

Media release



Regulator issues warnings over unproven IV treatments

Key points

- Warnings have been issued over concerns unproven IV infusion treatments may be being marketed inappropriately across Australia.
- Concerns have been raised that popular IV treatment claims are not supported by a medical justification or scientific evidence.
- Registered health practitioners may also face additional scrutiny if found to be administering IV therapy outside the standards in professional codes of conduct.

Embargoed to 6am, November 24, 2022.

22 November

Wellness businesses on notice over infusion treatments

Australia's health practitioner regulator is putting sections of the wellness industry on notice over concerns unproven intravenous infusion treatments may be being marketed inappropriately.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) this week wrote to several businesses warning their advertising of IV infusion treatments may be in breach of the National Law, which prohibits material that makes misleading or unfounded claims.

'IV infusion treatments are increasingly being offered across Australia, however the medical justification and scientific evidence for them has not kept pace with their marketing,' Ahpra CEO Martin Fletcher said.

'Clinics charging hundreds of dollars for cocktails promising everything from boosting immunity, clearer thinking, beauty, and even anti-aging, need to be honest with their clients about the lack of scientific evidence supporting their infusion services.'

'Patients also need to be aware of infection and other risks which come with all medical treatments, and which is why clinical interventions should only be provided when they are necessary.'

IV infusions are an invasive procedure with inherent health and safety risks for patients.

Under Australia's National Law, [anyone advertising a regulated health service](#) must ensure their advertising does not include false, misleading or deceptive information, does not use testimonials, and does not create an unreasonable expectation of beneficial treatment.

The legislation, enforced by Ahpra and the National Boards, also outlaws advertising which encourages the indiscriminate or unnecessary use of regulated health services.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
National Boards

GPO Box 9958 Melbourne VIC 3001 [Ahpra.gov.au](https://www.ahpra.gov.au) 1300 419 495

Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

As with any regulated health service, claims made about the benefits of IV infusions must be accurate and not misleading. This is because consumers are likely to rely on purported scientific claims, and be significantly influenced by such claims, when making choices as to their health care.

Advertisers of IV infusions commonly claim that general improvements in health, 'wellness' or appearance are attainable even where there is no diagnosed clinical need for the relevant compound. Many advertisers quote their patients as feeling or looking better after an infusion. Ahpra takes the view that there is little or no accepted evidence to support such generalised claims and they are therefore misleading and in breach of the National Law.

Anecdotal evidence is not acceptable evidence for the purposes of substantiating claims about the potential benefits of health services, and this type of advertising can encourage indiscriminate or unnecessary use of regulated health services.

Drugs and poisons legislation in each state and territory impose restrictions on possessing, using, obtaining, selling, storing, prescribing, administering and supplying scheduled medicines. Infusions containing Schedule 4 drugs such as glutathione are subject to these additional restrictions. As well as advertising standards, registered practitioners who provide IV infusion services may face additional investigation by the regulator to ensure they are upholding a range of professional standards and obligations in their code of conduct.

Any unregistered person found to be claiming to be qualified to practise as a medical practitioner or nurse may also be subject to criminal proceedings.

Ahpra does not regulate products, including IV equipment or fluids. Concerns about health-related products should be directed to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

Anyone who has concerns about a registered health practitioner is encouraged to contact Ahpra on 1300 419 495 or at the Ahpra website: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au>.

Contact us

- For media enquiries, phone (03) 8708 9200.
- For registration enquiries, please phone 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9285 3010 (overseas callers).