

## **Unregistered Health Practitioners Project**

This is the first in a series of bulletins to provide information on a project being undertaken on behalf of state, territory and commonwealth health ministers under the auspices of the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC).

In 2011 the Victorian Department of Health, on behalf of AHMAC, undertook a national consultation on options for the regulation of unregistered health practitioners. An 'unregistered health practitioner' is defined as someone who provides a health services and is not required to be registered under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

The results of the 2011 consultation showed that there was broad support for a nationally consistent 'Code of Conduct' for unregistered health practitioners and an enforcement system based on the system already operating in New South Wales. (South Australia has since introduced a similar system and code and Queensland and enacted supporting legislation.)

In response to the report of the 2011 consultation, state, territory and commonwealth health ministers agreed in principle on 14 June 2013 to strengthen state and territory health complaints mechanisms via:

- a single national Code of Conduct for unregistered health practitioners to be made by regulation in each state and territory, and statutory powers to enforce the code by investigating breaches and issuing prohibition orders
- a nationally accessible web-based register of prohibition orders
- mutual recognition of prohibition orders across all states and territories.

On behalf of AHMAC, the Victorian Department of Health is undertaking a public consultation on the terms of the first national Code of Conduct and proposed parameters to underpin the nationally consistent implementation of the code.

The department's project team is currently preparing a consultation paper, which is expected to be released publicly in March 2014. Availability of the paper will be advertised nationally and interested parties will be invited to make written submissions during the consultation period, expected to be from early March to mid-April 2014.

Consultation forums will also be conducted in each state and territory in March 2014. Feedback from the forums and the written submissions will be incorporated into the final consultation report.

Further information, including the final report from the 2011 consultation, is available on the project website: [www.ahmac.gov.au](http://www.ahmac.gov.au). Regular bulletins will also be issued during the project and posted online.

## **Contacts**

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