

Position statement

3 September 2013

Using a protected title, such as ‘acupuncturist’, under the National Law

Background

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) limits the use of certain titles. The protected titles for Chinese medicine are *Chinese medicine practitioner*, *Chinese herbal dispenser*, *Chinese herbal medicine practitioner*, *Oriental medicine practitioner* and *acupuncturist* (see s.113 of the [National Law](#)).

Endorsement

The National Law limits the use of the title *acupuncturist*. Certain Chinese medicine practices, such as acupuncture, can be undertaken by appropriately educated and competent health practitioners who are registered in professions other than Chinese medicine, when they have received endorsement from the profession for which they hold registration.

Endorsed practitioners can use the protected title *acupuncturist*, under the National Law.

While there are provisions under the National Law for endorsements, not all registered health professions have established standards for acupuncture endorsement. Where this is the case, the pathway exists to register with the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia, through the grandparenting arrangements (www.chinesemedicineboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards).

The Chinese Medicine Board of Australia will continue to work with other Boards regarding setting standards of endorsement, for other regulated health professions.

Holding out

The National Law (see s.116 of the National Law) prohibits unregistered persons knowingly or recklessly taking or using a title, name, symbol, word or description that, having regard to the circumstances in which it is taken or used, indicates or could be reasonably understood to indicate - the person is a health practitioner, or the person is authorised or qualified to practise in a health profession.

There are penalties for falsely using protected titles or holding yourself out to be a registered practitioner. Depending on the individual circumstances, a person may be investigated for holding themselves out, and prosecuted under the National Law.

A complaint may be made to AHPRA verbally by phoning 1300 419 495, or at any State and Territory office, or the online enquiry form on the website (see the ‘Contact Us’ page).

For more information

- Visit www.chinesemedicineboard.gov.au under *Codes and Guidelines* FAQ Protected titles, endorsement and ‘holding out’ under the National Law
- Visit www.chinesemedicineboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries, please call 0417 127 822.