
AHPRA

Review of stakeholder perceptions of AHPRA and the National Boards

A Social Research Project

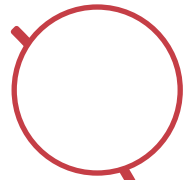
November 2018

Supplementary report prepared for:
The Medical Radiation Board of Australia

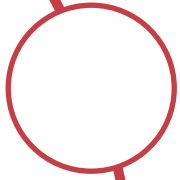
Introduction

- Truly Deeply has been engaged by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA) to test the perception of sentiment towards AHPRA and the National Boards. This review is intended to help AHPRA and National Boards better understand what stakeholders think and feel about the organisation and to identify how to facilitate ongoing confidence and trust in the work performed by AHPRA and National Boards.
- The study has used a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, specifically extended interviews (face to face and via the telephone), focus groups and online surveys.
- A single, integrated report has been provided to AHPRA documenting the key themes and results.
- A separate summary has been provided for each of the National Boards based on the results of the online survey with practitioners.
- The purpose of this report is to present a subset of findings specifically for the **Medical Radiation Board of Australia**.

An overview of the methodology

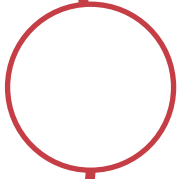


A **four stage** approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative research approaches has been used.



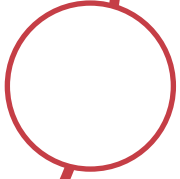
Stage 1 comprised a total of 53 qualitative interviews. This consisted of interviews with the Chair of every National Board (15); the Executive Officer of almost every National Board (13), Government health providers (3); major health employers (3); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy group representatives (5); Co-regulatory partners (4); Professions Reference Group members (3); representatives from CALD communities (2) and 'Other' various stakeholders (5).

These interviews were conducted between August 10 and September 26, 2018.



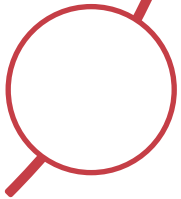
Stage 2 involved three focus groups. The three groups were conducted with i) Members of the Community Reference Group; ii) Members of the Professions Reference Group and iii) Accreditation Authority representatives.

These groups were conducted between August 14 - 22, 2018.



Stage 3 consisted of an online survey with practitioners from all 15 registered professions.

This survey was conducted between September 17 – 25, 2018.



Stage 4 consisted of an online survey with a representative sample of the Australian general public.

This survey was conducted between September 17 – 25, 2018.

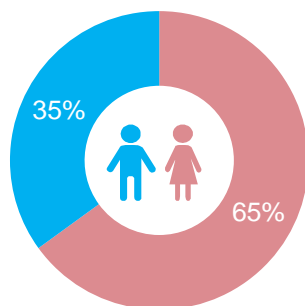
Quantitative approach

- Online surveys were conducted with practitioners as well as the broader community following the qualitative investigation. Truly Deeply developed the questionnaires in consultation with AHPRA.
- The questionnaires were developed to allow initial findings in the qualitative to be further explored and validated. Additional pre-codes and lists of words and statements were included in the survey following feedback from interviews and discussion with stakeholders.
- Respondents to the Community Survey were sourced using an external panel provider.
- Participants in the Practitioner Survey were sourced by AHPRA (using software that allowed the survey to be deployed to a random sample of practitioners in each profession).
- The practitioner sample has been weighted to ensure an equal ‘voice’ within the total sample of registered health practitioners (with the sample of ‘nurses’ and ‘midwives’ further separated). This has been done to ensure that the views of (for example) of ‘psychologists’, which accounted for 14% of responses to the survey, does not distort the views of other professions, which accounted for a much smaller response overall to the survey.
- Once the surveys were closed, statistical analysis was conducted by Truly Deeply to summarise and compare the quantitative findings.

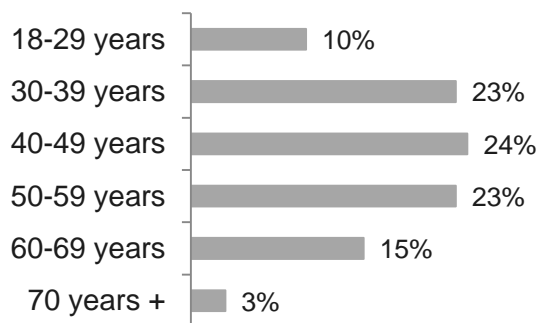
	Community Survey	Practitioner Survey
Fieldwork dates	September 19 - 25	September 19 - 27
Responses	1,020	5,694
Email invitations sent	na	100,257
Response rate	na	6.0%

Sample of registered practitioners (n = 5,694)

