open for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners: National Law applies from 1 July 2012

Registration applications are now open for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice profession which, along with three other professions, is joining the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) on 1 July this year.

To be granted registration, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners must meet the registration standards set by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia (the Board) under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Board reminds practitioners that:

- from 1 July 2012, in order to use the protected titles *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner*, *Aboriginal Health Practitioner* or *Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner* practitioners must be registered
- if you are a registered Aboriginal Health Worker in the Northern Territory on 30 June 2012, you will automatically be registered as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner on 1 July 2012. You will need to be registered to continue working in a clinical role in the Northern Territory
- those people not in the Northern Territory who are required by their employer to use these protected titles will also need to be registered to continue working after 1 July 2012
- after 1 July 2012, those practitioners who are not required by their employer to use these protected titles will not be required to be registered, and will be able to keep working using their existing titles (i.e. *Aboriginal Health Worker*, *Drug and Alcohol Worker* and *Mental Health Worker*), and
- other practitioners who meet the Board's standards may choose to be registered but will not have to register by 1 July 2012.

Aboriginal Health Workers currently registered in the Northern Territory will not need to apply for registration, or pay a fee until their annual registration renewal.

Anyone applying for registration is encouraged to apply to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) by **30 March 2012** to assist the Board to process all the applications. Registration application forms are now available at www.atsihealthpracticeboard.gov.au.

More information about practitioners' obligations is available on the Board's website along with the essential documents needed to apply for registration.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) works in partnership with 14 National Boards to implement the national regulatory scheme for health professionals. The currently regulated professions are: chiropractic, dental, medical, nursing and midwifery, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology. As of 1 July 2012, four more professions will be regulated under the National Scheme – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners, medical radiation practitioners and occupational therapists. The purpose of health practitioner regulation is to protect the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who have the skills, qualifications and knowledge to provide safe care are registered.

For more information

- Visit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia's website at www.atsihealthpracticeboard.gov.au.
- Lodge an online enquiry form under *Contact us* from the homepage
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200