

National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers (Queensland)

Information for health care consumers



Better consumer protection

Everyone has the right to expect that health care workers deliver safe and quality services. Generally, health care workers deliver services to improve the health of their clients, but sometimes a health care worker may operate outside the bounds of what is ethical or safe health care.

What is the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers (Queensland)?

In Queensland, the code applies from 1 October 2015 and will be recognised as the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers (Queensland) (National code (Queensland)). In 2015 Australian state and territory government health ministers agreed to the terms of the National code to help give greater protection to consumers for services provided by certain health care workers.

What is expected of health care workers?

Health care workers must:

1. Provide services in a safe and ethical manner.
2. Obtain consent from their clients.
3. Display appropriate conduct when giving treatment advice.
4. Report concerns about treatment or care provided by other health care workers.
5. Take appropriate action in response to adverse events.
6. Adopt standard infection control precautions.
7. Practice safely if diagnosed with infectious medical conditions.
8. Not make claims to cure certain serious illnesses.
9. Not misinform their clients.
10. Not practice under the influence of alcohol or unlawful substances.
11. Modify or stop practicing if they have certain mental or physical impairments.
12. Not financially exploit clients.
13. Not engage in sexual misconduct.
14. Comply with relevant privacy laws.
15. Keep appropriate records.
16. Be covered by appropriate insurance.
17. Display National code and other information (unless exempt).

To which health care workers does the National code (Queensland) apply?

The National code (Queensland) applies to:

- unregistered health care workers, and
- registered health care workers providing a service not related to their registration.

The National code (Queensland) does not apply to registered health care workers who deliver a health service related to their registration under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. The registration of health care workers may be viewed at www.ahpra.gov.au

How can I make a complaint about the health care I have received?

If you are not satisfied with a health service provided by your health care worker, or you are concerned with the health, conduct, or performance of an unregistered or registered health care worker, then you have the right to make a complaint.

Try talking with your health service provider in the first instance, as they may be able to resolve your concern or fix the problem. If you are not satisfied with the response, or feel uncomfortable talking with the provider directly, you can lodge a complaint with the Office of the Health Ombudsman, by:

- Submitting an online complaint form at www.oho.qld.gov.au.
- Filling in a complaint form (available at www.oho.qld.gov.au) and – sending it to:
PO Box 13281, George Street Brisbane Qld 4003,
– faxing it to (07) 3319 6350, or
– emailing it to complaints@oho.qld.gov.au.
- Making an appointment to speak to them by calling 133 OHO (646). They are open from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

Accessibility information for consumers seeking to make a complaint about health care they received

Consumers requiring an interpreter can access the Office of the Health Ombudsman via Translating and Interpreting Service by calling 131 450.

Consumers with a hearing or speech impairment can access the Office of the Health Ombudsman using the National Relay Service:

- TTY/voice call – 133 677
- Speak and Listen – 1300 555 727
- SMS relay – 0423 677 767
- Website – www.relayservice.gov.au

What actions may be taken?

The National code (Queensland) will be a document to which the Health Ombudsman and Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) may refer when considering what actions to take in relation to a health care worker who has operated unethically or unsafely or has compromised someone's health. The Health Ombudsman already has powers to take action in relation to health care workers who are not registered. Once the Health Ombudsman has accepted a complaint, actions may include:

- Assessing the complaint.
- Facilitating local resolution.
- Taking immediate action, including making an interim prohibition order.
- Investigating the matter.
- Undertaking conciliation.
- Referring to a government entity, such as the police service.
- Referring internally to the Director of Proceedings for a decision about whether to refer the complaint to the QCAT.
- Undertaking an inquiry into the matter of the complaint.

Further information may be found at www.oho.qld.gov.au

For More information

[The National code \(Queensland\) of Conduct for Health Care Workers \(Queensland\) | Queensland Health](#)

How to check if a health care worker has a prohibition order against them?

If a health care worker is prohibited to work in a health care role, there will be mutual recognition of these conditions between states and territories. This means that an order issued in one state or territory will be recognised across borders. Queensland currently recognises prohibition orders issued in New South Wales and South Australia, and this will expand as other states and territories implement the National code.

QLD	Office of the Health Ombudsman Actions/orders taken against health practitioners - Office of the Health Ombudsman
NSW	Health Care Complaints Commission http://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/Hearings---decisions/Public-Statements-Warnings
SA	Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner http://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/orders-issued-code-conduct-unregistered-health-practitioners/
WA	Health and Disability Services Complaints Office Health and Disability Services Complaints Office - Prohibition Orders
VIC	Health Complaints Commissioner Prohibition orders Health Complaints Commissioner
NT	Health and Community Services Complaints Commission Make a complaint HCSCC
ACT	ACT Human Rights Commission Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers - HRC
TAS	Health Complaints Commissioner Tasmania Complaints Health Complaints Commissioner Tasmania

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