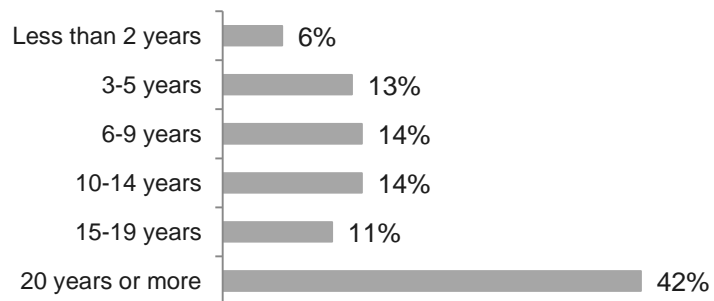
Gender



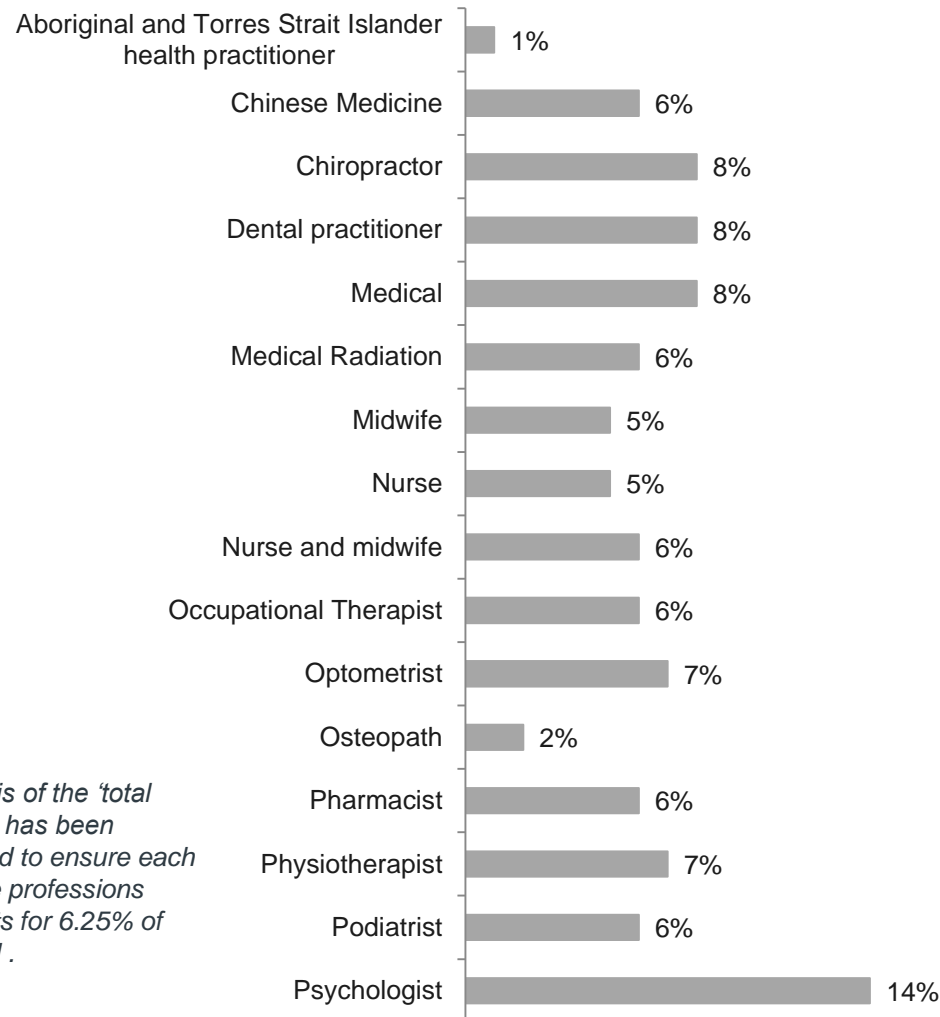
Age



Years in practice



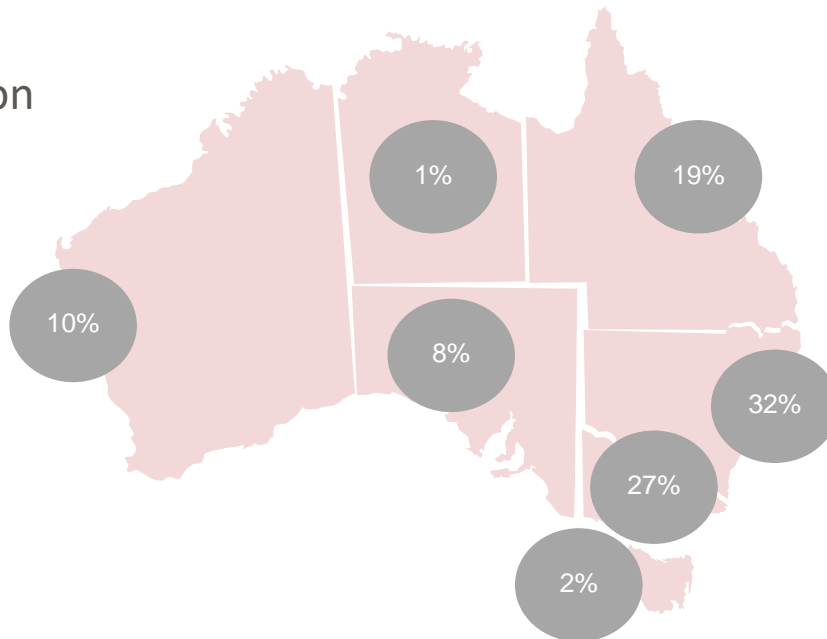
Practitioner type*



**Analysis of the 'total sample' has been weighted to ensure each of these professions accounts for 6.25% of the total .*

