

Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors

Sports and Exercise Chiropractor

INTRODUCTION

The dimensions of a chiropractor's practice

The dimensions of a chiropractor's practice can be described in terms of (see Figure 1):

- **breadth** (or scope)

The Chiropractic Board as 'any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession' 'practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct nonclinical 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 health services in the chiropractic profession.' However an individual's scope will depend on the professional roles they perform or services they provide. This may be broad, working with a wide variety of athletes and medical conditions, or narrow, focusing on a particular athlete group or limited range of conditions.

and

- **depth** (or performance level)

When scope is narrow, this may afford the individual to increase their expertise and performance. However 'specialisation' is not synonymous with 'advanced', as a narrow scope can occur without any enhancement in performance.

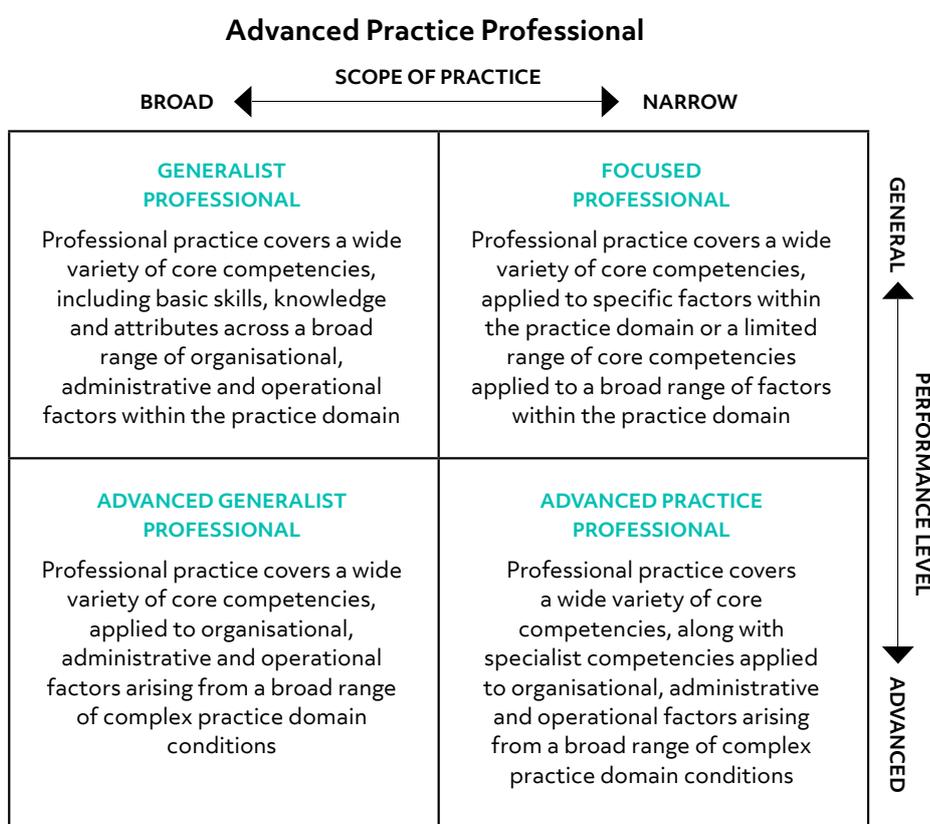


Figure 1. Image reproduced from Fergusson et al.

¹ Fergusson L, et al. Work-based learning and research for mid-career professionals: two project examples from Australia. Interdisciplinary Journal of E-Skills and Lifelong Learning. 2018;14. At: <http://www.ijello.org/Volume14/IJELL14p019-040Fergusson4321.pdf>

SUPPORTING AND RECOGNISING ADVANCEMENT

The Australian Institute of Chiropractic Education (AICE) supports the advancement of chiropractors in focused areas of practice, and recognises their activity and achievements as they progress through the respective advanced learning pathways.

Formal and independent recognition of advancement in a focused area of practice will identify chiropractors with the additional experience and qualifications achieved, to peers, the community, referrers and employers. Note, however, that it does not replace any registration requirements of the Chiropractor Board of Australia.

Progression through the AICE advanced learning pathways is recognised at three stages beyond the competence achieved at initial registration: trainee, member and fellow. Advancement is achieved through a combination of education and training, and clinical experience.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RECOGNISING ADVANCEMENT TO EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Evidence-based practice involves 'integrating the best available research evidence with clinical expertise and the patient's unique values and circumstances' to provide the best possible outcomes for patients².



Figure 2. Image reproduced from CIAP²

Supporting the advancement of chiropractors will not only support individual chiropractors capacity to contribute to healthcare, but also support the ongoing development of an evidence base for chiropractic practice that can continue to drive improved outcomes for patients at a system level.

THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCED SPECIAL INTEREST CHIROPRACTORS

The Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors has been developed to support:

- Awareness and understanding of the performance expectations of Members and Fellows of the AICE, for the profession, health sector and broader community
- Application of a consistent and fair assessment of individuals progressing through the respective advanced learning pathways.

The Competency Framework describes:

- the competencies in which advancement is recognised, incorporating knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours
- the level of performance expected at each of the stages in the AICE advanced learning pathway, for each of the focused practice domains.

Each Competency Framework encompasses five broad domains:

- 1. Clinical expertise**
- 2. Professionalism**
- 3. Research and education**
- 4. Leadership and influence**
- 5. Business**

USING THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS IN THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATION

In the accreditation of education programs, in Australia and internationally, there is a continuing emphasis on an outcome-focused approach. This is partly because a prescriptive input-based focus, e.g. defining curriculum, inhibits innovation and hinders responsiveness to the rapidly changing healthcare and education environments.

The Competency Frameworks form a core part of an outcome-focused approach to accreditation. Education providers will be expected to map how their program learning outcomes map to the relevant performance level in the relevant Competency Framework.

However, to support a common understanding of expectations, guidance relating to specific aspects is provided to support application of the Competency Frameworks in the development and provision of education programs.

² Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

USING THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS IN THE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

As the Competency Frameworks identify the performance expectations of Members and Fellows of the AICE, the process applied by AICE in assessing individuals is mapped against the framework to support transparency, consistency and fairness.

Performance of competencies may be demonstrated through direct assessment by AICE and/or by completion of recognised postgraduate education programs.

AICE recognises that there are individuals who have obtained the experience and qualifications defined in the respective Competency Frameworks, and are already performing at the level of Member or Fellow. As such, grandfathering provisions are being developed. For a limited period of time, and through a transparent and consistent process, individuals may be exempted from proceeding through the assessment process if it can be demonstrated that they are already performing at the expected level.

Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors: Sports and Exercise Chiropractor

Definition:

Sports and Exercise Chiropractic is a recognised special interest subset of chiropractic that focuses on the comprehensive and holistic health care of the physically active individual or athletes, to prevent injury, restore optimal function and contribute to the enhancement of sports performance. They achieve this using sports-specific knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve best clinical practice, while ensuring a high standard of professional, safe and ethical practice.

Sports and Exercise Chiropractic professionals demonstrate advanced performance in the

competencies required for a customised approach to active individuals of all ages and abilities, at individual and group levels by utilising evidence-based multi-modal techniques to enhance the function of the neuro-musculoskeletal system.

Sports and Exercise Chiropractors participate comfortably in a multi-disciplinary team environment, working closely with parents, coaches, other health providers and the community to provide the best high quality care for each athlete or active individual.

Domain 1. Clinical expertise

A Sports and Exercise Chiropractor has an advanced level of clinical expertise. The individual's clinical expertise is integrated with the best available evidence (clinically relevant and drawn from studies

with the least possible bias) and the patient's unique values and circumstances to improve patient outcomes through evidence-based practice³.

| COMPETENCIES | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A MEMBER: | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A FELLOW: |
|--|--|--|
| 1.1 Assesses the health status and related circumstances of the athletic and active population, critically analyses these and forms a clinical impression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs a clinical and bio-psychosocial assessment to inform injury prevention, injury management, rehabilitation and performance enhancement Applies the results of clinical, laboratory and other diagnostic procedures to inform injury prevention, injury management, rehabilitation and performance enhancement Recognises the specific needs of particular populations, including female athletes, children, older people and para-athletes Recognises the risks and needs associated with specific sports and activities Recognises the different goals that may be associated with different contexts, including pre-season, competition and recovery | <p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to cases with greater complexity; uncertainty; and ambiguity Role modelling the application of advanced clinical expertise and collaboration with others involved in the care and performance of the athlete or active individual Mentoring others to achieve advanced clinical expertise. |
| 1.2 Identify and prioritise issues to be addressed in a consultation with an athlete or active individual | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the concerns and goals of athletes during the consultation Selects appropriate tools to assist development of priority issues within the athletic athlete Identifies issues which need to be addressed during future visits or with other health care practitioners | |
| 1.3 Works in collaboration with the athletic and active population, exploring the care options available and developing agreed, evidence-based care and management plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares decision making with the patient in planning care Demonstrates sound clinical reasoning through evidence-based practice Supports a multimodal treatment approach to injury prevention, injury management, rehabilitation and performance enhancement Supports the integration of exercise in injury prevention, injury management, rehabilitation and performance enhancement Sources and incorporates evidence into sports chiropractic practice | |

³ Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

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| <p>1.4 Coordinates the safe and effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of care and management plans for the athletic and active population</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a clear sequence and flow for the entire interaction with the athlete or active individual • Performs safe and effective adjustive, manipulative, manual and other corrective procedures to optimise injury prevention, injury management, rehabilitation and performance enhancement • Monitors progress using sports-related performance evaluation instruments • Responds to changing and evolving situations across progressive interactions | |
| <p>1.5 Collaborates effectively in a multidisciplinary team to support the athletic and active population</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upholds the role of a Sports Chiropractor in a multidisciplinary team • Recognises the roles and expertise of other members in a multidisciplinary team • Communicates with, consults with and refers to other members of the team to achieve the best outcomes for the athlete or active individual • Effectively manages differences and resolves conflict when collaborating in a multidisciplinary team | |
| <p>1.6 Collaborates effectively with others involved in the performance and care of an athlete or active individual, including coaches, parents and administrators</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies others involved in the performance and/or care of the athlete or active individual • Documents the athlete or active individual's wishes for communication and collaboration with others involved in their performance and/or care • Maintains an effective relationship with others involved, in accordance with the wishes expressed and by the athlete or active individual. | |

Domain 2. Professionalism

Professionalism embodies a range of individual characteristics and values. It is a fluid construct that is demonstrated largely through situational awareness and contextual judgement. It incorporates a duty of care to make the care of patients the chiropractor's first concern:

- Being ethical and trustworthy;
- Being patient-centred, including culturally aware, having respect for diversity and communicating effectively;
- Being self-aware, reflecting regularly on their practice and working within the limits of their competence;
- Keeping their knowledge and skills up-to-date; and
- Being committed to safety and quality in healthcare.

| COMPETENCIES | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A MEMBER: | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A FELLOW: |
|---|--|--|
| 2.1 Practises legally, professionally and ethically in sports and exercise chiropractic practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to relevant legislation, common law, codes, standards and other policy regulating sports and exercise chiropractic practice. • Applies professional and ethical standards in responding to challenges common in sports and exercise chiropractic practice • Recognises legal obligations relating to particular athlete populations, including females, children, and involvement of other members of the athlete's support/team | <p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member, promoting professionalism through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role modelling professional and ethical behaviours • Mentoring others in professionalism • Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes in the sports and exercise chiropractic environment • Leading the development of stakeholder relationships within the sports and exercise chiropractic environment |
| 2.2 Applies a patient-centred approach to sports and exercise chiropractic practice, including for the patient, members in the multidisciplinary team and others involved in the performance and care of the athlete or active individual | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respects diversity in the care and management of athletes and the active population • Provides culturally responsive care • Maintains a duty of care for the athlete or active individual and their safety in the face of multiple, competing demands | |
| 2.3 Communicates effectively with athletes and active individuals, and others involved in their performance and care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts communication style to the athlete or active individual's level of health literacy • Information about a patient's goals and preferences, and information to inform their care, is gathered • Two-way communication (spoken, written and non-verbal) engages the athlete or active individual in shared decision-making and care planning • Structured communication techniques are used to improve the transfer of clinical information and responsibility with those involved in the performance and care of the athlete or active individual • Relevant, accurate, complete and timely information is documented in the health care record to support care of the athlete or active individual | |

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| <p>2.4 Maintains and extends competence in sports and exercise chiropractic</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinely self-assesses and critical evaluates personal knowledge, skills and expertise in sports and exercise chiropractic • Uses internal and external sources of information in evaluating own knowledge, skills and expertise in sports and exercise chiropractic • Continuously pursues learning and professional development in sports and exercise chiropractic | |
| <p>2.5 Collaborates to continuously improve quality and safety of sports and exercise chiropractic services</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies common risks to quality and safety in the delivery of sports chiropractic services • Implements activities to improve quality and safety in the delivery of sports and exercise chiropractic services | |

Domain 3. Research and education

The ability to acquire and apply the best available evidence from multiple sources is a critical component of evidence-based practice. A Sports and Exercise Chiropractor integrates the best available evidence with their clinical expertise and the patient's unique values and circumstances to

improve patient outcomes.⁴

As Sports and Exercise Chiropractors progress to Fellow status, they will also contribute to the evidence base and facilitate the integration of evidence into practice through education of peers and students, within and outside the profession.

