
AHPRA

Review of stakeholder perceptions of AHPRA and the National Boards

A Social Research Project

November 2018

Supplementary report prepared for:
The Chiropractic 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 **Chiropractic 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.

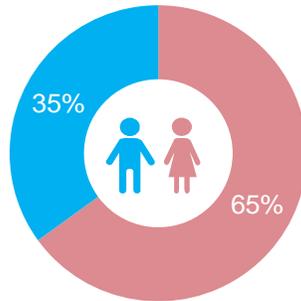
Quantitative approach

- 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.

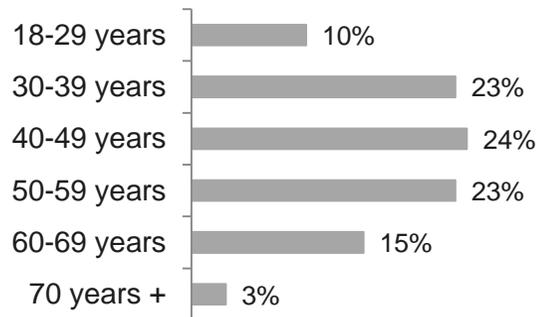
	Community Survey	Practitioner Survey
Fieldwork dates	September 19 - 25	September 19 - 27
Responses	1,020	5,694
Email invitations sent	na	100,257
Response rate	na	6.0%

Sample of registered practitioners (n = 5,694)