Sample of registered practitioners (n = 5,694)

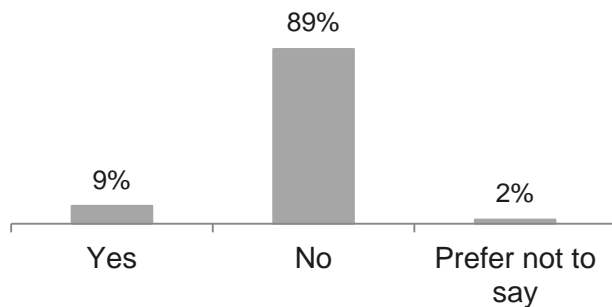
Location



Metro: 66%

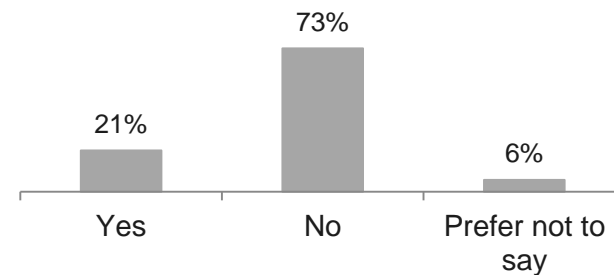
Regional : 34%

% who have had a complaint ever made against them to AHPRA or their Board as a registered Health Practitioner*



* As identified by individual respondents

% who have ever been audited to check their compliance with the mandatory registration standards*



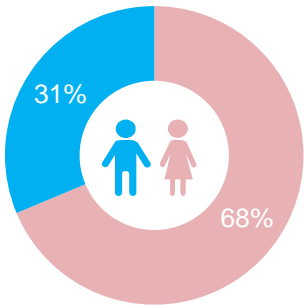
* As identified by individual respondents

Summary of results of the online survey with registered health practitioners.

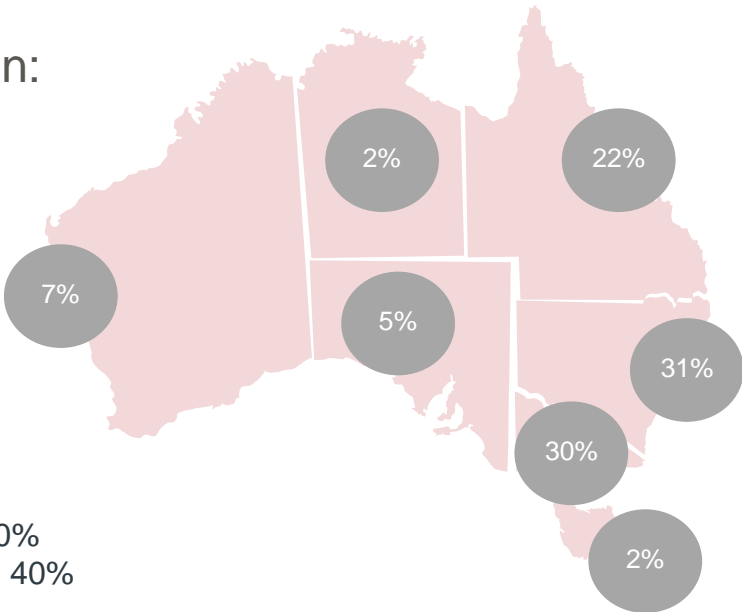
Specific insights into the responses from:
medical radiation practitioners

Sample of medical madiation practitioners (n=326)

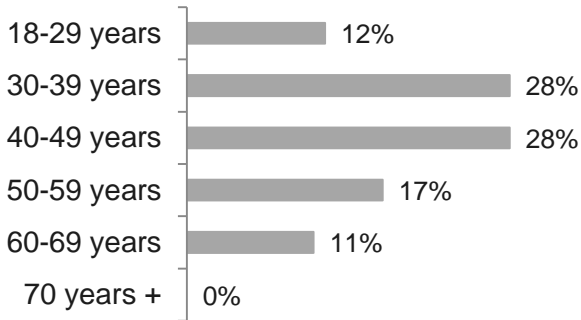
Gender:



Location:

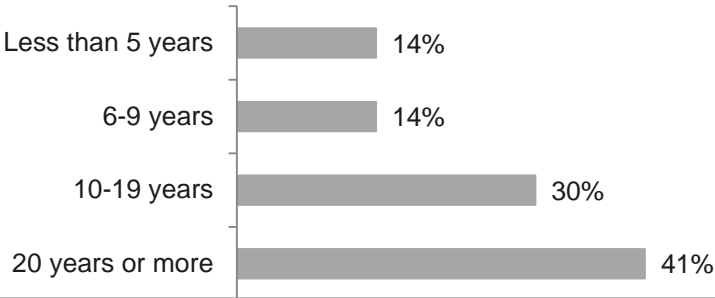


Age:

