

# National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions

Exposure draft of “Bill B”  
*Health Practitioner Regulation  
National Law 2009*



# Implementation progress

2009

- March – Agency Management Committee appointed
- 23 April – First meeting of Committee
- 16 May – CEO advertised
- 16 May – National boards advertised
- 22 May – Letter from Agency Management Committee Chair to all staff in boards on staffing transition

# Development of Bill B

- COAG decision March 2008
- Extensive consultation process
- National Law (“Bill A”) received Royal Assent in November 2008
- Consultation papers issued in 2008 and 2009
- Over 1000 people attended forums
- Over 500 written submissions
- 12 June 2009 – release of exposure draft and commencement of five-week consultation period, closing on 17 July

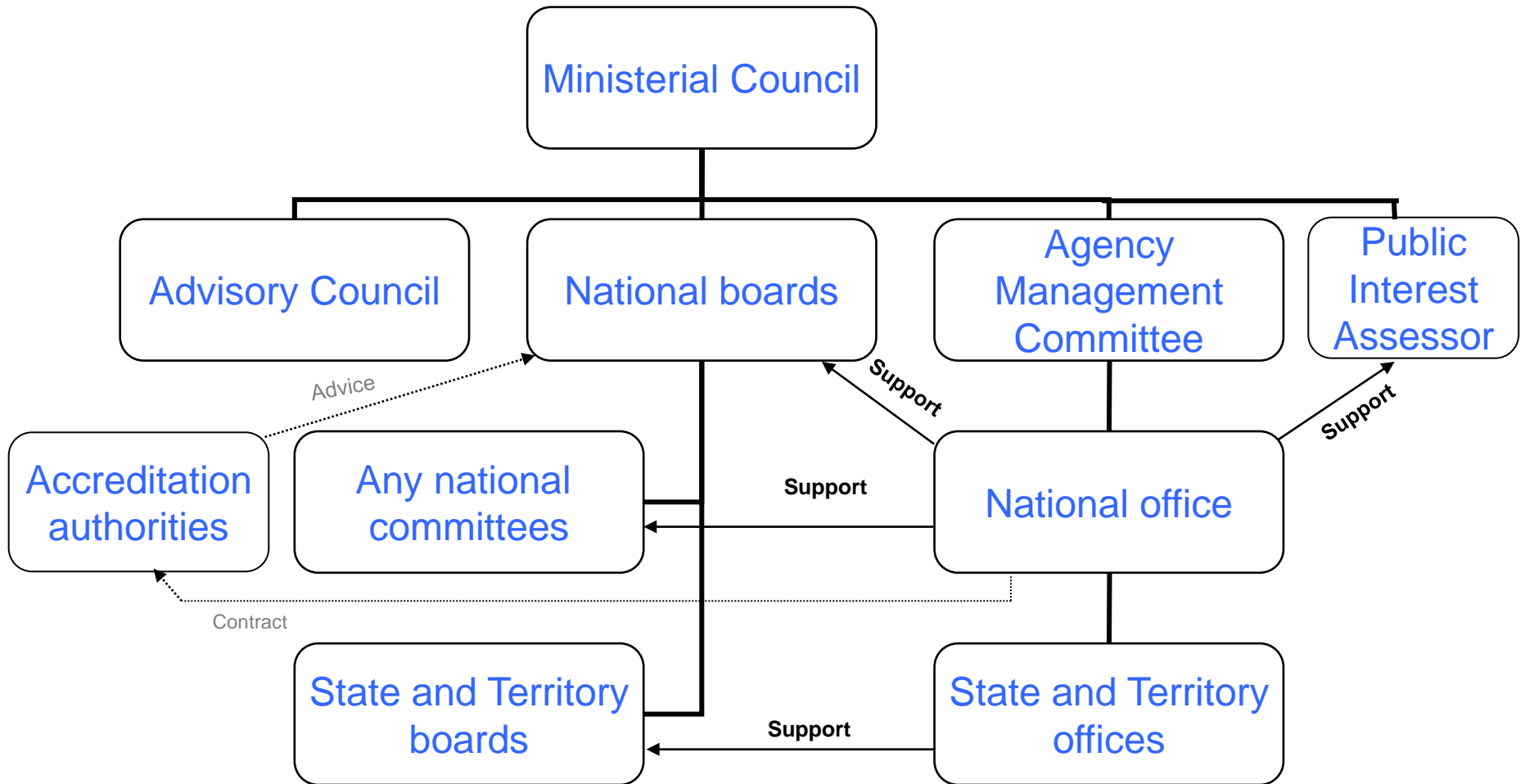


# Key features supported

- National system for health practitioner regulation
- Public national register for each profession
- Independence of accreditation functions
- National boards to exercise regulatory functions
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency to support boards