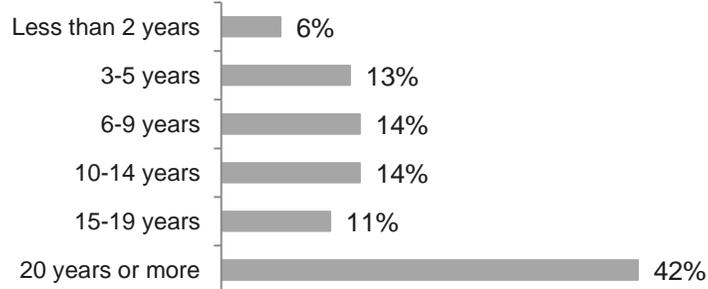
Gender



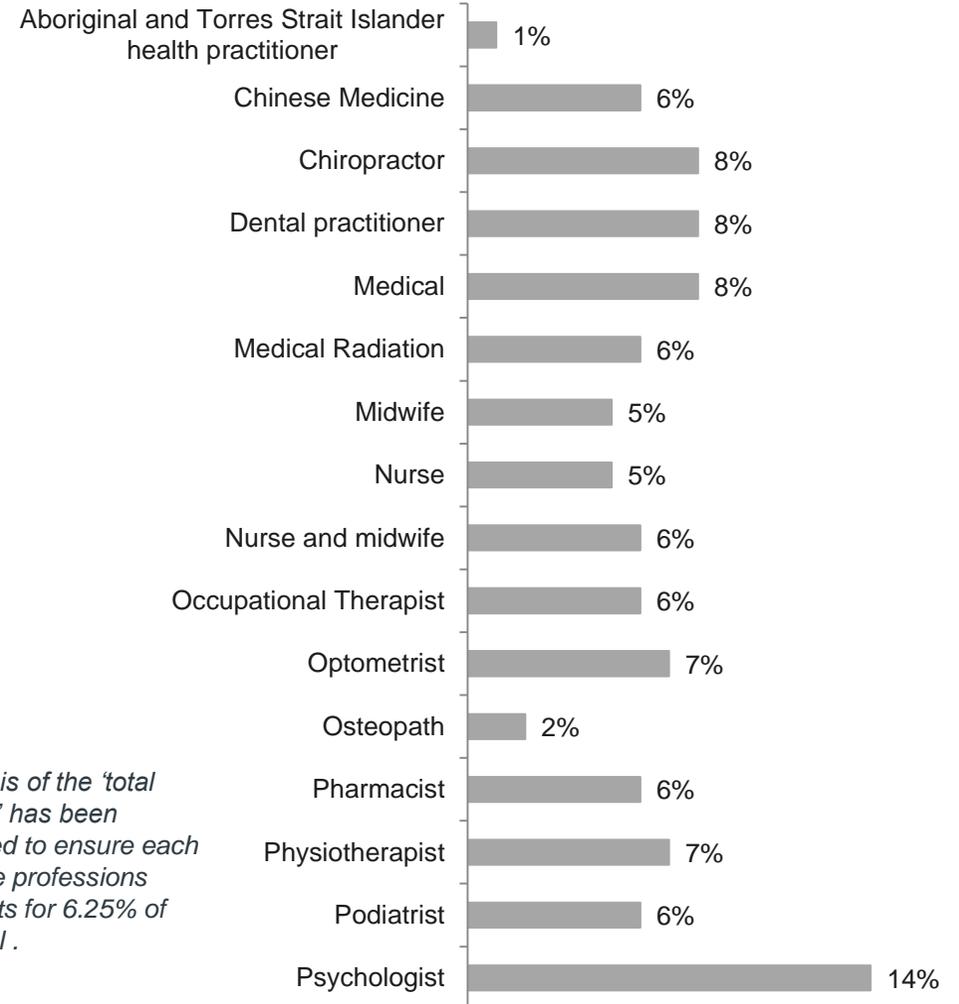
Age



Years in practice



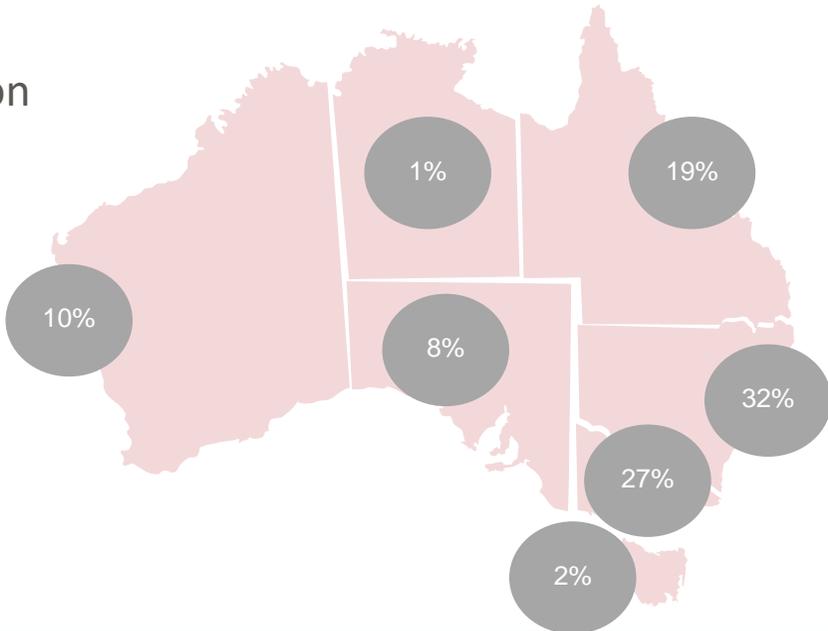
Practitioner type*



**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)

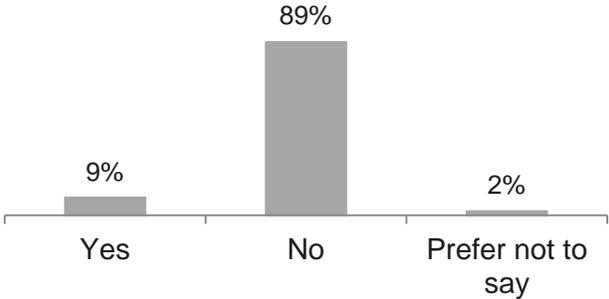
Location



Metro: 66%

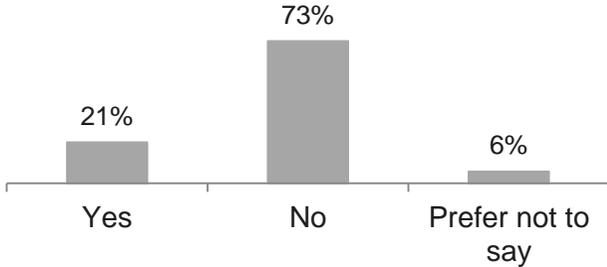
Regional : 34%

% 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*



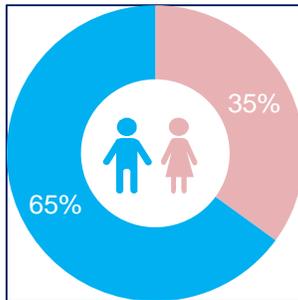
* As identified by individual respondents

