



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
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Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

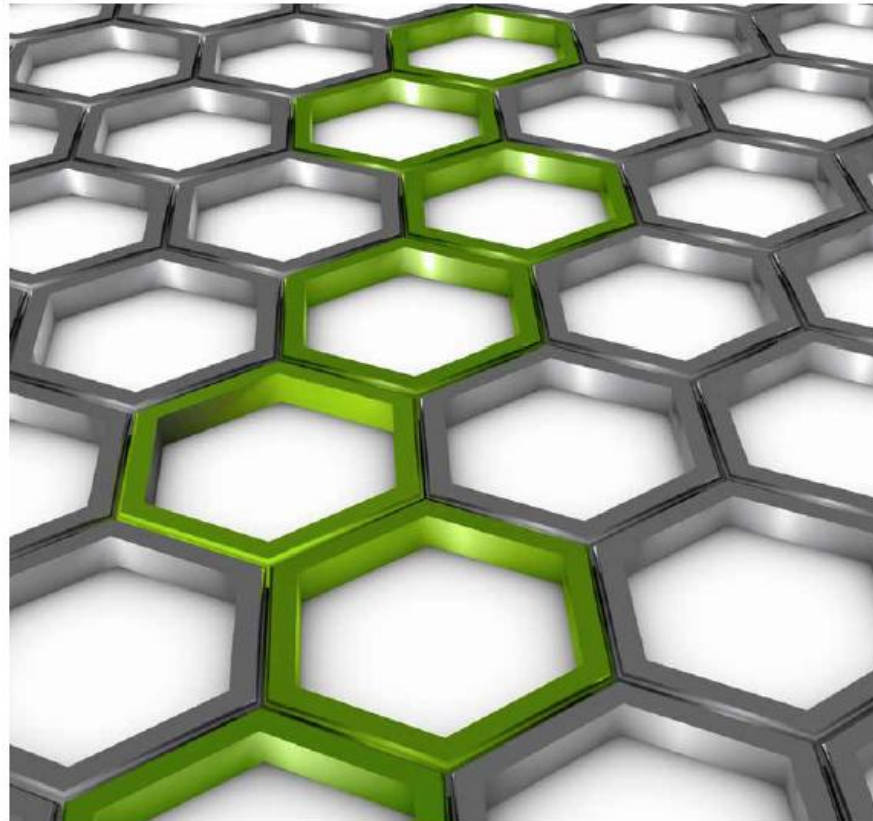
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Overview of prescribing competencies and the Health Practitioner Prescribing Pathway Project

Steve Marty & Chris Robertson

COMPETENCIES REQUIRED TO PRESCRIBE MEDICINES

Putting quality use of medicines into practice



The structure of the competencies

The seven competency areas in the Prescribing Competencies Framework each describe an activity essential for prescribing. The order in which they are presented does not imply a hierarchical order of importance; all are equally important for ensuring that prescribing is judicious, appropriate, safe and effective.

Competency Area 1

Understands the person and their clinical needs

Competency Area 2

Understands the treatment options and how they support the person's clinical needs

Competency Area 3

Works in partnership with the person to develop and implement a treatment plan

Competency Area 4

Communicates the treatment plan clearly to other health professionals

Competency Area 5

Monitors and reviews the person's response to treatment

Horizontal Competency Area H1

Practices professionally

Horizontal Competency Area H2

Communicates and collaborates effectively with the person and other health professionals

The horizontal competencies (H1 and H2) are competencies that health professionals integrate with the other competency areas during the prescribing cycle.

6 Competencies required to prescribe medicines



COMPETENCY AREA 2

Treatment options: Understands the treatment options and how they support the person's clinical needs

This competency area focuses on the competencies required to identify and discuss appropriate, safe, effective, and evidence-based treatments for the person. This framework acknowledges that the most appropriate treatment may not be a medicine and describes the competencies required to assess non-pharmacological treatments in broad terms only. It describes in detail the competencies required to identify the medicines suitable for treating the person's condition that can be incorporated into a treatment plan.

Note: The research knowledge (for prescribers, their family and carers) regarding signs and symptoms is not included in this competency area. This knowledge is covered in the competency area for health professionals who provide a consultation, diagnosis, and advice about the person's own or others' symptoms.

