

What is a podiatrist?

A podiatrist is a health professional who deals with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of medical and surgical conditions of the feet and lower limbs.

What does a podiatrist do?

- provides expert examination of the feet and lower limbs
- prevents and manages foot complications for those living with chronic disease such as diabetes, kidney disease, arthritis and circulation problems
- assesses, diagnoses and treats foot complications such as wounds, infection, circulatory and neurological problems
- prescribes wound and rehabilitation programs, that include wound management, application of total contact casts or irremovable cast walkers, insoles and footwear
- coordinates multi-disciplinary teams of doctors, surgeons, nurses and allied health professionals to reduce the need for elective foot surgery, amputation and hospitalisation
- performs both nail and soft tissue surgery
- plays an important role in maintaining the mobility of many elderly and disabled people.
- contributes towards research into the treatment(s) and prevention of foot complications and unnecessary hospitalisation.

Is this you?

- patient, proactive and flexible
- good communication skills
- able to work as part of a team and independently
- interested in health and wellbeing
- enjoy helping people.

'I have a fantastic job working in high risk podiatry. Podiatry is a career with terrific opportunities for travel, life experience and career development. It's been very exciting assisting with the development of high risk foot services in Queensland.'

Helen Martin, Podiatrist



Where can a podiatrist work in Queensland Health?

Queensland Health offers employment opportunities for registered podiatrists in hospital and community health settings with services ranging from:

- community health centres
- acute hospitals – both inpatient and outpatient environments
- sub-acute and residential care homes.

Queensland Health podiatrists also work in specific multi-disciplinary clinics and teams, including:

- high risk foot clinics managing wounds and preventing amputations
- orthopaedic clinics managing lower limb musculo-skeletal complications
- vascular clinics diagnosing and managing lower limb circulation problems
- outreach clinics in many rural and remote centres across Queensland
- Telehealth clinics providing advice via videoconference and digital photography for other health professionals.

Emerging areas of podiatric practice

There are a number of areas in which podiatrists can develop expertise, including:

- management of the 'high risk foot'
- wound care
- vascular clinic
- biomechanical assessment and treatment
- paediatrics
- research
- project management
- clinical education.

How do you become a podiatrist?

To become a podiatrist you have to study a health science degree with a major in podiatry at university. Prerequisite subjects, or assumed knowledge in one or more of English, Mathematics B and Chemistry are normally required. Contact the university for more information, as requirements may change.

Degree courses

Queensland University of Technology:

- Kelvin Grove campus: Bachelor of Health Science (Podiatry) – 4 years full time.

Registration

In order to practice as a podiatrist, graduates are required to be registered with the Podiatry Board of Australia.

What scholarships are available?

There are a variety of scholarships and financial assistance available. Check out the respective tertiary institute website for details. Also available is the Queensland Health Rural Scholarships Scheme. For further information visit www.health.qld.gov.au/orh/scholarships/ah/allied.asp

Interested in other allied health careers?

Visit the Queensland Health Work For Us website www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus for more careers in health fact sheets – allied health series:

- Dietitian
- Radiographer
- Physiotherapist
- Psychologist
- Pharmacist
- Social worker
- Speech pathologist.

Where can I find out more info?

Queensland University of Technology School of Public Health (Kelvin Grove campus)

Phone: (07) 3138 5879

Email: publichealth.enquiries@qut.edu.au

Website: www.hlth.qut.edu.au

Podiatry Board of Australia

Phone: 1300 419 495

Website: www.podiatryboard.gov.au

Australasian Podiatry Council

Phone: (03) 9416 3111

Website: www.apodc.com.au

The QTAC website has a list of universities and tertiary institutions with links to universities and courses offered. Go to www.qtac.edu.au and select Institutions.

To find out more about the exciting career opportunities in Queensland Health visit www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus

Do great things every day

