

Frequently asked questions - Professional indemnity insurance arrangements

What are my requirements?

The Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) requirements in relation to Professional Indemnity Insurance Arrangements (PII) are set out in the [PII registration standard](#).

When you practise as a paramedic, you must be covered by your own or third-party PII arrangements that meet this registration standard:

- for all aspects of your practice
- in all locations where you practise, and
- whether you are working in the private, non-government and/or public sector, and whether you are practising full-time, part-time, are self-employed, employed, or in an unpaid or volunteer capacity, or any combination of these factors.

What are professional indemnity insurance arrangements (PII)?

The PII required for paramedics is designed to cover the risks arising from their provision of health care to a person, particularly should something go wrong. This can take the form of your own insurance coverage or indemnity converge by another third party such as an employer, volunteer or sporting organisation.

Why do I need PII?

Under the National Law, a registered health practitioner must not practise their profession unless they have appropriate PII arrangements in force that cover all aspects of their practice of the profession and it is the individual practitioner's responsibility to ensure that they have that coverage and that the coverage meets the requirements set out in the standard.

Practice for the purposes of the standard is any role, whether remunerated or not, in which an individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. It is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

Does my employer have the PII I need?

If you are employed, and you only work for an employer(s), your employer(s) is likely to have arrangements that will provide appropriate cover for your practice and the risks involved in your work. An employer's PII arrangements may only provide cover for activities you carry out as part of your duties during your employment.

The arrangements may vary between different employers, so if you are not sure about what is covered by your employer's PII arrangements, you should always check with your employer.

What about in other practice situations?

If you are practising privately, as a volunteer or in an unpaid position, you are still required to have appropriate PII arrangements in place. Some voluntary organisations will have PII arrangements which cover their volunteers' activities. If you hold your own PII arrangements, you should check to see if these cover any practice you do as voluntary work.

If you are self-employed, you will need to make sure that you have made your own PII arrangements. Some trade unions, professional bodies and defence organisations offer professional indemnity cover as part of their membership or for an extra fee. Alternatively, you can also arrange your own cover directly.

If you carry out a combination of employed and self-employed roles, you will need to make sure that you have PII arrangements in place which provide appropriate cover for all aspects of your practice.

If you are registered but are not practising for part of the registration period (for example, if you take a six-month leave of absence to travel overseas), you do not need to have PII arrangements for that period. However, as above, when you decide to cease practice for any period you must ensure you have appropriate run-off cover for matters that would otherwise be uncovered arising from your previous practice as a paramedic.

What is run-off cover?

Run-off cover means insurance that protects a paramedic who has ceased a particular practice against claims arising out of activities that occurred when he or she was conducting that practice. This type of cover may be included in a PII policy or may need to be purchased separately.

How much cover should I have?

What might be appropriate cover for one registered health practitioner may be not be appropriate for another. You need to make sure that you consider the risks which may arise from your own practice and make sure that your PII arrangements provide adequate cover appropriate to those risks. The standard requires that you have considered this issue and engaged with insurance brokers or providers to determine an adequate level of cover. You have obligations to fully disclose information about your practice so that the advice received is suitable for your situation.

What PII documentation do I need to retain?

Paramedics with private PII arrangements must retain written advice from an approved insurer or insurance broker that PII has been issued or that a premium has been paid and accepted. This will usually be in the form of a Certificate of Currency.

If a paramedic is covered by an employer union or professional body, he or she will need to keep any PII documentation automatically issued to them.

If a paramedic does not receive PII documentation usually, he or she will only need to obtain it if requested in writing to do so by the Board, for example if they are audited.

What will the Board do if my PII arrangements lapse?

The Board is empowered to ensure that paramedics only practise with PII arrangements in place. Practitioners must advise the Board within 7 days if their PII has ceased (i.e. lapsed or cancelled) and they must not practice until PII is again in place. If a paramedicine practitioner is found to have practised without PII arrangements in place, the Board may be subject to disciplinary action.

Are there approved insurers?

Yes. In Australia an approved insurer is any insurer authorised by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) to conduct new or renewal of insurance business in Australia. The APRA website hosts a list of such insurers.