



## **Pru Goward**

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Medical Research

Assistant Minister for Health

Minister for Women

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION POWERS STRENGTHENED TO PROTECT PATIENTS IN NSW**

The NSW Government has acted to provide further protection to the community by strengthening the regulation of non-registered health practitioners and increasing the power of the state's healthcare watchdog, the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC).

Assistant Minister for Health Pru Goward said legislation that passed through NSW Parliament last night puts non-registered health practitioners on notice.

"People who seek the services of non-registered health practitioners do so trusting the people providing their care," Ms Goward said.

"In NSW non-registered health practitioners like dieticians, homeopaths, speech pathologists, or naturopaths are subject to a Code of Conduct setting out standards for compliance and can be prevented from practicing if they breach the Code."

The HCCC already has the power to investigate complaints alleging a breach of the Code and, for serious breaches, issue a prohibition order, which prevents a practitioner from practising or places conditions on the practice.

"Until now however, there were no laws stopping non-registered health practitioners prohibited from practising interstate from coming to NSW and working here in breach of an interstate prohibition order," Ms Goward said.

The legislation passed yesterday addresses this by recognising and applying in NSW an interstate prohibition order relating to a non-registered health practitioner that is made under a prescribed law of another State or Territory.

Ms Goward said the powers of the HCCC have also been increased.

"This legislation gives the HCCC additional powers to issue a public warning during an investigation, alerting the public earlier of risks arising from health services and treatment," Ms Goward said.