



## The Notifier Experience

*Increasing the public understanding and confidence in the process of consumer complaints*

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## OVERVIEW

- Research
- NRAS review
- AHPRA-wide action plan
- Your role



## Research

- Health Issues Centre (Victoria) report June 2014  
*“Setting things right – improving the consumer experience of the joint consideration process between OHSC and AHPRA”*
- To advise on specific actions AHPRA can take to increase public confidence in the joint consideration process
- To develop proposals for improvement, within the context of current legislative arrangements

## Research

- Review of written sources of information
- Focus groups
- Interviews with key informants
- No direct research with consumers in the timeframe

## Research

- Victorian Study 2004
  - Disjunction between consumer expectations and outcomes delivered
  - Tensions in role of Professional Boards in dealing with what consumers might be thinking of as complaints
  - Highlighted that regulation focuses on:
    - Failures of professional standards, and
    - Protection of the public interest, and
    - Not complaint resolution

## Research (Victorian study 2004)

- Consumers experience
  - Lack of responsiveness
  - Clear and timely communication
  - Perceived lack of impartiality
  - One quarter did not understand the reason for the outcome
  - Three quarters did not agree with the outcome or think it reasonable

## Research – common consumer themes

- Investigation didn't assess all materials / understand issues
- Did not feel fully informed during process
- Not enough information about decision
- Lack of ongoing contact / information flow
- Too slow
- Appeared unfair

## Recommendations - communication

### Written

- Plain English
- Throughout the process
- Explanations about decision

### Interpersonal

- Two way process – opportunity to be heard
- Sense of communicating in a human way

## Recommendations - process

- Improving timeliness
- Information flow about what is happening
- What does it look like from the consumer's point of view?
- Being in the right place that has capacity to deal with the complaint (as the consumer sees it)

*Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?*

Henry David Thoreau

## NRAS Review

- Single entry point for complaints and notifications?
- National performance measures and prescribed timeframes?
- Sufficient transparency about process and outcomes?
- Flexible powers to adopt ADR?
- Removal of adverse findings?

## AHPRA response - Regulatory Operations

- The trial of a centralised Notification Intake Centre to provide a single point of entry within AHPRA for the notifier.
- Building AHPRA's culture and capacity to focus on the customer throughout the notifications process.
- Analysis of notifications management structures and identifying a preferred model for the organisation.

## AHPRA response - Regulatory Operations

- Building the relationship between AHPRA and HCEs
  - joint development of early triage/ assessment matrix
  - referral of matters (where appropriate)
  - prompt communication to the notifier
- Options to provide more meaningful information to notifiers
- Exploring development of a review process for the notifier following the conclusion or outcome of a matter.

## AHPRA response - Communications

- Review and rewrite template letters
- Consumer panel to provide advice on clarity, language, layout of website information
- Prepare case studies for information of practitioners and members of the public
- Develop and improve communication channels:
  - Twitter
  - Online consultation platform

## AHPRA response - Policy & Strategy

- Coordinate data and research for risk based regulation
  - Engagement of research fellow
  - Quarterly reports on risk based regulation and case studies for Boards

## What's in the plan? AHPRA-wide

- Building a customer focused culture
- Ongoing training for all staff who communicate directly with notifiers
- Stakeholder engagement strategy

## Your role

- Work with us to take an enabling approach to the National Law
- Could we provide more meaningful information to notifiers with practitioner consent?
  - e.g where Board decides no further regulatory response is required

## Contact Information

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