

Media release

16 November 2015

Guidelines for safe Chinese herbal medicine practice published today

New *Guidelines for safe Chinese herbal medicine practice* have been published for all Chinese medicine practitioners today.

The new guidelines explain the Chinese Medicine Board's expectations of Chinese medicine practitioners to provide safe Chinese herbal medicine services. They address a policy gap by providing clear guidance for practitioners to make sure there is clarity and transparency about the expectations of practitioners providing Chinese herbal medicine services.

Practitioners need to know and understand this guideline to ensure their practice meets National Board expectations.

'These guidelines aim to assist Chinese medicine practitioners to practise Chinese herbal medicine safely and support the Board's effort to facilitate public access to safe health services,' said Chinese Medicine Board of Australia Chair Professor Charlie Xue.

He continued: 'They influence patient safety by improving the traceability of patient medication history and the ability of other health professionals to obtain information about herbs prescribed. The National Board released these documents today on its website, so that practitioners could familiarise themselves before the requirements take effect in 2 years.'

For the Chinese medicine profession, the guideline means that they are required to write in English on prescriptions and labels and:

- use clear and consistent herbal nomenclature
- record adequate details of Chinese herbal medicines in patient health records
- write adequate prescriptions
- ensure medicine labelling is accurate and informative, and
- ensure compounding and dispensing of medicines is precise and professional.

The guidelines reflect the Board's endorsement of the use of the authorised pin yin as the most appropriate herbal nomenclature for use in Chinese medicine in Australia and an accompanying, searchable compendium which cross-references commonly used species by various nomenclatures. The guidelines covers the use of raw herbs, herbal extracts and manufactured medicines.

These guidelines are consistent with the priorities of the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#) and there will be a two-year transition period before these guidelines come into effect in November 2017. This transition will allow practitioners to make sure their practice complies with these requirements.

FAQ and additional information

- FAQ (insert doc size) on the on the transition to the new guideline
- User guide (insert doc size) show Chinese medicine practitioners how to use the guideline

For more information

- Lodge an [online enquiry form](#)
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200