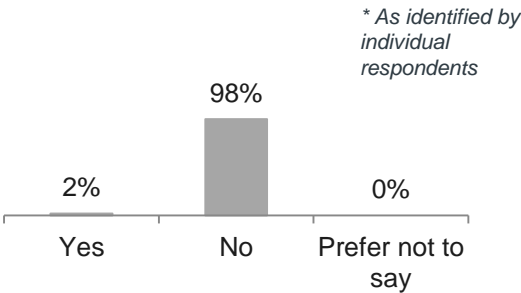


Metro: 60%
Regional: 40%

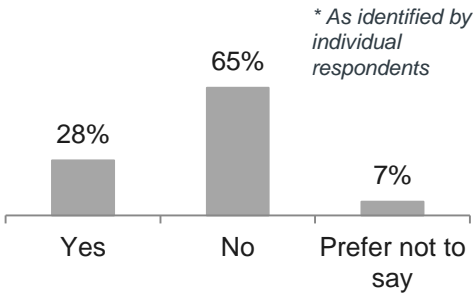
Years in practice:



% who have had a complaint ever made against them to AHPRA or their Board as a registered Health Practitioner*



% who have ever been audited to check their compliance with the mandatory registration standards*



Perceptions of the Medical Radiation Board of Australia (Top 20 associations)

Q. Which of the following words or statements, if any, do you strongly associate with the (National Board)?

Base: Total sample of practitioners registered with this specific Board (n=326)

Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of the Board	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Regulators	47%	(+9%)
Administrators	38%	(+3%)
For practitioners	34%	(+2%)
Necessary	29%	(-6%)
Bureaucratic	29%	(+3%)
Decision- makers	18%	(-9%)
For the public	17%	(-6%)
Out of touch	12%	(-)
Competent	11%	(-7%)
Poor communicators	10%	(-)

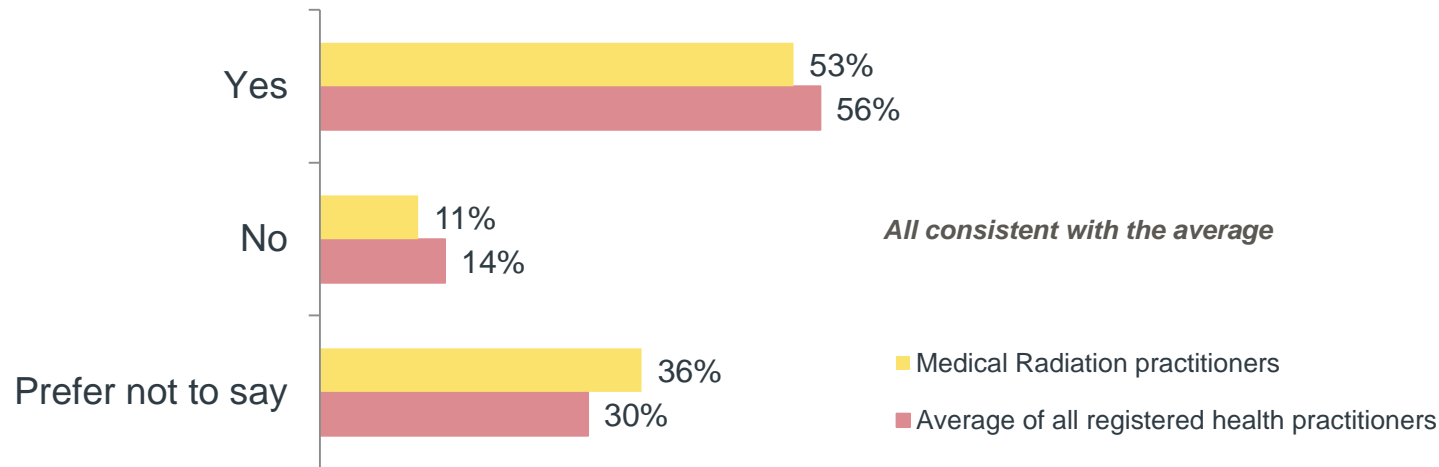
Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of the Board	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Advocates	10%	(-8%)
Controlling	9%	(-1%)
Rigid	9%	(-2%)
Accessible	8%	(-4%)
Fair	8%	(-3%)
Intimidating	7%	(-3%)
Trustworthy	7%	(-6%)
Helpful	6%	(-6%)
Approachable	6%	(-6%)
Supportive	6%	(-7%)

Green indicates a result *significantly higher* than the average across all professions.

