

Chinese Medicine Reference Group

March 2024

Terms of reference

Purpose

The Chinese Medicine Reference Group (the Reference Group) is convened by the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia (the Board) in order to:

- provide a forum for discussion of matters related to the registration and regulation of Chinese medicine practitioners and accreditation of Chinese medicine programs under the National Registration and Accreditation scheme (the National scheme),
- foster communication and a common understanding between the different participants within the Reference Group in relation to the work of the Board, the work of participants in the Reference Group and the broader function of the National scheme, and
- to assist the Board in progressing its core business.

Membership

- The Reference Group is chaired by the Board Chair or their nominee.
- The members of the Reference Group are selected through an expression of interest process and sector nominations and are appointed at the discretion of the Board.
- The Reference Group should comprise a minimum of 10 members and can include:
 - national professional association representatives,
 - consumer representatives,
 - educational institution representatives,
 - representation from the private health insurance industry,
 - representation from professional indemnity providers,
 - representation from the Therapeutic Goods Administration, and
 - at least four registered individual Chinese medicine practitioners appointed by the Board.
- At least one of the registered Chinese medicine practitioner members should have graduated within the last five years. They should be selected on merit, based on published selection criteria.
- Practitioner members are appointed to the Reference Group for two years and may be appointed for a further two years.
- Chinese Medicine Board members may attend in an ex-officio capacity.
- Ahpra staff may attend as observers at the discretion of the Chair.

Additional attendees may be invited from time to time at the discretion of the Chair.

Functions

The Reference Group:

Chinese Medicine Board of Australia

- is intended to be a discussion forum,
- does not hold any decision-making powers,
- will provide an opportunity for Reference Group members to raise and report on any issues of interest and/or concern that may relate to the functions of the Board, and
- may assist the Board to monitor the effectiveness of existing accreditation and registration requirements and related processes for the profession over time.

Meetings

The Reference Group:

- normally meets once per year face to face or via video conference, and
- may also be consulted via email on particular issues at the discretion of the Chair.

Quorum

- The Reference Group has no delegated authority from the Board to make decisions and is therefore not subject to a quorum.
- All members are encouraged to send at least one representative to each meeting.

Procedures

- The Reference Group follows procedures consistent with the National Board, which includes declarations of any conflicts of interest.
- The *Guiding Principles of the Reference Group* inform all meetings of the Reference Group. The Guiding Principles provide a broad but clear philosophy that encompasses the Board's values and assists the Reference Group to understand culture and way of operating within the NRAS.
- The Board Chair will set a strategic focus for each meeting of the Reference Group.
- The Ahpra staff will call for submissions of agenda items at least four weeks in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- Endorsement of agenda items submitted is required by the Board Chair.
- Endorsed agenda items will be circulated to the Reference Group members one week prior to the Reference Group meeting.
- The Chair provides an overview at the beginning of each meeting, ensures a strategic focus for discussions and prioritised agendas, and facilitates an evaluation of each meeting.
- Members are to be aware of and respect that some agenda items or discussion may be deemed confidential.
- As stated in the *Guiding Principles of the Reference Group*, members should feel confident to express their views and / or ideas within the context of meetings and should expect their contributions to be treated respectfully by others.
- Members may report the meetings to their respective organisations. Any such reports should be respectful of the contributions and views of other members.
- A Communique approved by the Chair or nominee will be published on the Board's website following each meeting.

Remuneration

- The Reference Group members receive a sitting fee for attending meetings at the same rate as National Board members for special assignment except where attendance at the meeting is:
 - a function of the person's employment, or
 - as a professional association representative¹.
- Members eligible for sitting fees will have reasonable travel and accommodation costs covered by the Board.
- Other costs or situations are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Secretariat

The Secretariat is provided by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency.

Terms of reference review period

The Reference Group's Terms of reference are reviewed every two years or as required.

¹ Consistent with *Professions Reference Group, Terms of Reference* which state 'Members will fund their own attendance at meetings'.