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### Chair’s message

Welcome to the tenth edition of the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia’s (the Board) newsletter. Previous issues can be found on the Board’s [Newsletters](#) page.

The Board held a forum and its monthly meeting in Adelaide in February, and the March meeting and forum will be held in Melbourne – please read the details in this newsletter and let us know if you are able to attend the open forum in Melbourne.



We’ve also provided information about the national drug screening protocol and the 2014/15 annual report on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

I would like to wish everyone a very happy New Year, including Chinese New Year.

**Professor Charlie Xue**  
Chair, Chinese Medicine Board of Australia

### Registration renewal update

In the recent renewal period, 96.56% of Chinese medicine practitioners renewed their registration and 98.3% of these did so online. This high rate of online renewal reflects the trend for all renewing practitioners across the National Scheme.

The Board will publish its next quarterly data update in March. For previous updates on the registered workforce, visit the [Statistics](#) page on the Board’s website.

### New Guidelines for safe Chinese herbal medicine practice have been published

New *Guidelines for safe Chinese herbal medicine practice* were published for all Chinese medicine practitioners in November 2015.

The [new guidelines](#) explain the Chinese Medicine Board’s expectations of Chinese medicine practitioners to provide safe Chinese herbal medicine services.

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. The guidelines influence patient safety by improving the traceability of patient medication history and the ability of other health professionals to obtain information about herbs prescribed.

For the Chinese medicine profession, the guidelines mean 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. There is also an accompanying, searchable compendium which cross-references commonly used species by various nomenclatures. The guidelines cover 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 the guidelines come into effect in **November 2017**. This transition will allow practitioners to make sure their practice complies with these requirements.

For all these documents, and additional FAQ, visit the [Codes and guidelines](#) section of the Board's website.

## Forums for Chinese medicine practitioners, students and stakeholders

The Board is holding forums around Australia in the first half of 2016. These will cover information on the role of the Board and AHPRA, and policy and notification trends updates.

A successful forum was held in Perth at the Confucius Institute at The University of Western Australia in November 2015. On 22 February 2016 the forum was held in Adelaide at the Adina Apartment Hotel Adelaide Treasury, attended by more than 50 registrants.

The National Board would like to invite you to these forums to discuss regulation and encourage the integration of registration standards, codes and guidelines into Chinese medicine practice. The dates for the forums in 2016 are:

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>21 March, Melbourne</b> | Citadines on Bourke Melbourne, 131-135 Bourke St, 5.30pm to 7.00pm |
| <b>23 May, Brisbane</b>    | Venue to be confirmed, 5.30pm to 7.00 pm                           |
| <b>20 June, Sydney</b>     | Venue to be confirmed, 5.30pm to 7.00pm                            |



Adelaide forum attendees at the presentation by Board members Anne Fletcher, Charlie Xue and Craig Zimitat.

To register to attend a forum in your city, please send an email with your full name (surname in capitals) and email address to [cmbaupdate@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:cmbaupdate@ahpra.gov.au).

Keep an eye on the Board website's [News](#) page for updated information about the forums.

## National drug screening protocol in place from November 2015

From November 2015, all Chinese medicine practitioners who have restrictions placed on their registration by the Board as a result of past substance misuse will have routine quarterly hair testing, in addition to random urine testing.

The introduction of routine hair testing is based on expert advice about modern screening methods. Routine hair testing helps provide comprehensive information about the use – over time – of a wide range of drugs (not just based on the practitioner's drug taking history).

The drug screening protocol is part of a wider, national strategy to effectively manage compliance and monitoring across the National Scheme. More information is in the statement published on the [Board's website](#).

## National Scheme news

### New video outlines objectives and role of the National Scheme

A new video and an accompanying infographic explaining the Australia-wide scheme that is in place to protect members of the public has recently been launched by AHPRA.

Working in partnership with the 14 National Boards, AHPRA helps regulate Australia's 630,000-plus registered health practitioners through a national scheme.

[The video](#) explains how the National Scheme works and how patients are protected.

Both resources are available on the [What we do](#) page of the AHPRA website. The video can also be watched on AHPRA's [YouTube channel](#).

### 2014/15 National Scheme annual report and Chinese Medicine Board profession profile

AHPRA and the National Boards have released their 2014/15 annual report on the National Scheme, providing a comprehensive record of the operations of the National Scheme for the 12 months ending 30 June 2015.

The annual report is published on AHPRA's [annual report mini-site](#). It includes a detailed report – including data – for the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia.

### Chinese medicine practice: profession profile

The National Board will soon publish a report of its work in regulating Chinese medicine practice in the National Scheme during 2014/15.

The report will provide a profession-specific view of the Board's work to manage risk to the public and regulate the profession in the public interest. It is a profile of regulation at work in Australia for the 12 months ending 30 June 2015.

The data in this report are drawn from data published in the 2014/15 annual report of AHPRA and the National Boards.

Look out for the report in the next month on AHPRA's [annual report mini-site](#), where the 2014/15 state and territory summaries will also be published. We will have a link and news item on the Board's website.

### Employer obligations: new awareness campaign

AHPRA has published a [news item](#) that outlines employers' obligations, and has ads running on LinkedIn and Facebook. This is the first step in the campaign, with many more activities to follow, including direct mail, paid print advertising, and in-language advertising (for the public campaign).

The overall campaign will be rolled out in stages and has three target audiences and objectives:

1. Employers – check the [register](#) before employing someone, keep up to date with changes to registrations, make mandatory reports when required.
2. Practitioners – know your obligations as a registered health practitioner.
3. Public – check to see if your practitioner is registered.

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## Keep in touch with the Board

Visit the [Chinese Medicine Board website](#) for news about the profession, information on the National Scheme and for registration standards, codes, guidelines, policies and fact sheets.

Read the [National Board Communiqué](#) each month on the website: these publications inform everyone of the decisions made at the Board's monthly meeting.

Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [enquiries link](#) on the bottom of every page.

For registration enquiries call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 9275 9009 (for overseas callers).

Address mail correspondence to: Prof. Charlie Xue, Chair, Chinese Medicine Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne VIC 3001.