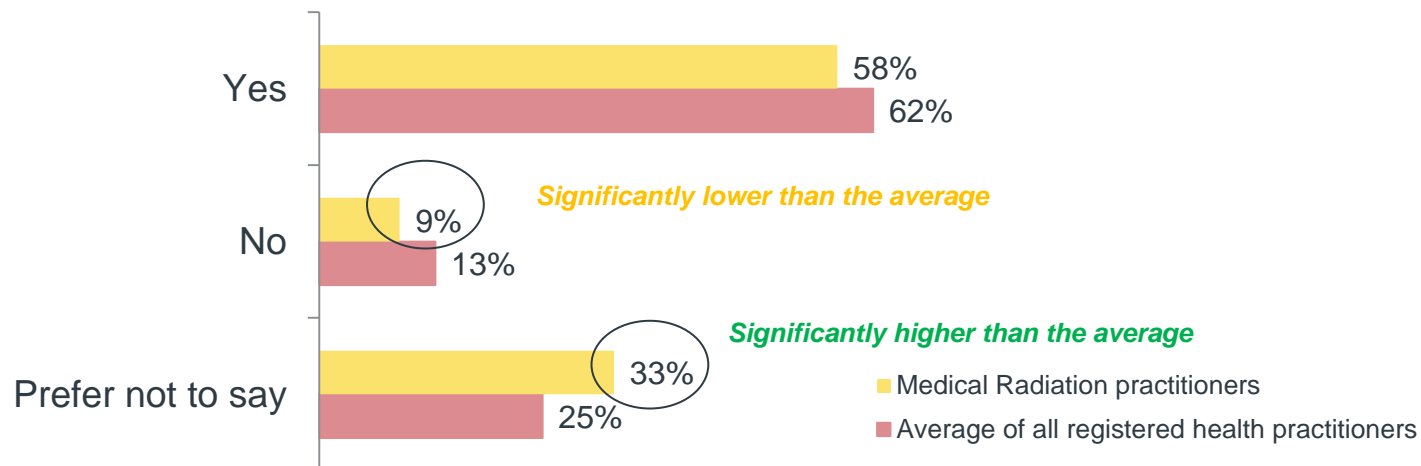
Orange indicates a result *significantly lower* than the average across all professions.

Levels of confidence and trust in the Medical Radiation Board of Australia

Q. Do you feel confident that your National Board is doing everything it can to keep the public safe?



Q. Do you trust your National Board?



What are the indicators of trust and barriers to trust in the Medical Radiation Board of Australia

Indicators of trust: **58% trust the Board**

Why wouldn't they be trustworthy?

Because they set the rules and enforce them.

A body is needed to ensure the practitioner and the patients are equally looked after legally. For the best level of practise to be maintained and improved upon in the future with in a sustainable environment.

I work on the assumption that the board is effective at what they do, however I don't really have evidence of this.

Nothing they have demonstrated would cause me not to trust them.

Appear to make considered decisions with the information provided them. (It's the provision of this information I have reason to doubt).

I trust that a board has been put into place with its own constitution to follow, and works together as a cohesive group for the best interest of medical radiation employers, employees and the public.

Barriers to trust: **9% DO NOT trust the Board**

Guidelines are not based on international evidence based best practice. Should have equal representation for all radiation professions, not just radiologists dictating to radiographers.

I think they underestimate skill sets, and don't always align with the award.

In the past there seemed to be a lot of ego included in the decisions & public face of the Board. This is improving now.

They are out of touch with the profession and the market for radiographers.

No idea what they do. Overlap with AHPRA. Double dipping.

They are extremely poor communicators and have no regard whatsoever for medical radiation practitioners. They changed their guidelines recently and failed to notify practitioners of the changes and also gave an unfair timeframe in which to comply with the changes (12 months to comply with a 3 year period). Also there was no exceptions made for people on maternity leave at the time.

Full list of responses provided separately

Perceptions of AHPRA amongst medical radiation practitioners

(Top 20 associations)

Q. Which of the following words or statements, if any, do you strongly associate with AHPRA?

Base: Total sample of practitioners registered with this specific Board (n=326)

Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of AHPRA	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Regulators	52%	(-2%)
Administrators	50%	(-2%)
Bureaucratic	39%	(-1%)
Necessary	34%	(-6%)
For the public	33%	(-5%)
For practitioners	32%	(+2%)
Decision-makers	21%	(-4%)
Competent	14%	(-1%)
Controlling	14%	(-3%)
Rigid	13%	(-5%)

