



AUSTRALIAN
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION



APA ADVOCACY NEWS

5 November 2020

Table of Contents

CLICK THROUGH TO THE RELEVANT SECTION

Developing news	2
Always Was, Always Will Be: Get involved with APA's NAIDOC Week Q&A2	
Latest advocacy and emerging issues	3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health	3
Aged care	3
Compensables	4
COVID-19	4
NDIS and disability	5
Paediatrics	5
Telehealth	6
Veterans	7
Resources	7

Developing news

APA's aged care advocacy position hits the right note in the sector

APA's strategic advocacy to improve access to physiotherapy for older Australians is gaining recognition in the sector.

This week our response to final proposed recommendations to the Aged Care Royal Commission has been featured on respected news website *Australian Ageing Agenda*.

The widely read publication interviewed APA Director and gerontology physiotherapist Rik Dawson about the proposed recommendations, which were made in a final report by the Counsel Assisting to the Royal Commission.

The Commissioners will consider these proposals before handing down their final recommendations to the Federal Government next year. It is pleasing to see a number of recommendations echoing the principles we have long advocated for.

The Australian Ageing Agenda feature follows acknowledgement of the quality of our submissions from the office of the Counsels Assisting the Royal Commissioners.

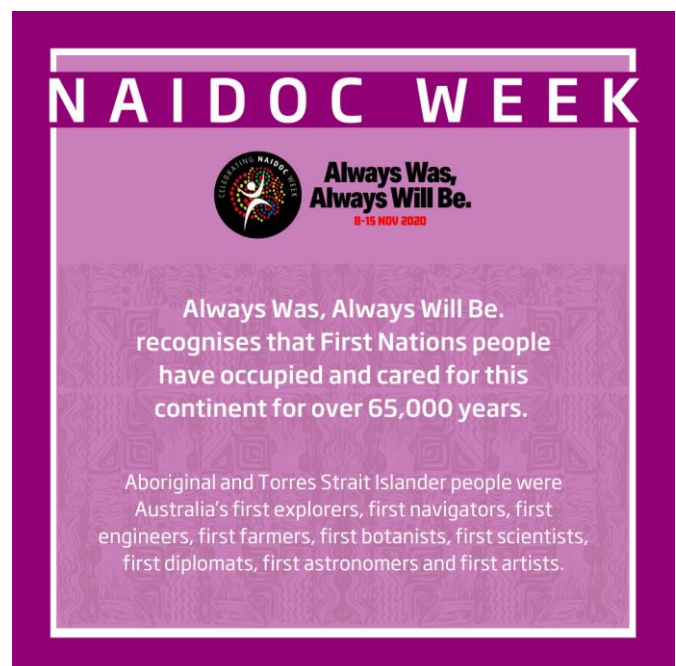
The APA will make a final submission to the Royal Commission by 12 November 2020.

Read more in Aged Care news below.

Always Was, Always Will Be: Get involved with APA's NAIDOC Week Q&A

NAIDOC Week, which is held each year to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, kicks off next week.

To mark the week, APA's some of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members will answer NAIDOC Week related questions from the APA community. If you have any questions for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, please send them through by COB tomorrow.



Latest advocacy and emerging issues

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

NAIDOC week commences next week, running from 8-15 November. Throughout the week, the APA will be posting Q&A content of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, with NAIDOC Week related questions from the APA community. If you have any questions for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members please send them through by COB tomorrow.

Further details: [Email](#)

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, with support from HESTA, are presenting a webinar on better healthcare in hospitals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Participants will hear about the latest research from Australia and North America on how hospitals can deliver better care.

12 November 2020, 10:30am–11:30am AEDT

Further details: [Website](#)

MASS Education through Queensland Health is hosting a webinar for NAIDOC Week titled “Cultural considerations re the provision of assistive technology for First Nations people,” which unpacks the cultural identity of First Nations people and how this relates to the prescription and use of assistive technology.

Further details: [Website](#)

Aged care



Final proposed recommendations have been made by Counsel Assisting to the Aged Care Royal Commission in a wide-ranging report that recognises the importance of

physiotherapy.

The APA broadly supports the Counsel Assisting’s proposed recommendations that residential aged care facilities engage allied health professionals via a blended funding model of ongoing and activity-based payments. It also supports the monitoring of allied health services delivered to ensure consumers receive the level of multidisciplinary care they need.

Recommendations to ensure allied health representation in care management and in aged care health assessments via Medicare are also positive.

The APA publicly responded to the report with a media release. As a result, physiotherapy’s vital role in aged care was featured in highly respected news website the *Australian Ageing Agenda*, which is widely read across the sector.

Further details: [Media release](#) [News story](#)

Serious Incident Response Scheme

The new Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) will start in early 2021 as announced by Minister Richard Colbeck on 1 October 2020.

The department has published a SIRS Model for Implementation paper on its website. This paper sets out the structure and operation of the SIRS for residential aged care and flexible care delivered in a residential aged care setting.

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission will shortly provide the sector with information and education to ensure aged care providers are ready for commencement of the SIRS.

Further details: [Website](#)

Compensables

The APA met with SIRA this week to discuss the evaluation of certification by physiotherapists and possible changes to the fee schedules in the near future.

The SIRA evaluation will be undertaken by the same Monash University team that undertook the evaluation of certification in the early days of Worksafe and TAC in Victoria. We encourage any members working with patients covered by SIRA to complete the evaluation.

The survey is hoping to capture opinions from all treating physiotherapists regarding certification whether you have actually issued a certificate or not.