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

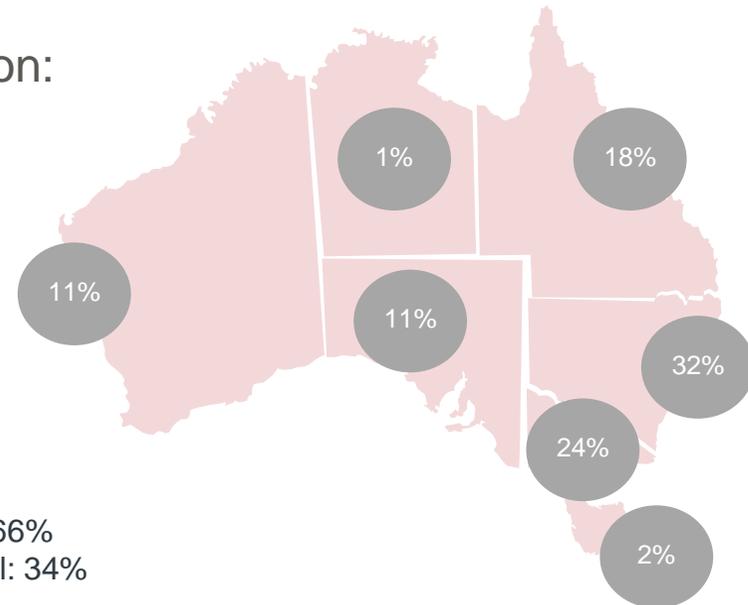
Specific insights into the responses from:
chiropractors

Sample of chiropractors (n=437)

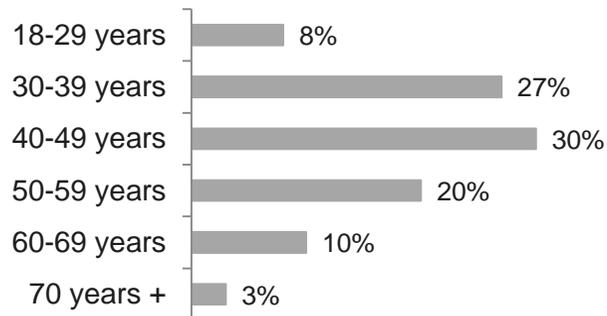
Gender:



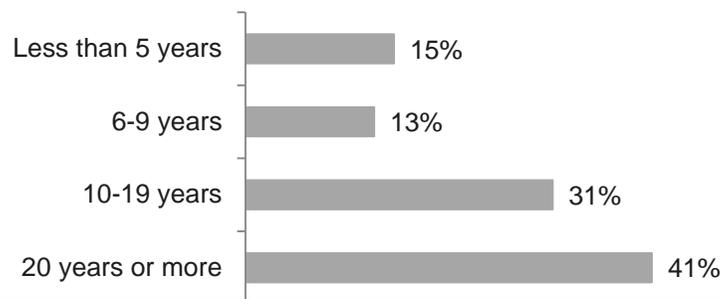
Location:



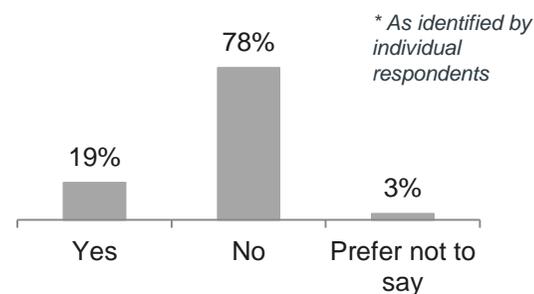
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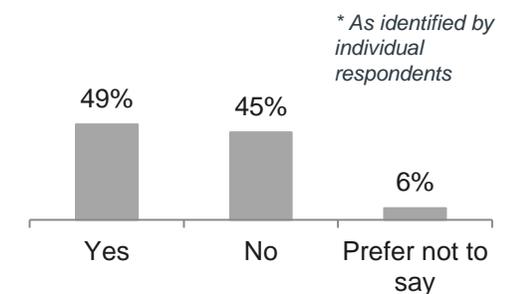
Years in practice:



% 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 Chiropractic 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=437)

Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of the Board	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Administrators	43%	(+8%)
Regulators	41%	(+3%)
Necessary	39%	(+4%)
For the public	32%	(+9%)
Bureaucratic	32%	(+6%)
For practitioners	23%	(-13%)
Decision makers	21%	(-6%)
Competent	18%	(-)
Out of touch	17%	(+5%)
Controlling	17%	(+10%)

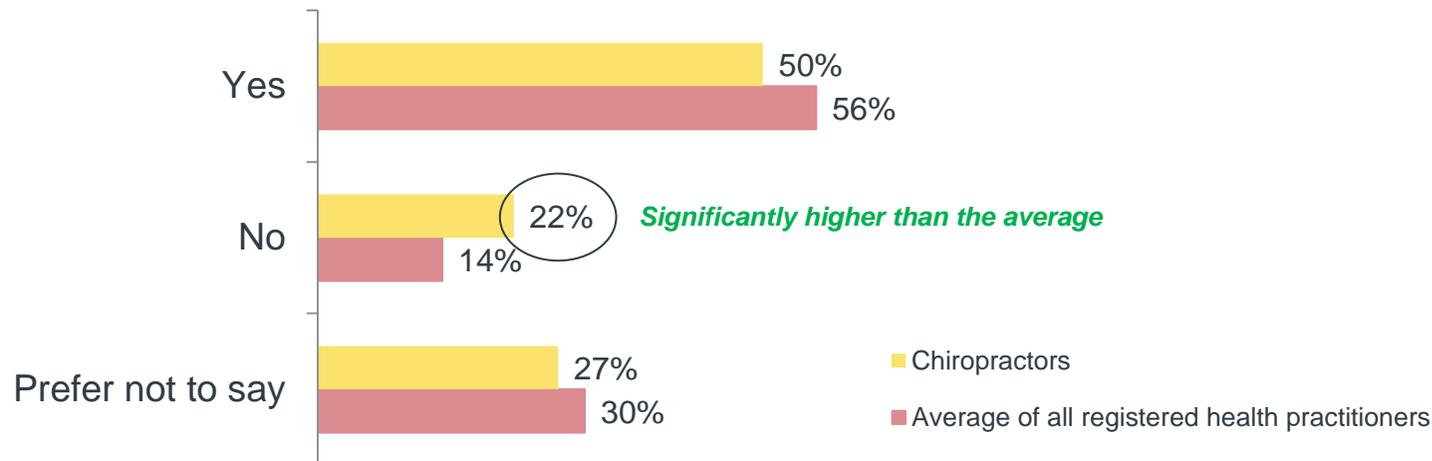
Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of the Board	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Rigid	15%	(+4%)
Poor communicators	13%	(+3%)
Intimidating	13%	(+3%)
Advocates	12%	(-6%)
Approachable	12%	(-)
Fair	11%	(-)
Submissive	11%	(+8%)
Supportive	10%	(-3%)
Shows leadership	10%	(-3%)
Helpful	9%	(-3%)