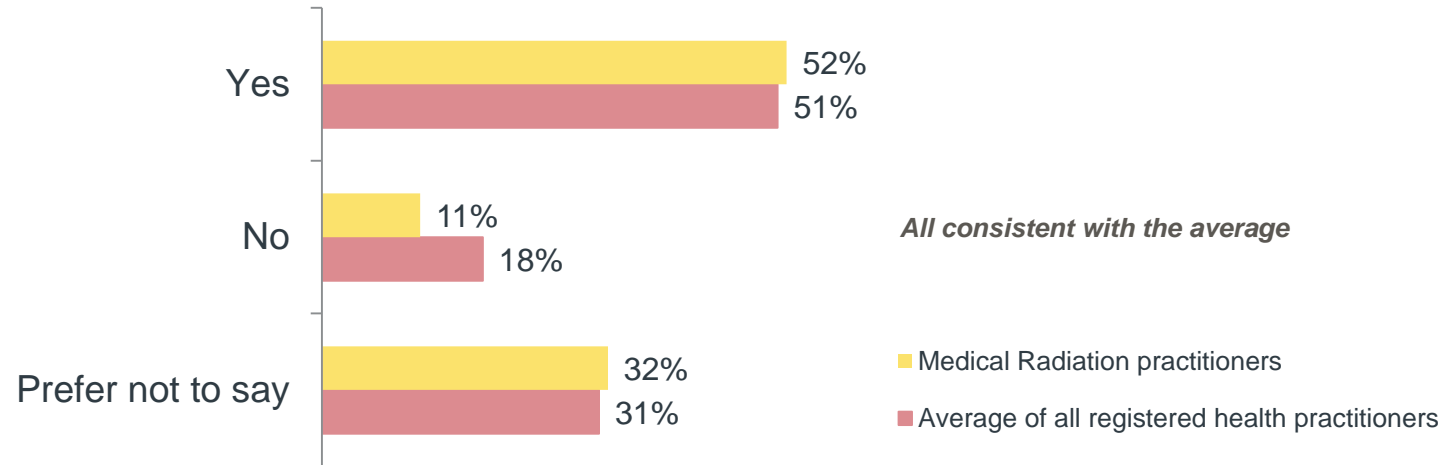
Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of AHPRA	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Accessible	12%	(-1%)
Poor communicators	11%	(-3%)
Out of touch	11%	(-1%)
Intimidating	10%	(-7%)
Good communicators	10%	(+1%)
Approachable	10%	(+1%)
Fair	9%	(-1%)
Responsive	8%	(-)
Supportive	8%	(-)
Advocates	8%	(-)

Green indicates a result *significantly higher* than the average across all professions.

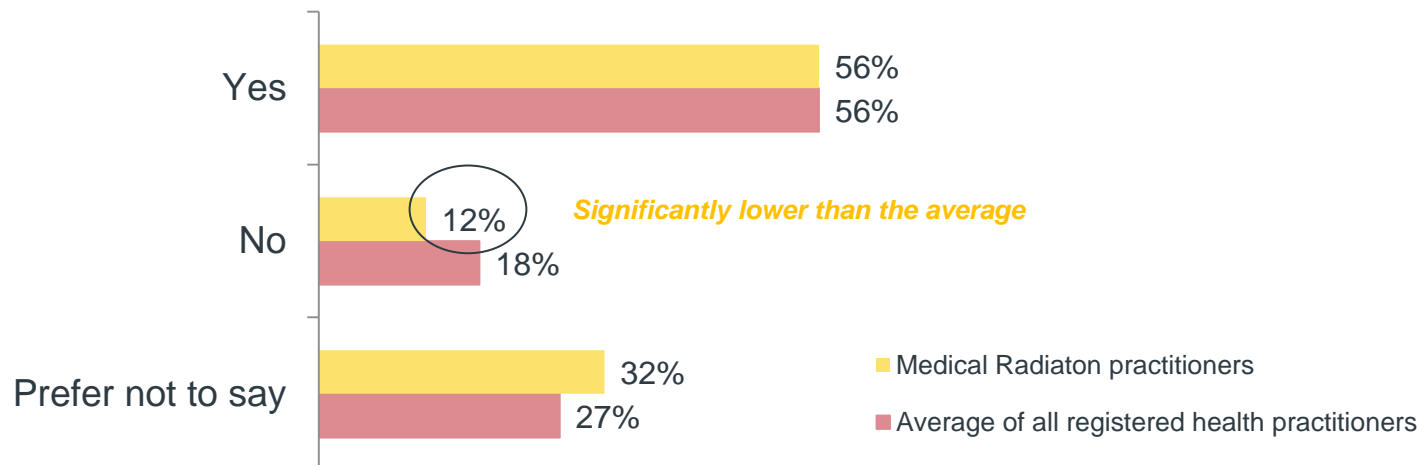
Orange indicates a result *significantly lower* than the average across all professions.

Levels of confidence and trust in AHPRA amongst medical radiation practitioners

Q. Do you feel confident that **AHPRA** is doing everything it can to keep the public safe?



Q. Do you trust **AHPRA**?



What are the indicators of trust and barriers to trust in AHPRA amongst medical radiation practitioners

Indicators of trust: **56% trust AHPRA**

They are a body of professionals and I feel like it's a highly regulated role - as far as I know there is no reason not to trust them.

I have no reason to mistrust them. When I have needed to phone them for help I have been dealt with efficiently and in a friendly manner. I have seen evidence of AHPRA de-registering or suspending practitioners who have not upheld expected standards of practice.

They make it easier to ensure only competent practitioners are registered, and remove state based levels of duplication.

Open and transparent.

They seem professional and regulated.