| COMPETENCIES | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A MEMBER: | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A FELLOW: |
|---|--|--|
| 3.1. Critically evaluates sports chiropractic practice in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews literature sources relevant to musculoskeletal conditions, sports and exercise chiropractic practice and business management Critically appraises the research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertakes peer review activities in sports chiropractic practice Leads and mentors others in the critical evaluation of research |
| 3.2. Applies research evidence into own practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes the extent to which confidence may be placed in the research evidence Establishes the applicability of the research evidence to the circumstances of the athlete or active individual being treated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the incorporation of evidence in the design, implementation and evaluation of sports chiropractic practice |
| 3.3. Identifies gaps in the evidence base | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises areas of uncertainty and identifies gaps in the evidence base for sports chiropractic practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates research questions to address research gaps |
| 3.4. Designs and delivers research projects to address gaps in the evidence base | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in research planning with the guidance of more experienced colleagues Generates evidence at a practice/service level suitable for presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies areas for innovation and advances in practice Generates new evidence suitable for presentation at a research symposium Authors primary evidence outcomes in peer-reviewed journals Mentors others in research projects |
| 3.5. Plan and deliver education activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in the education of others (athletes and active individuals, students, peers and other health professionals) with guidance from more experienced colleagues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers education to chiropractic students, peers, members of the public and other healthcare or industry stakeholders, relevant to sports and exercise chiropractic practice Delivers education at national and/or international levels, relevant to sports and exercise chiropractic practice Shapes national education and CPD practice, relevant to sports and exercise chiropractic practice |

⁴ Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

Domain 4. Leadership and influence

As Sports and Exercise Chiropractors progress towards Fellow status, their leadership role will move beyond leadership of themselves and their

own practice, to a role in sharing a vision for the profession for the future, and using initiative and innovation to respond to change and drive progress.

| COMPETENCIES | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A MEMBER: | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A FELLOW: |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 Contributes to a strategic vision for sports chiropractic in Australia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages with the strategic vision for sports chiropractic in Australia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shapes the strategic vision for sports chiropractic in Australia |
| 4.2 Engages with colleagues, athletes and active individuals, others involved in their performance and care, and the broader health and sports sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes positive relationships with colleagues involved in the performance and care of athletes and active individuals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads interprofessional collaborations with those involved in the care and performance of the athlete or active individuals, and the broader health and sports sector |
| 4.3 Encourages and influences innovation, improvement and service development in sports chiropractic practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays awareness of the political, professional and public environment in which innovation and change occurs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champions innovation and change through political, professional and public support and commitment Serves as a role model, coach and mentor for others |
| 4.4 Recognises and responds to community expectations in the healthcare of athletes and active individuals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a commitment to the promotion of the public and community good in healthcare, including stewardship of resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates awareness of community expectations of sports chiropractic practice and promote professional accountability amongst colleagues Influences the profession's response to issues of societal accountability Demonstrates exemplary professional accountability to athletes, the community and the profession |

Domain 5. Business

Sound business practices are important for maintaining a sustainable practice while innovating to meet the multi-faceted needs of patients in the rapidly changing healthcare environment. Practice management involves a broad range of activities, including financial management, human resource

management, planning and marketing, information management, risk management, governance and organisational dynamics, and business and clinical operations.⁵ Health care and chiropractic practice are highly regulated environments, and practices must be managed in accordance with legal and professional responsibilities.

| COMPETENCIES | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A MEMBER: | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A FELLOW: |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 Uses business models that are patient-centred and sustainable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies needs of athlete and active individuals that can be met with chiropractic care in various environments Identifies and implements standardised processes in practice that support quality chiropractic care Collaborates to develop business models with others involved in the care and performance of the athlete or active individual for better health outcomes and business sustainability | <p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member, promoting professional, sustainable and innovative business practices through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role modelling professional business behaviours Mentoring others in business models and practice Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes for business models and practice in the sports and exercise chiropractic environment Effectively managing business model transitions for various environments Leading interprofessional collaborations with those involved in the care and performance of the athlete or active individuals to optimise business models and achieve better health outcomes |
| 5.2 Manages resources for safe and effective care and continuity of sports and exercise chiropractic services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes physical and technology infrastructure to support chiropractic care and practice management Uses physical, financial and human resources effectively and efficiently Manages personal and professional demands throughout the career life cycle | |
| 5.3 Uses information and data to inform practice improvements and minimise risk in the sports and exercise chiropractic environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks data that accurately reflect care outcomes Analyses data to discern relationships between investments and outcomes Recognises the impact of system factors and resource availability on practitioner and patient safety Implements change to improve care and practice management Takes action to minimise risk | |

⁵ Core principles of Health Care Practice Management. Australian Association of Practice Management. At: <https://www.aapm.org.au/Your-Profession/Core-Principles>