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

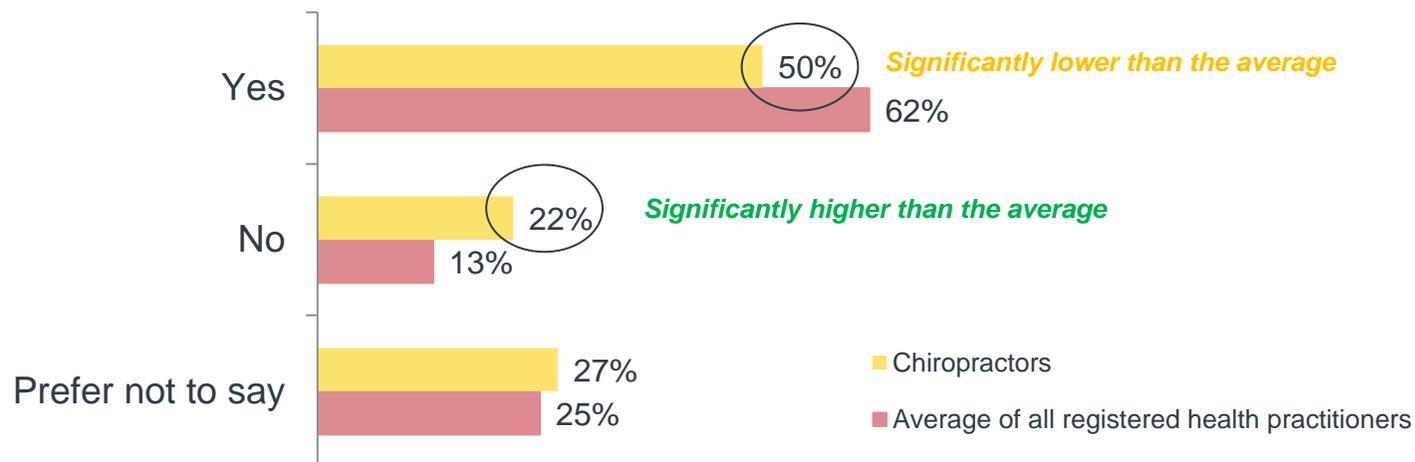
Orange indicates a result *significantly lower* than the average across all professions.

Levels of confidence and trust in the Chiropractic 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 Chiropractic Board of Australia

Indicators of trust: **50% trust the Board**

I believe they are vigilant in insisting on high standards for the profession, and diligent in enforcing these standards.

They understand the profession better than AHPRA.

Because they communicate and meet registered chiropractors at meetings and open forums.

I tend to trust people/organisations until they let me down. I have no reason to not trust the CBA - but I am sceptical.

All of my dealings with them have been fair.

Because they are a discipline specific group who understand the needs of the public in relation to delivering and experiencing chiropractic care.

Wayne Minter is a good and honourable man.

Because they represent our profession fairly.

Competent people who understand their role in protecting the public and therefore the reputation and standing of the profession.

Barriers to trust: **22% DO NOT trust the Board**

Not in touch with reality. Poor reading of what is advertising. Restrictive. Too musculoskeletal.

I feel they could be doing more for the chiropractic profession itself (I do feel they are protecting the public but at our cost).

Out of date thinking.

Not enough attention is given to, and regulatory boundaries enforced upon those practitioners that disregard registration rules. A simple check of chiropractic practice websites would unveil a multitude of issues. I have placed complaints in the past with no follow up resulting.

i feel they may be influenced too much by medical bureaucrats.

I believe they would let personal opinions shape their role within the chiropractic board and I doubt there is a diverse representation of the profession on the board.

Ongoing acceptance of non evidence based continuing education.

Full list of responses provided separately

Perceptions of AHPRA amongst chiropractors (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=437)

Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of AHPRA	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Regulators	61%	(+7%)
Bureaucrats	52%	(+12%)
Administrators	51%	(-1%)
For the public	46%	(+8%)
Necessary	36%	(-4%)
Controlling	33%	(+16%)
Intimidating	31%	(+14%)
Rigid	30%	(+12%)
Out of touch	22%	(+10%)
Decision makers	21%	(-4%)

