



Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists

## 2015-16 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN REGISTER OF NATUROPATHS AND HERBALISTS

### BACKGROUND

The landscape of 2015-16 was a challenging one for the naturopathic and herbal medicine professions, and it presented ARONAH with both opportunities and challenges. Faced with critical media directed toward naturopathy, in particular, we stepped into a stronger role in the external environment. Responding to this pressure meant the majority of ARONAH's activities in this period were focused on responding to and capitalising on this unexpected situation. This report overviews the key activities related to these areas.

### MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

In 2015, critical press attention directed toward the naturopathic profession warranted a response from ARONAH. In July 2015, I was invited to appear on Channel 9's Today show to discuss the risks to the Australian population of the continued lack of registration of naturopaths. The interview was filmed live and played at peak breakfast time nationally – for a show with approximately 300 000 viewers this was a significant achievement of exposure for ARONAH's regulatory efforts. A YouTube clip of the footage was shared on social media and was viewed over 1500 times. Complementing this interview, Dr Jon Wardle, ARONAH's administrator, was interviewed on Channel Ten's The Project. The ratings of The Project is consistently between 600 000 and 700 000 viewers. The combination of these two interviews gave ARONAH an extraordinary opportunity to raise the profile of the need for registration of naturopaths and herbalists. ARONAH representatives were also involved in interviews with reporters from other media organisations on both radio and newspaper during this period.

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In follow-up response to the above events, all state and federal members of parliament deemed to have influence over the registration of naturopaths and herbalists in Australia were contacted with a lobbying letter outlining the need for registration. The following individuals were sent correspondence from ARONAH:

- Honourable Walter Secord – Shadow Minister for Health, Parliament of NSW
- [Honourable Jillian Skinner – Minister for Health, Parliament of NSW](#)
- Honourable Chris Patterson – Member for Camden, Parliament of NSW
- Honourable Jill Hennessy – Minister for Health, Parliament of VIC
- Honourable Kim Hames – Minister for Health, Parliament of WA
- Honourable Jack Snelling – Minister for Health, Parliament of SA
- Honourable Michael Joseph – Minister for Health, Parliament of TAS
- Honourable Simon Corbell – Minister for Health, Parliament of ACT
- Honourable John Elferink – Minister for Health, Parliament of NT
- Honourable Cameron Dick – Minister for Health and Ambulance, Parliament of QLD
- Honourable Senator Nick Xenophon – Senator, SA

The correspondence also included a copy of the 2005 Lin Report, the ARONAH submission on options for regulation of unregistered health practitioners to the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Committee, and a



published peer-reviewed journal article authored by Dr Jon Wardle outlining the risks to the public of unregistered health practice.

As a direct result of this correspondence, meetings were held between representatives of ARONAH and: the NSW Ministry of Health; QLD Ministry of Health and Ambulance; Senator Nick Xenophon; and Anne-Louise Carlton.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amie Steel', set against a light green rectangular background.

Report prepared by  
Dr Amie Steel, ND PhD  
Chairperson - ARONAH