Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice

Policy Statement
All identified health professionals are to be credentialled and have a defined scope of clinical practice to support the delivery of safe and high quality health care within Department of Health.

Intent of this policy
The mandatory intent of this policy is to ensure:

- all identified health professionals are credentialled and have a defined scope of clinical practice
- any case of near miss, an actual or potential case of patient injury or adverse event where breach of credentialing/registration or a scope of clinical practice requirement was a contributing factor is reported to the Director-General, Department of Health
- there is a process in place, to afford health professionals the opportunity, to appeal the decision regarding their scope of clinical practice.

Scope
This policy applies to the Department of Health and is relevant to professionals identified in the professional stream requirements section of this document.

Health professionals employed within Hospital and Health Services should refer to the Health Service Directive, Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice.

Principles

- patient safety: ensuring health professionals practice within the bounds of their education, training competence and within the capacity and capability of the service in which they are working
- consistency: aligning with National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards Queensland Health credentialing processes
- natural justice and procedural fairness: the credentialing and scope of clinical practice processes are underpinned by natural justice and procedural fairness
- due care and diligence: all parties act with due care and diligence to support procedural fairness. Credentialing and defining scope of clinical practice processes are underpinned by transparency and accountability
equity: applicants be treated equally and without discrimination. All decisions shall be based on the professional competence of the applicant and the capacity of the relevant service.

**Specific mandatory professional stream requirements**

1. **Medical Practitioners and Dentists**
   The Department of Health shall:
   
   - ensure all identified, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registered medical practitioners and dentists are issued with a current documented scope of practice covering all work performed.
   - contribute to the minimum data set for each eligible practitioner to the central credentialing repository, and provide updates upon any variation to approved scope of clinical practice upon implementation of the Shared Credentialing within each Department of Health agency.
   - upon request, make the results of compliance audits available to areas within the Department of Health that have assigned responsibilities for credentialing ie. the Director-General and the Office of the Principal Medical Officer.
   - ensure reports of a near miss, an actual or potential case of patient injury or adverse event where breach of this directive was a contributing factor are provided to the Principal Medical Officer at time of submission to the Director-General.

2. **Nurse Practitioners**
   The Department of Health shall:
   
   - ensure all nurse practitioners hold a current endorsement as a nurse practitioner under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 (Qld)* and have no restrictions on practice.
   - ensure health professionals employed or engaged in a position that requires endorsement as a nurse practitioner are credentialed and issued with a current, documented scope of clinical practice covering all clinical work performed.
   - ensure credentialing decisions are professionally led with appropriate nursing representation.

3. **Mental Health Nurses and Mental Health Nurse Practitioners**
   The Department of Health shall:
   
   - support all registered nurses with mental health nursing qualifications working within identified mental health and alcohol and drug treatment service settings to be credentialed with the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN) ‘Credential for Practice Program’.

4. **Eligible Midwives**
   The Department of Health shall:
   
   - ensure all eligible midwives hold current general registration as a midwife in Australia with no restrictions on practice and a notation on the register as an eligible midwife.
ensure appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements are in place for midwifery practice.

- ensure midwives employed or engaged in a position requiring eligibility are credentialed and issued with a current, documented scope of clinical practice covering all clinical work performed.

- ensure credentialing decisions are professionally led with appropriate midwifery representation.

5. Allied Health Professionals

The Department of Health shall:

- ensure all allied health professionals intending to engage in complex clinical practices not traditionally performed by their profession are credentialed and have a documented defined scope of clinical practice.

- ensure all allied health professionals working in Queensland Public Health System facilities but not employed by a Hospital and Health Service are credentialed and have a documented defined scope of clinical practice.

- have mechanisms in place to support professional support activities for all allied health professionals regardless of the allied health professional’s clinical area, career stage, location or profession speciality.