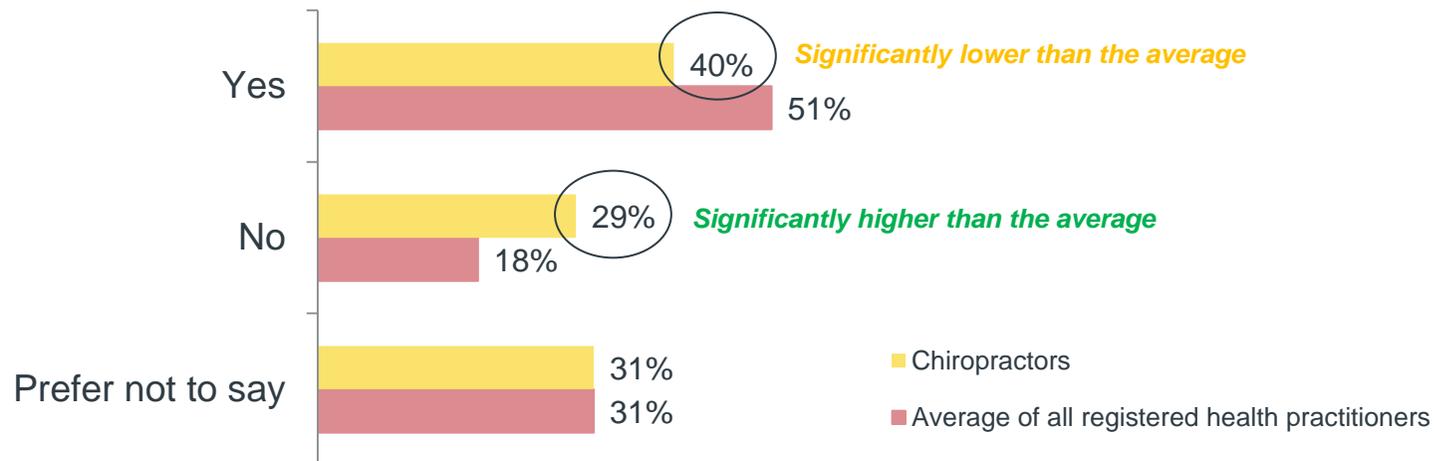
Perception	% of practitioners with that perception of AHPRA	Difference compared to the average across all professions
Poor communicators	20%	(+6%)
Secretive	14%	(+6%)
For practitioners	13%	(-17%)
Competent	11%	(-4%)
Aloof	10%	(-2%)
Zealous	10%	(+5%)
Fair	9%	(-1%)
Accessible	7%	(-6%)
Responsive	7%	(-1%)
Good communicators	6%	(-3%)

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

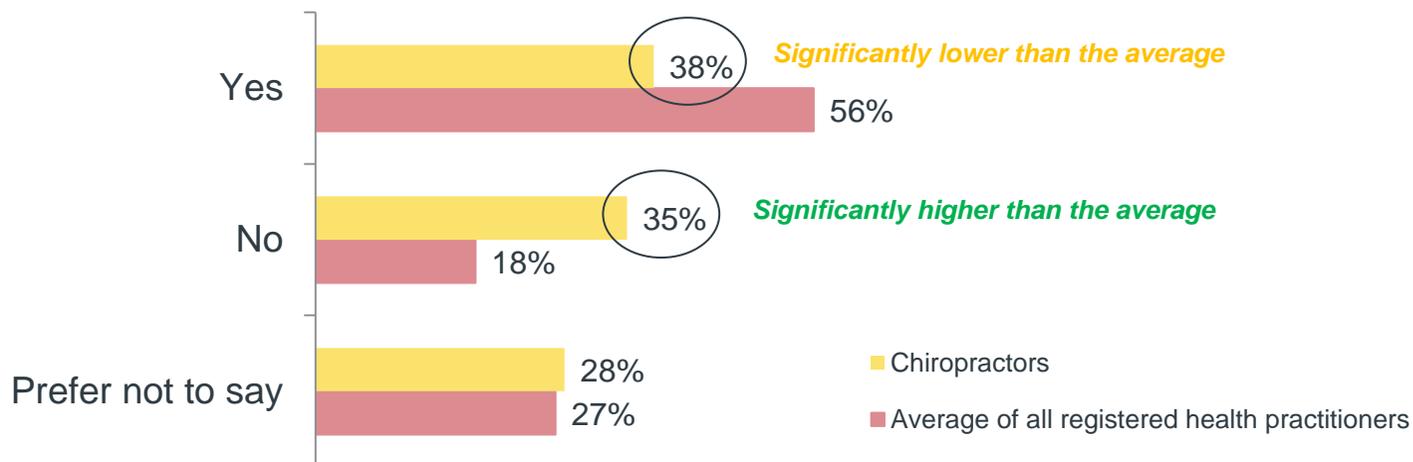
Orange indicates a result *significantly lower* than the average across all professions.

Levels of confidence and trust in AHPRA amongst chiropractors

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 chiropractors

Indicators of trust: **38% trust AHPRA**

They are on top of ensuring compliance of registration.

I have had cause to deal with AHPRA via a registration audit. They explained what they needed and gave me ample opportunity to provide it. The fact that they did the audit as well as the professional manner in which it was conducted instils trust.

It has accountable governance and is independent of professions.

All of my dealings with them have been transparent and fair.

