



Advancing Practice

BACKGROUND AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BACKGROUND

The Australian public expects that health care professionals are competent and continually focused on enhancing their knowledge, qualifications and expertise throughout their careers.

These expectations continue to grow while the Australian health system faces significant challenges including:

- an ageing population,
- an increase in complex chronic diseases and comorbidities and,
- a new focus on multi-disciplinary and inter-professional teams in healthcare delivery

In this context, the role of the pharmacist in the system is changing and evolving to new levels of complexity. As the healthcare environment changes, there has been general recognition amongst the pharmacy profession that there is a need for a Framework to recognise pharmacists working beyond entry-to-practice or general competencies.

ADVANCED PHARMACY PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

The release of an [Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework for Australia \(APPF\)](#) in 2012, established a structured developmental pathway for the pharmacist practitioner. The APPF was based on the UK CoDEG Advanced and Consultant Level Competency Framework and adapted for Australia.

The APPF was developed by the Advanced Practice Framework Steering Committee (APPFSC) which was made up of the representative membership of 9 pharmacy organisations in Australia and is now referred to as the Pharmacy Practitioner Development Committee (PPDC). You can find out more information about the PPDC at advancedpharmacypractice.com.au.

The APPF was endorsed by the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) and in 2015 the Australian Pharmacy Council undertook a Credentialing of Advanced Practice Pharmacists pilot program. The pilot program aimed to demonstrate that appropriate guiding principles, evaluation standards, policies and procedures can be implemented to ensure a robust and defensible evaluation process of practitioner practice portfolios. The pilot program evaluated 43 submitted practice portfolios against the APPF using trained evaluators to differentiate and determine practitioner performance across the APPF competencies. The pilot demonstrated the APPF is flexible and relevant to all areas of pharmacy practice and is an effective and practical tool to use as a rubric for evaluating practitioner performance.

NATIONAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS FRAMEWORK FOR PHARMACISTS IN AUSTRALIA 2016

During the review of the National Competency Standards for Pharmacists in Australia, which was conducted by the PPDC, it was determined the standards of the APPF should be incorporated into the revised competency standards. This decision was consistent with the concept of there being a continuum of practice.

The revised 2016 version of the National Competency Standards for Pharmacists in Australia has five Domains. Four of these Domains include advanced practice enabling competencies from the APPF now integrated into the document. The Domains are:

- Professionalism and ethics (includes 4 advanced practice enabling competencies)
- Communication and collaboration (includes 2 advanced practice enabling competencies)
- Medicines management and patient care (nil advanced practice enabling competencies)
- Leadership and management (14 advanced practice enabling competencies)
- Education and research (9 advanced practice enabling competencies)

More information on the changes to the competency standards can be found [here](#).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE CREDENTIALING OF ADVANCED PRACTICE PHARMACISTS IN AUSTRALIA

Credentialing is guided by six principles. These principles represent the foundations on which the evaluation standards, policies and procedures have been developed.

PRINCIPLE 1

Recognition of advanced practice is conducted with the objective of enhancing your capacity as a pharmacist to contribute to health care.

PRINCIPLE 2

The credentialing of advanced practice pharmacists will support consumer participation in health.

PRINCIPLE 3

Your development as a practitioner is a key element of achieving practice at an advanced stage, with support and recognition required along continuum.

PRINCIPLE 4

Advanced practice is credentialed through a standardised and independent evaluation process.

PRINCIPLE 5

The processes for credentialing are fair, transparent and robust.

PRINCIPLE 6

Only those who have been officially credentialed may use the title Advanced Practice Pharmacist.

FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES:

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5. Pharmacy Practitioner Development Committee. National competency standards framework for pharmacists in Australia 2016. Canberra; 31 May 2017. Available from: <http://www.psa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/National-Competency-Standards-Framework-for-Pharmacists-in-Australia-2016-PDF-2mb.pdf>
6. Kopelman K, Bates I, Ward B, Duggan C. The RPS roadmap to advanced practice: supporting the development and assessment of Advanced Practitioners, both specialist and generalist. London: Royal Pharmaceutical Society; 3 Nov 2016. Available from: www.rpharms.com/news/details/The-RPS-Roadmap-to-Advanced-Practice
7. Jackson S, Martin G, Bergin J, Clark B, Halstead P, Rowett D *et al*. Advanced practice: a survey of current perspectives of Australian pharmacists. *J Pharm Pract Res* 2015; 45(2), 186-192. doi: 10.1002/jppr.1097
8. International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP). Advanced Practice and Specialisation in Pharmacy: Global Report 2015. The Hague: International Pharmaceutical Federation; September 2015. Available from: www.fip.org/educationreports

9. Extended? Advanced? What's the difference? Aust Pharmacist [feature] 2015; Apr: 74-75.
Available from: <http://advancedpharmacypractice.com.au/resources/>
10. Understanding advanced and extended professional practice. Aust Pharmacist 2015; Apr: 76-79.
Available from: <http://advancedpharmacypractice.com.au/resources/>
11. Australian Pharmacy Council Advanced and Extended Practice Steering Committee. Advanced and Extended Pharmacy Practice- an environmental snapshot. Canberra: Australian Pharmacy Council Limited; September 2013. Available from: www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/news-publications/apc-publications/
12. Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework Steering Committee. An Advanced Pharmacy Practice Framework for Australia. Canberra: APPFSC Secretariat; October 2012. Available from: <http://advancedpharmacypractice.com.au/publications/>