We need a national body not just state ones, so have to start somewhere.

Previous dealings have been outcome driven.

It is a national governing body that ensures its members are accredited so that they do no harm.

Barriers to trust: **12% DO NOT trust AHPRA**

In my experience they are extremely slow to respond and do not have an open door policy i.e. them vs us mentality.

AHPRA allows registration of professions that are not based on evidence based practice.

They are just tax collectors. Charging working families a fortune just so they can do their jobs.

They do not take action against rogue providers.

Seem petty and greedy.

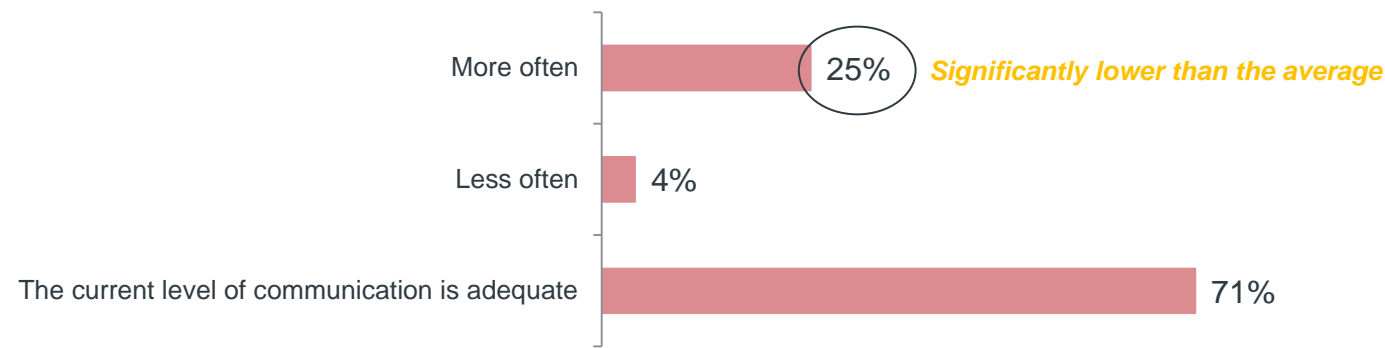
My application was poorly handled resulting in 6 months of delays to registration. This seems to due to the registration officer not having the skills, experience or support required to fulfil their duties as the issue was quickly solved and registration granted once escalated. A shame about the months of lost earnings before I lost trust in the process and instigated the escalation!

Concerns regarding transparency e.g. Complaints and disciplinary actions on medical practitioners not visible to potential patients.

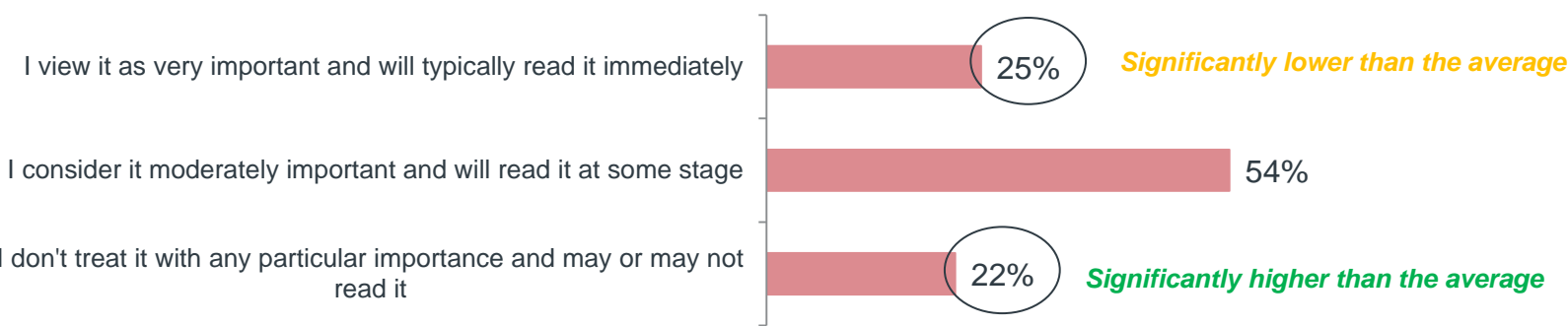
Full list of responses provided separately

Response to communication by the Medical Radiation Board of Australia

Q. Would you like (National Board) to communicate with you.....?



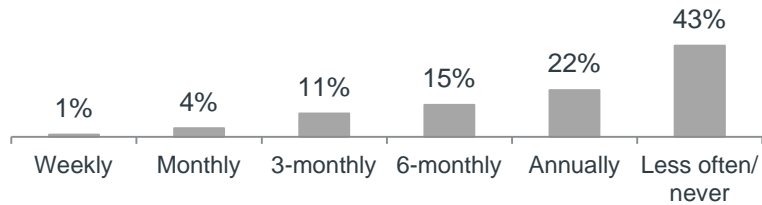
Q. How do you typically respond to communication you receive from (National Board)?