Because I do not have any bad experience with AHPRA.

I have yet to feel my trust has been betrayed.

I think the people involved are honest and trustworthy. I have some concerns about their ability to deal with some practitioners, especially in the medical profession more so than chiropractors, and the timeliness of dealing with some complaints.

I think that they are only administrators and they do that well.

Full list of responses provided separately

Barriers to trust: **35% DO NOT trust AHPRA**

Too biased by medical complainants of chiropractors.

Do not protect practitioners from disruptive groups such as Friends of Science in Medicine.

They view practitioners as guilty until proven innocent. Their investigations take far too long. They seem to be oblivious to the well being of practitioners. There should be a public registrar of patients who have made vexatious or unrealistic complaints.

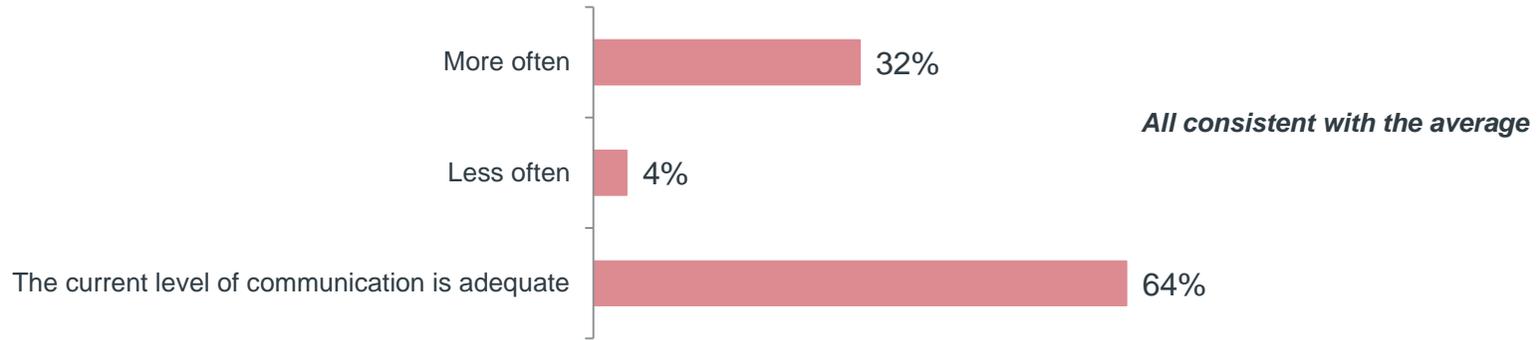
I feel they are biased towards the medical profession. They are discriminatory against women needing to take maternity leave.

I don't understand how AHPRA can be trusted if it maintains a prove your innocence approach. the hard line on regulated professions is not matched evenly across the professions - not all professions are regarded as equal.

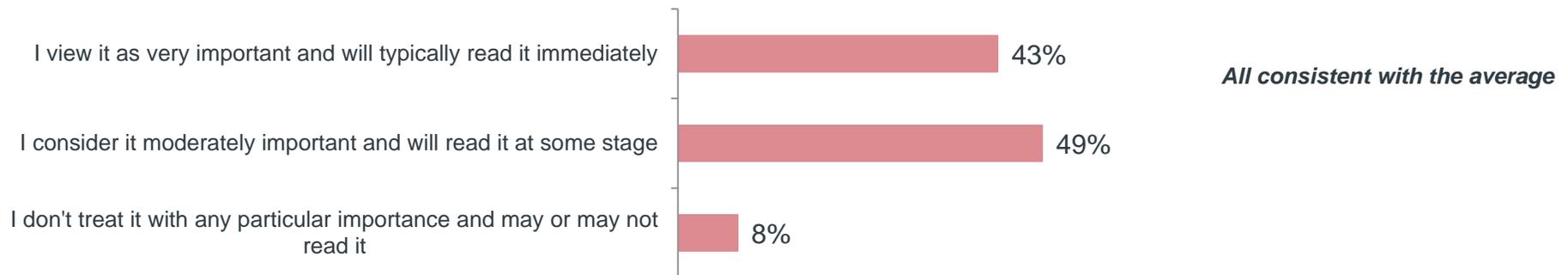
I think it is an organisation which is centralising power to itself, is unaccountable to those it administers to and adds to its own power in the guise of improving standards. It does not follow its own rules and has no empathy.