# The new scheme



# Key new elements in the exposure draft include

- State and Territory boards
- Mandatory reporting
- Criminal history and identity checks
- Simplified complaints arrangements and Independent Assessor
- Student registration
- Independent accreditation processes
- Three new professions to be covered in 2012
- Privacy protections for practitioners and consumers
- Mandatory continuing professional development

# Registration arrangements

## Registration categories:

- General
- Specialist
- Provisional
- Limited
  - postgraduate training or supervised practice
  - area of need
  - public interest
  - teaching or research
- Non-practising
- Student



# Registration transition

- If you are registered on 30 June 2010, you will automatically be registered on 1 July
- Boards will advise you of your category and type of registration well ahead of 1 July
- National board will work with existing boards to design registration transition for your profession
- Special provisions where specialist registration is not available on 1 July 2010



# State and Territory boards

- State and Territory boards to be committees of the national board
- Flexibility for national boards in smaller professions
- Members of State and Territory boards appointed by Minister in the State or Territory
- Agency office in each State and Territory with a national office in Melbourne
- Registrations and complaints to be handled in State and Territory offices

# Mandatory reporting

- Practitioners and employers (eg hospitals) must report a registrant who they believe has engaged in reportable conduct
- Reportable conduct is:
  - practising while intoxicated by drugs or alcohol
  - engaging in sexual misconduct in professional practice
  - placing the public at risk of substantial harm through either:
    - : a physical or mental impairment affecting practice, or
    - : a departure from accepted professional standards

# Criminal history and identity checks

- From 1 July 2010 boards to complete criminal and identity history checks for all health practitioners registering for the first time in Australia
- All other registrants to make an annual declaration on criminal history matters when renewing
- Boards to have power to conduct ad hoc criminal history and identity checks

# Simplified complaints arrangements

- Single point of contact for members of the public with assistance provided where required
- Complaints passed to the relevant board
- National board and independent Public Interest Assessor (PIA) must consult at preliminary assessment and decision following assessment
- Board and PIA must attempt to reach agreement with most serious action prevailing
- Role of individual Health Complaints Commissioners continues
- States and Territories able to nominate their own arrangements for PIA



# Complaints arrangements

- Separate tribunals in each State or Territory with specific arrangements established under State law
- Matters referred to tribunal where conduct occurred (if conduct occurred in multiple jurisdictions then on mailing address of registrant)
- Separate panels for health and professional standards as required by boards
- States and Territories able to opt out of default arrangements under National Law

# Student registration

- National boards will register students
- Each board will decide the point in the program from which students must be registered according to level of risk for the public
- Current student registrations will roll over into new scheme
- From 2011 all boards will register students

# Accreditation processes

- Functions independent of government with Ministerial reserve power on standards
- Ministerial Council assigns functions to external body (otherwise independent committee)
- Accreditation authorities will submit standards and accredited programs of study for national board approval
- Existing standards and approved programs to transition as is to new scheme on 1 July 2010



# Additional professions to be covered

From 1 July 2012

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clinical health workers
- Chinese medicine practitioners
- Medical radiation practitioners

Boards commence work one year ahead

# Information sharing and privacy

- Specific protections for both members of the public and registrants
- Tailored privacy, and freedom of information provisions based on Commonwealth law
- Information can be shared with a number of government agencies and also international regulatory authorities
- Provision of workforce planning data optional for registrants

# Mandatory CPD

- Continuing professional development (CPD) to be a condition of practice for all registrants other than non-practising and students
- National boards to determine profession-specific requirements
- Requirements in existence at 30 June 2010 will satisfy initial annual renewal requirements

# Next steps

- Consultation on draft Bill June and July
- Submissions close 17 July
- Ministers consider feedback and submissions
- Introduction of draft Bill into Queensland Parliament in September or October
- State and Territory parliaments consider enabling legislation (Bills C)



# More information?

Website – [www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp](http://www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp)

Questions – National Registration and  
Accreditation Implementation  
Project team

Contact project team – 02 6289 1531 or  
NRAIP@dhs.vic.gov.au