

# Ahpra's Chaperone Policy Review



Reading time:

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The Medical Board of Australia (MBA) and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency released a status report on 4 August 2017, on the implementation of the recommendations from the Independent review of the use of chaperones. In 2016, prompted by patients, whose trust was abused by doctors, a review was commissioned to consider the appropriateness of imposing a chaperone condition on the registration of a health practitioners to protect patients while allegations of sexual misconduct are being investigated.

The report recommends three areas for regulatory reform:

- no longer using chaperones as an interim restriction while allegations of sexual misconduct are investigated
- establishing a specialist team within Ahpra working with the Medical Board of Australia to improve handling of sexual misconduct complaints, and
- strengthening monitoring and providing more information to patients in the exceptional cases when chaperone conditions are in place.

The MBA and Ahpra have adopted all the recommendations made; meaning:

- using more effective ways to protect patients when allegations of sexual misconduct are made, including gender-based restrictions, restricting patient contact or suspending the doctor's practice
- establishing a specialist, national, Medical Board committee to make decisions about all these cases, supported by a specialist team within Ahpra to manage sexual misconduct notifications, auditing all open notifications about allegations of sexual misconduct by doctors and reviewing all doctors currently subject to chaperone conditions, and
- writing to all police departments in Australian states and territories to establish clear inter-agency protocols.

It is Ahpra's aim to strengthen and rename its chaperone protocol; Practice monitoring protocol to reflect all the report's recommendations.

Find the [full Independent review of the use of chaperones report](#) on Ahpra's website.

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