

***National Registration and Accreditation Scheme
for the Health Professions***

Proposed arrangements for accreditation

***Submission by the
Pharmaceutical Society of Australia***

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About PSA

1. The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) represents the professional interests of pharmacists across the nation. It provides standards of practice, education, training and practice support for pharmacists and helps members of the profession to deliver quality health care to consumers.
2. PSA is also joint owner, with The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, of the Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy (AACP) which was established in 1992. Currently, AACP is the major accreditation and credentialing body approved by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing for specialised professional pharmacy services which are remunerated separately from the supply of medicines.

PSA's comments

3. PSA takes this opportunity to provide a submission on the proposed arrangements for accreditation under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions.
4. PSA appreciates the direction being taken to ensure existing structures and accreditation processes around health professional education and training are maintained during the transitional arrangements and where possible, through to the new scheme. PSA agrees it is vital that existing arrangements which are operating effectively are allowed to continue. It is also important, as noted in the paper, that the transition process should not inadvertently disadvantage any registered practitioner or students about to enter a profession.
5. The pharmacy profession, through organisations such as the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC), individual pharmacy registering authorities (state and territory pharmacy boards), PSA, AACP and other bodies, has well established structures, standards and processes for the purposes of:
 - a. initial registration and re-registration;
 - b. assessment of overseas trained practitioners;
 - c. evaluation of education courses and institutions;
 - d. intern training programs; and
 - e. credentialing of specialist practitioners.
6. Significant experience and expertise resides in these organisations individually and collectively. PSA believes it would be sensible and logical to retain and maintain the infrastructure and contribution of such organisations as much as possible under the new scheme legislation. This is clearly in the public interest and also of significant benefit in the process of establishing the new scheme.
7. As the custodian of the competency standards for pharmacists, PSA is responsible for the development of these standards on behalf of, and in consultation with, the pharmacy profession.

8. The competency standards are utilised by all sectors of the pharmacy profession and applied in many ways. Examples include the following:

Utilised by:	Examples of purpose:
a. Applicants for registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in their preparation for assessment for initial, and restoration of, registration.
b. Registering authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with their assessment of applicants for initial registration as pharmacists in Australia. • Assist in developing procedures to assure the competence of applicants for re-registration for their areas of practice. • Assist in the performance review of practitioners e.g. disciplinary hearings.
c. The New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Schools Accreditation Committee (NAPSAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the evaluation of pharmacy courses.
d. Credentialing bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in credentialing pharmacists to provide a particular service.
e. Providers of intern training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in developing curricula for courses.
f. Providers of continuing pharmacy education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in developing educational materials or courses for pharmacists to assist them with their continuing professional development (CPD).
g. Academic institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in developing curricula for courses leading to registration as a pharmacist.
h. Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in developing job descriptions. • Assist in recruitment and performance review processes.
i. Pharmacists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the preparation of procedures that will facilitate self-assessment of their competence for any area of pharmacy practice, particularly for the purpose of adopting appropriate means of CPD.

9. PSA seeks assurance that the national scheme legislation will not hinder PSA's ability to fulfil the key responsibility of any ongoing review of existing, and development of new, competency standards.
10. PSA would be pleased to provide any additional information relating to this submission on accreditation issues and look forward to participating in ongoing discussions on the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

(End of submission)