Response to communication by the Chiropractic 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=437)

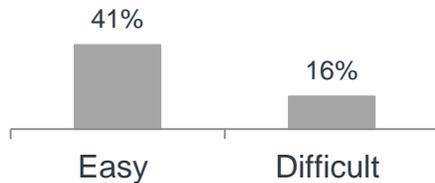
Use of the Chiropractic Board of Australia website

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



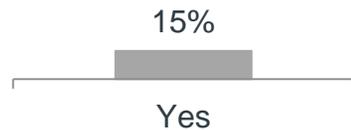
Base: Total sample of practitioners registered with this board

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



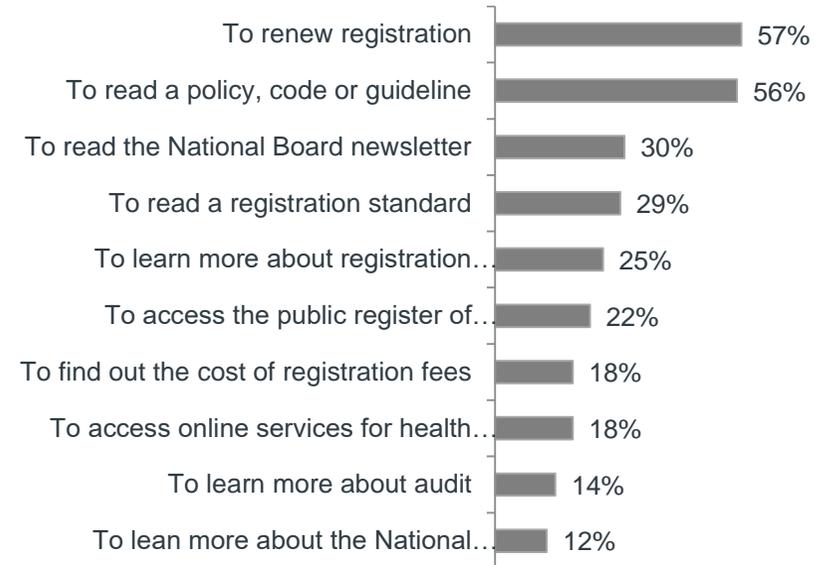
Base: Practitioners who have visited that board's website

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 (but not limited to)...

- *Whether chiropractors can teach and run rehab classes - in my case Pilates classes*
- *Certain advertising guides*
- *Results of complaints and accompanying statistics.*
- *How to deal with complaints*
- *How many years patient records need to be kept. People on the phone had no idea!*
- *Process for determining what constitutes Formal CPD*

Additional feedback from chiropractors

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

National Board occasionally pushes forward on a predetermined agenda without giving due consideration to all sides of an argument, or can take several months to reach a decision without communicating in the interim, or fails to fully comprehend the issues being presented.

Great job compared to where I practice Thailand. However I have issues wherein some chiropractors and associations allow to advertise, thereby by default perform/conduct/advocate some unjustified, unscientific seminars and care. This debases the valuable contribution that many provide and is a clear hazard to the public and especially young good hearted practitioners.

Need to stop ridiculous advertising complaints from clogging up the complaints system.

It is important that they are there to regulate chiropractors and protect the public - which they do well. but I feel it is at the expense of the profession itself.

I don't know enough about the group. I heard about a huge waste of money splurged on one of their Christmas parties & perhaps an expensive junket O/S. It was all over the news & was not impressive. Hard working practitioners would not have been happy to hear that.

It's an out of date model, for the benefit of neither the patient or the practitioner.

I think that AHPRA is a good example of how to improve national efficiency for all health professions. It reduced duplication of services and is cost effective. It should be copied by more countries like the USA.

AHPRA should deal with complaints much faster, especially those with vexatious characteristics.

Thanks for reaching out to get more information about our perceptions. its nice to know you are keen to understand us. My concern as is mirrored i think in our profession, is that Chiropractic is targeted and mistruths are allowed to be spread by other registered health professions. It should be equal across the professions as to their protection and public perception, this could be better supported by AHPRA. Thank you.

More information

For further information about this study please contact:

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Truly Deedly

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