ELEMENT 2.1 Considers non-pharmacological treatment options suitable for treating the person and their condition

Performance criteria

2.1.1 Recognises when it is clinically appropriate not to intervene, for example, in cases where the signs and symptoms are likely to resolve without treatment

2.1.2 Recognises when it is clinically appropriate to implement non-pharmacological treatments

- requires the critical reasoning and/or evidence supporting the decisional to intervene
- requires the critical reasoning and/or evidence supporting treatment decisions
- applies non-pharmacological therapies and their relative outcomes in comparison with pharmacological interventions

ELEMENT 2.2 Identifies appropriate medicines options that can be incorporated into the person's treatment plan

Performance criteria

2.2.1 Recognises knowledge of pharmacology (other biomedical sciences, clinical medicine, and therapeutics) and identifies medicines suitable for treating the condition

2.2.2 Obtains, interprets, and applies current evidence, and information about medicines

- requires the features of drugs and properties of medicines suitable for treating the person's condition
- requires the pharmacological base supporting treatment decisions
- requires the critical review of the evidence and information about medicines for the person's condition

COMPETENCY AREA 2 (continued)

Knowledge, skills and behaviours

Knowledge

Understanding of

- person or quality use of medicines (by use)
- medicines, including:
 - conventional and regulatory status, to recognise:
 - scheduled medicines: controlled drugs, prescription-only medicines, pharmaceutical-only medicines, and pharmacy-only medicines
 - unscheduled medicines, such as medicines on green sale (eg, animal analgesic analgesics) and complementary medicines (non-plant-based herbs, natural and synthetic medicines, complementary medicines (made products) containing herbs, vitamins, minerals, nutritional supplements, homeopathic medicines, and both traditional medicines
 - approved indications
 - other indications that are supported by good evidence
 - pharmacology
 - effectiveness and safety
- current sequencing or treatment options suitable for treating the condition (eg, first line, second line etc)
- valid evidence base or information about medicines, for example:
 - the Australian Medicines Handbook (AMH)
 - therapeutic guidelines
 - medical clinical guidelines (eg, national health and medical research council guidelines)
 - the national medicines comprehensive catalogue
 - new, safer choices, and/or health resources
 - the product information for medicines (eg, from boxes)
 - the pharmaceutical benefits scheme (PBS)
 - the therapeutic goods administration (TGA)
 - the national immunisation schedule
 - hospital formularies, protocols, and guidelines

Skills

Demonstrated ability to

- identify appropriate non-pharmacological treatments
- access, interpret, and critically appraise evidence and information about the following aspects of health and medicines to inform clinical decision making:
 - efficacy and effectiveness
 - the strength of evidence
 - interactions with other medicines or conditions
 - contraindications
 - potential harms
 - price in therapy
 - cost
 - method of use
 - the suitability of medicines and suitable dose forms
 - the length of treatment
 - monitoring requirements
 - quality of the combination
 - issues of concern for special or vulnerable populations
 - comparative effectiveness, safety and cost effectiveness
- thoughtfully consider the following requirements when identifying appropriate medicines options and labelling them to the person:
 - effectiveness, including:
 - the pharmacological and pharmacokinetic properties of the medicine
 - body-related effectiveness
 - or-ability effectiveness
 - practical treatment success rates
 - the person's ability to use the medicine

* For specifications of the pharmacy knowledge required by prescribers, see the Knowledge section of Competency Area 1 (linked with the person and their clinical needs).

† Competencies related to prescriptive medicines

COMPETENCY AREA

Describes a particular professional activity.

Introduction

Each competency area begins with an introductory section that summarises the focus for each competency.

ELEMENT

The competency areas are then broken down into elements that describe the specific processes, actions, and tasks that health professionals carry out when prescribing.

Performance criteria

The performance criteria for each competency area describe the performance required in practice and break the elements into the observable behaviours or results that are expected of competent prescribers.

Evidence examples

Evidence examples provide cues for assessing prescribing performance. They are examples only, and should be customised for the scope of practice and role the prescriber performs in the workplace.

Knowledge, skills and behaviours

Each competency area also ends with knowledge, skills, and behaviours subsections describing the level of underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours that prescribers require, and integrate, when performing the competency.



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How can the competency framework be used?

