



Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists

2017 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN REGISTER OF NATUROPATHS AND HERBALISTS

BACKGROUND

2017 saw another challenging year for the professions of naturopathy and western herbal medicine with some critical media attention. The middle of the year saw a need to highlight the lack of minimum education standards for naturopaths and western herbalists as an issue for the professions. In the second half of the year the government announced cut backs to health insurance rebates for naturopaths and western herbalists and ARONAH has responded to this in various ways on behalf of our members.

This report overviews the key activities related to these areas.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

In response to a news story on a practicing naturopath who was charged with serious offenses, ARONAH was quoted in the Daily telegraph on 25th August calling for the government to act on their own recommendations to register the professions as they continue to put the public at risk by not doing so.

ARONAH also wrote a press release on this topic.

LOBBYING

ARONAH board members met with the Health Complaints Commissioner and staff in Melbourne in August. This was an introductory meeting as the changes to the Health Act had come into place in February. ARONAH board members are pleased to report that a working relationship was established with the commissioner Karen Cusack as well as the HCC department. This was cemented later during the year with ARONAH being contacted as a representative of the standards held by the profession of naturopath.

ARONAH board members also met with representatives of the Victorian Health department in 2017.

Meetings are being set up with the Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt for a couple of months time. ARONAH has written a submission to the government regarding the changes to the private health insurance rebates for naturopaths and herbalists. These changes targeted only unregistered professions. ARONAH has also contacted all health insurance companies requesting more information for our members.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In March ARONAH representatives attended the NHAA conference held in Brisbane. Here, an update on the World Naturopathic Federation was given as part of the conference. ARONAH is proud to be an associate member of the WNF.

ARONAH representatives attended the 2017 WNF general assembly in Arizona, USA. Here they spoke about the future of the profession of naturopath on a world stage including some exciting projects which will help to define and support naturopathy.



ARONAH was part of the Course Advisory Committee meetings for THINK education. These meetings take place periodically for the higher education sector to engage with the external naturopathic community. ARONAH always looks to protect the professions of naturopathy and WHM and by being involved in these meetings we are standing behind future generations of naturopaths and Western herbalists

SUSTAINABILITY

As predicted, membership growth has been slow in 2017 due to the voluntary nature of ARONAH as an independent register. This slow growth in membership numbers is expected to be an ongoing issue. Coupled with AHPRA announcing that they won't be registering any new professions until their internal review process is complete, ARONAH needs to pursue other avenues of revenue to ensure sustainability into the future.

ARONAH has made significant inroads in the area of accreditation of standards in the education sector in Australia. In the recent past, ARONAH has been most successful in protecting the public through ensuring high standards of professional practice and training. These accreditation standards will be finalized in the coming month and educational institutions will be approached to adopt ARONAH's standards

SOCIAL MEDIA

2017 has been a very successful year on social media. ARONAH has put a strategy in place for regular posts on Facebook and Twitter, and this has seen our following grow to over 2,000 likes and follows on Facebook. The affiliated group, Naturopaths for Registration also has almost 2,000 members. Overwhelmingly this has been positive engagement with most posts reaching likes in the double figures, as well as many positive comments. One particular post in the second half of the year encouraged questions from fellow naturopaths and western herbalists which has resulted in many important areas that ARONAH can communicate with the professions. Some key documents are being drafted so that any future confusion or misinformation can be easily handled by directing people to our website.

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