Related or governing legislation, policy and agreements

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 (Qld)
- Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 (Qld)
- Health Quality and Complaints Commission Act 2006 (Qld)
- Health Ombudsman Act 2013 (QLD)
- Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 (Qld)
- Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012 (Qld)
- Judicial Review Act 1991 (Qld)
- Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)
- Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 (Qld)
- Witness Protection Act 2000 (Qld)

Related policy or documents

- Department of Health:
  - Recruitment and Selection Human Resources Policy B1 (QH-POL-212)
  - Employees to Notify Supervisor if Changed with or Convicted of an Indictable Offence Human Resources Policy E4 (QH-POL-127)
Department of Health: Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice

- Mental or Physical Incapacity of Employees Human Resources Policy E11 (QH-POL-170)
- Indemnity for Queensland Health Medical Practitioners Human Resources Policy I2 (QH-POL-153)

## Supporting documenting

- Clinical Services Capability Framework for Public and Licensed Private Health Facilities

## Business area contact

Office of the Principal Medical Officer  
Health Service Clinical and Innovation Division

## Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

**Date of last review:** 13 June 2014  
**Supersedes:** Version 1

## Approval and Implementation

**Policy Custodian:**  
Deputy Director-General, Health Service and Clinical Innovation Division
Definitions of terms used in this policy and supporting documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition / Explanation / Details</th>
<th>Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adverse event</td>
<td>An incident in which harm resulted to a person receiving care</td>
<td>National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, June 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health Professionals</td>
<td>This policy applies to the following allied health professions: audiology; clinical measurement</td>
<td>Allied Health Professions Office</td>
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<td>sciences; dietetics; exercise physiology; music therapy; nuclear medicine technologists; nutrition;</td>
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<td>occupational therapy; optometry; orthoptics; orthotics / prosthetics; pharmacy; physiotherapy; podiatry; psychological; physicists; radiation therapy; radiography; radiochemists; sonography; social work; speech pathology; social work associates; welfare officers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical practice</td>
<td>The professional activity undertaken for the purpose of investigating patient symptoms and preventing and/or managing illness, together with associated professional activities related to patient care.</td>
<td>National Standard for Credentialing and Scope of Clinical Practice 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex clinical practice (allied health)</td>
<td>Intervention or procedure which requires an allied health professional to conduct clinical practice that is not traditionally within the scope of their profession.</td>
<td>Allied Health Professions Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credentialing</td>
<td>The formal process used to verify the qualifications, experience, professional standing and other relevant professional attributes for the purpose of forming a view about their competence, performance and professional suitability to provide a safe, high quality healthcare service within specific environments.</td>
<td>National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Service Organisations, Standard 1, October 2012</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-">http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-</a></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible Midwife</td>
<td>Notation as an eligible midwife applies to a class of registered midwives and not to all registered midwives.</td>
<td>Nursing and Midwifery Board Registration Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having notation as an eligible midwife on the register of midwives indicates that the midwife is competent to: provide pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care to women and their infants; and is qualified to provide the associated services and order diagnostic investigations appropriate to the eligible midwife’s scope of practice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>An eligible midwife may also prescribe scheduled medicines in accordance with relevant state or territory legislation once an endorsement for scheduled medicines under section 94 has been attained.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD10%2F1340&amp;dbid=AP&amp;checksum=ZWejXbYCYl0yXim4PJ5oaA%3D%3D">www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD10%2F1340&amp;dbid=AP&amp;checksum=ZWejXbYCYl0yXim4PJ5oaA%3D%3D</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health professional</td>
<td>A trained health professional who may or may not be registered with AHPRA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identified health professionals</td>
<td>This directive applies to professionals identified in the Professional stream requirements section of this document.</td>
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Department of Health: Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice

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<td>Near miss</td>
<td>An incident that does not cause harm, but has the potential to do so</td>
<td>National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, June 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>A registered nurse educated and authorised to function autonomously and collaboratively in an advanced and extended clinical role.</td>
<td>Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency <a href="http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD10%2F1351&amp;dbid=AP&amp;chksum=MhZbIQy5eHKHz0u%2BhCSTg%3D%3D">http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD10%2F1351&amp;dbid=AP&amp;chksum=MhZbIQy5eHKHz0u%2BhCSTg%3D%3D</a></td>
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<td>Professional support</td>
<td>A term that refers to activities that create an environment where personal and professional growth may occur.</td>
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### Version Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Prepared by</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25/06/2013</td>
<td>Office of the Principal Medical Officer</td>
<td>New document</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>13/6/2014</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>Minor update following review</td>
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