- Guide planning
- Inform training syllabi
- Guide accreditation
- Provide an assessment framework
- Assist standards and guidelines development
- Inform stakeholders

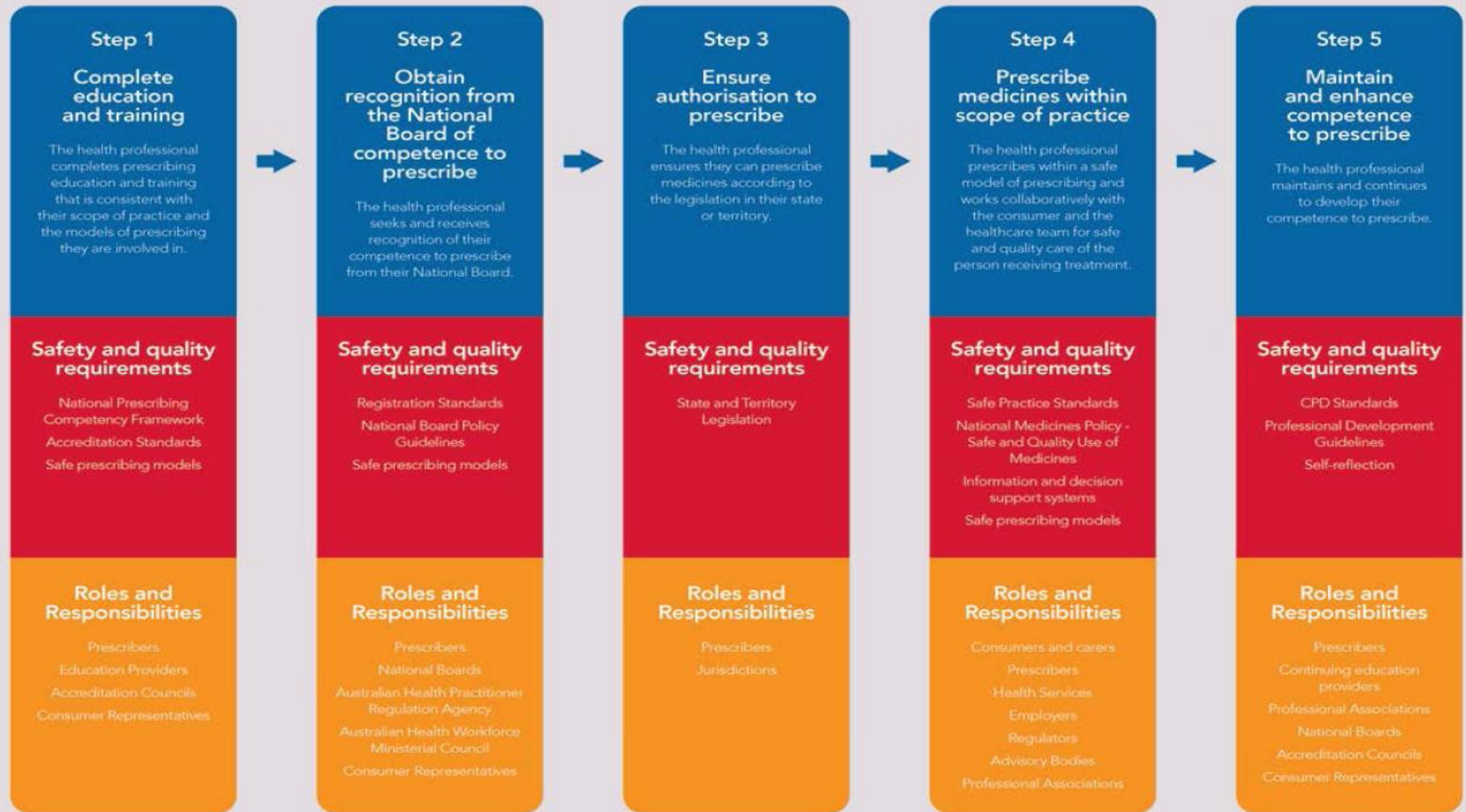
Health Workforce Australia

- Health Practitioners Prescribing Pathway Project
- Wide representation on Steering Committee
- Wide public consultation
- Considered various models
- Project completed
- Final report to HWA Board and then to Ministers



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Health Professionals Prescribing Pathway



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Download a copy of the NPS document – [Competencies required to prescribe medicines](#).