Base: Total sample of practitioners registered with this specific Board (n=326)

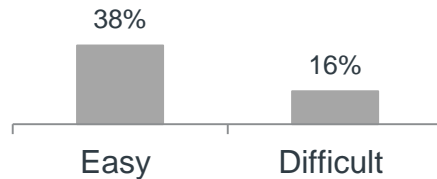
Use of the Medical Radiation Board of Australia website

Q. How often do you visit the website of (your National Board))?



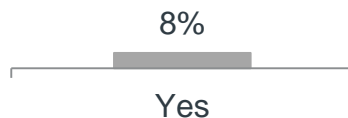
Base: Total sample of practitioners registered with this board

Q. How easy or difficult is it to find the information you were looking for on the (National Board) website?



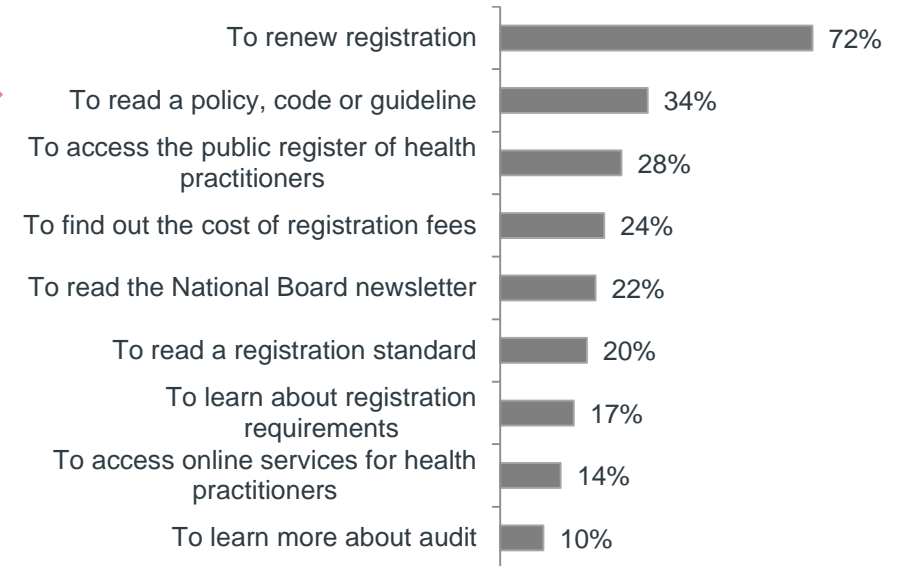
Base: Practitioners who have visited that board's website

Q. Is there any information you have looked for on the website of (National Board) but not been able to find?



Base: People who have visited that board's website

Reasons for visiting the National Board website



Additional information sought by practitioners include:

- *Getting back-to-work-training / placement options*
- *I was looking for an SPP report template but couldn't access it but emailed and was sent a different link to get to it*
- *List of "notifiable pathologies" regarding x-ray sands CT imaging*
- *The registration fees for the different professions for tax purposes.*
- *Complaint outcomes from panels and QCAT*
- *Just looking but so hard to navigate*

Additional feedback from medical radiation practitioners

Sample of open ended responses *(full list of responses provided separately)*

I am unsure what our registration fees are used for. I feel that the main role is to manage complaints against practitioners which I think it is unfair to have to pay for. I would like more information and communication about other roles that the board plays. I would also like to see the board have more involvement and oversight of the university accreditations e.g. for course structure changes and student numbers etc. in order to protect the profession more.

They need to advertise what they do, who they are, membership and most of all services to the profession.

My experience is that AHPRA has been slow to investigate complaints and reach a decision. I am aware of 2 that took longer than 12 months that resulted in restricted practice for the practitioners concerned. These type of issues need to be resolved within 3 months. This is in the interest of all parties involved.

Not sure why I am paying fees - don't seem to get any benefits from them Perhaps we could get clarification on what the advantages are!

I believe information in this field is adequately available on the relevant websites, and if there are staff in each of the agencies available to help with enquiries then you can't do more than that. People will seek info if they want it. If the registration/re-registration process is straightforward then really the rest of the work that these organisations do should be in the background and on the whole doesn't need to frequently engage the majority of us worker bees.

I think that the National Standards are set too high and aren't achievable by some smaller or country practitioners. The Standards should represent the minimum requirements, not higher than average. That is the responsibility of the Professional Bodies. Remember too that the job is not a technical job than can be completely measured by Standards. The most important part is the skill of the practitioner to get the patient on side for their best outcome. This can't be measured on an audit. AHPRA & MRPBA are an important part but not the only part of the profession.

AHPRA is expensive and I am not really sure why? I don't know what National board is!

Be prepared to think laterally and not so rigidly.

AHPRA can work on presenting a little less intimidating and a lot more empathetic to the people to the unfortunate professionals that come under its light.

More information

For further information about this study please contact:

Michael Hughes

Managing Partner Strategy

michael@trulydeeply.com.au

Truly Deeply

(03) 9693 0000