We have no further details about how to participate at this stage but will keep you updated.

COVID-19

The APA and AHPA have strongly advocated on behalf of the physiotherapy profession and allied health to ensure continuity of safe practice via telehealth and face-to-face since the onset of COVID-19.

We are in continued regular contact with State Chief Allied Health Officers, the Minister for Health and relevant departments.

It is pleasingly we are moving to a “new normal” across the country and will keep you updated of changes as they happen.

Border Updates

Queensland has further eased border restrictions with New South Wales with an opening of the borders to regional New South Wales. However, travel is not permitted from the 32 greater Sydney Local Government Areas listed as hotspots.

Further details: [Website](#)

The New South Wales government has announced the border with Victoria will open from 12:01am on 23 November 2020.

Further details: [Website](#)

Victoria Groups and Classes

Indoor group therapy will be permitted from 11:59pm on 8 November 2020. The following guidance has been provided by the Chief Allied Health Officer to support business planning:

1. For clinical settings, indoor groups will need to apply a density quotient of 1 person per 4 square metres, with a patron cap of up to 10 people per space – practitioners are excluded from the group numbers.
2. For health professionals, that provide clinical services in a fitness industry setting (ie. public/commercial gym) a density quotient of 1 person per 8 square metres with a patron cap of up to 10 people applies – practitioners are again excluded from the group numbers.
3. No shared equipment.
4. Stagger session times to avoid congregation or exceeding patron limits.
5. There will be no restrictions on the clinical indications for metro Melbourne or regional Victoria after 8 November 2020.

Further details: [Website](#)

PPE in NSW aged care facilities

NSW Health has updated its guidance to residential aged care facilities. This includes advice that masks are no longer necessary in all aged care facilities.

NSW Health also recommends providers plan for all staff to wear surgical masks should it be recommended in the future where there is an increased risk of local transmission.

Further details: [Guidance](#)

NDIS and disability

Minister Robert has announced the allocation of \$5.9 million over the next two years to the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to strengthen NDIS services within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Further details: [Media release](#)

Submissions

- We have provided a submission to DSS on the National Disability Strategy.
- The APA is looking to provide a submission to DSS on the NDS and NDIS Outcomes Framework

Disability and NDIS Projects

The APA met again last week with senior NDIA officials regarding concerns relating to the scope and timelines of the Independent Assessor (IA) project that was due for roll-out at the start of October. The NDIA have confirmed that the second pilot has recommenced and that the timelines for the national roll-out have been extended, and is now planned for February 2021.

Ongoing discussions with the NDIA will continue to address concerns raised by the APA including appropriateness of assessment tools, selection of tools and the scope of IA in plan development and review.

JMF grant

Content development for the online modules for the JMF grant are undergoing final testing. The course should be publicly available mid-November. Expressions of interest have been circulated and there has been great interest in the course. You can find more information or register.

Further details: [Course registration](#)

With Victorian restrictions easing, filming for the awareness campaign is planned to resume in mid-November.

Paediatrics

The APA was invited to a consultation with the NDIA and Nous Group on the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Reset Project.

Further details: [website](#)

Ongoing discussions between the APA and AHPA have considered ongoing advocacy opportunities in the ECEI space. Next week the APA will meet with AHPA and other peak bodies to brainstorm future advocacy opportunities and approaches.

10-year Primary Healthcare Steering Committee

The APA is represented at the Primary Healthcare steering committee, which will help to improve patient-centered care, the quality of care, the efficiency and effectiveness of the health system. The next meeting of the steering committee is on 13 November 2020.

Telehealth

The APA continues to advocate for: an extension of MBS and DVA funded telehealth to enable current research into the effectiveness of telehealth to be concluded and further research to be undertaken to inform future decisions.

A commitment to ensuring that telehealth service delivery is safe and effective, and call for an evidence-based approach to underpin permanent access to telehealth for consumers. The next APA telehealth roundtable will occur on 12 November 2020 with attendees including a range of external stakeholders involved in future decision making about access to telehealth.

The topics that will be covered include:

- funding and sustainable support for telehealth for improved access and outcomes
- ensuring safety and quality of telehealth delivery within allied health professions
- updates from the aged care and remote and rural settings

- background and expected timeframes from the Melbourne University project on international standards for telehealth.

- [Mobility and functional support products](#)
- [Extension to Provisional Access to Medical Treatment \(PAMT\) trial for veterans](#)

Veterans

Thank you to those who responded to our call for support to promote Veterans' Health Week.



DVA news articles

The Department of Veterans Affairs has published the following articles:

[DVA clients' new-look Veteran Cards to access healthcare](#)

[Updated Rehabilitation Appliances Program \(RAP\) guidelines and forms](#)

- [Assistive listening devices](#)
- [Assistive communication/speech pathology items](#)

Resources

Zoom tools for people living with dementia

Dementia Australia has developed a suite of resources to help people living with dementia to stay connected. Developed by people living with dementia, the resources are designed to support the use of video conferencing to help people stay in touch.

Dementia Australia is keen for aged care staff to use these new resources to increase the opportunities for residents to enjoy social interaction during this unprecedented time of enforced isolation.

Further details:

- [Media Release – Video conferencing guide](#)
- [Using Zoom – Guidelines for meetings](#)
- [Using Zoom – Participating in meetings](#)
- [Zoom tips – How to join a meeting](#)
- [Zoom tips – How to get the best out of the experience](#)
- [Zoom tips – Holding a dementia-friendly meeting](#)

