Australian Government
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency

arpansa

ANRDR Advisory Board meeting

Minutes

Details	
Date	25 October 2021
Time	14:00 – 15:00 AEDST
Location	Virtual
Chair	Cameron Lawrence (ARPANSA)
Attendees	Glenn Riley (Vic), Bradley Feldtman (NT), Sieu Tran (NSW), Mark Carey (NSW)
Apologies	Stephen Carter (Qld)
Secretariat	Ben Paritsky (ARPANSA)

The Australian National Radiation Dose Register (ANRDR) held a meeting to update the Advisory Board (the Board) on the progress to date on the ANRDR's transition to the new dosimetry service provider (DSP) submission model and to seek feedback on the ANRDR's proposal to mandate the use of the national dosimetry number.

Update from ARPANSA

ARPANSA provided a brief overview to the Board on the work over the past year to transition to the new model whereby DSPs submit their customers' dose records directly to the ANRDR. This model is based on a previous recommendation by the Board to support the advancement of the ANRDR to achieve its stated goal of capturing all radiation workers in Australia. The following topics were presented:

Technical aspects – ARPANSA has engaged the services of a contractor to develop the ANRDR system to facilitate the data transfer from the DSPs. The first stage of this work involves the development of the data transfer specifications that will form the roadmap for DSPs to develop their ANRDR reporting mechanisms.

The ANRDR number is a unique identifier attributed to each individual in the register and was introduced to address some of the challenges experienced with linking records using only names and dates of birth. It has been in use for some time as a voluntary field. With the change to the new model, it was flagged that the ANRDR number should become a mandatory field to enhance identification of individuals and minimise duplicate entries. As such, the ANRDR number has been renamed the national dosimetry number (NDN) and will be used as the primary identifier for individuals. The Board unanimously agreed that this is a sensible approach and advised the ANRDR to proceed with this concept.

Stakeholder engagement – ARPANSA held virtual meetings with all the DSPs operating in Australia earlier in the year to inform them of this work. All DSPs responded positively and expressed their desire to collaborate with ARPANSA on this project. ARPANSA will circulate the draft specifications to stakeholders for consultation in early November for feedback by the end of the year. The ANRDR team will then aim to hold virtual meetings with the stakeholders to discuss the draft and feedback.

Pilot program – it is anticipated that early next year the ANRDR will be ready to commence the DSP pilot program. This will involve the participating DSPs to develop their reporting mechanisms and redevelopment of the ANRDR system, in line with the approved data transfer specifications. All DSPs will be invited to participate in the program.

Discussion session

The Board was provided an opportunity to ask follow-up questions on the information presented and offered some general advice on various aspects of the project.

A question was raised about whether it would be possible to track dosimeters that are used across multiple jurisdictions. This is unlikely given that the ANRDR will only be aware of the jurisdiction in which the dosimeters are registered.

A question was raised regarding how the process would accommodate name changes and it was noted that this would most likely have to be manually followed up via quality assurance processes, such as an annual data review. In such cases, the NDN will be essential to confirm a person's identity.

A brief update was provided on the DSP accreditation program which is being spearheaded by the Victorian radiation regulator. There have been some setbacks over the past 18 months. The accreditation program will be put forward for consideration by the Radiation Health Expert Reference Panel (RHERP) as part of the work to address the findings from the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA's) 2018 Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission to Australia. The Board advised the ANRDR to proceed with the pilot program on a voluntary basis and continue to treat the accreditation program as a separate matter.

A couple of matters were raised related to modifications of records and how incidents relating to accidental high exposure would be managed. It was noted that internal processes exist to make any required record changes with relevant approval and the preference is that doses are submitted after any investigations and finalisations relating to accidental exposures are addressed amongst the employer, the relevant regulator and the DSP.