

# Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors

## Paediatric 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 chiropractor in their regulated health 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.

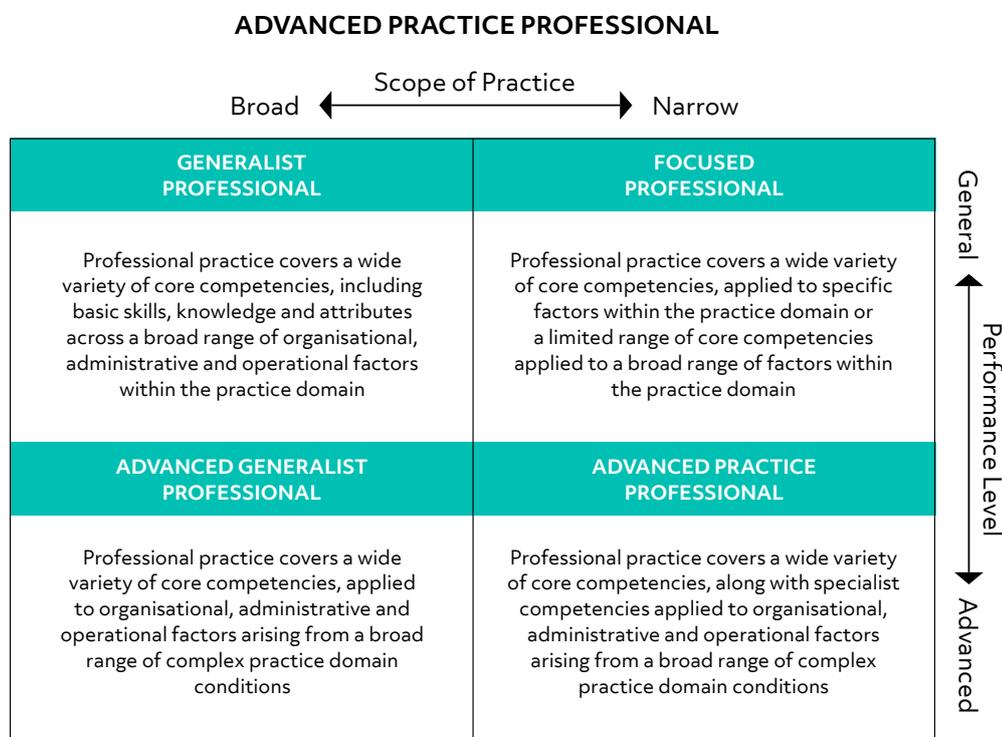


Figure 1. Image reproduced from Fergusson et al.<sup>1</sup>

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/IJELLv14p019-040Fergusson4321.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: member, titled member and fellow. Advancement is achieved through a combination of education, 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 client's unique values and circumstances' to provide the best possible outcomes for patients.<sup>2</sup>

Supporting the advancement of chiropractors will not only support an 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 clients at a system level.

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.

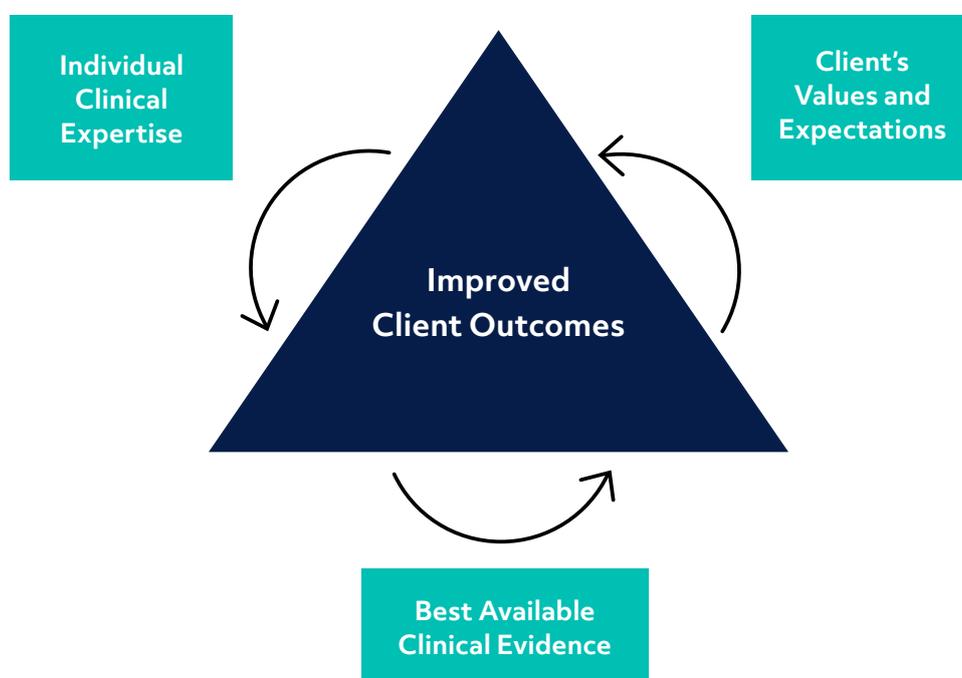


Figure 2. Image reproduced from CIAP<sup>2</sup>

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>

## 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 show how their program learning outcomes align with the relevant performance level in the Competency Framework.

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.

## USING THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS IN THE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

As the Competency Framework identifies the performance expectations of members, titled 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 approved postgraduate education programs.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The members of the AICE are committed to high standards of ethical conduct, the principle of full disclosure and the declaration of any existing or potential conflicts of interest.

AICE recognises that there are individuals who have obtained the experience and qualifications defined in the Competency Framework, and are already performing at the level of member, titled member or fellow.

As such, grand-parenting provisions have been developed which will apply until December 31st 2023. Through a transparent and consistent process, the entry requirements for membership levels of the AICE will be subject to generous concessions and exemptions if applicants can demonstrate that they are already performing at the expected level.

From January 1st 2024, the entry requirements for all levels of membership of the AICE will be more rigorous, without the current concessions and exemptions.

# Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors: Paediatric Chiropractor

## *Definition:*

Paediatric chiropractors focus on the comprehensive and holistic care of the child, to restore function and contribute to optimal growth and development. They achieve this through developmental and age appropriate assessment and care delivery, whilst ensuring a high standard of professional, safe and ethical practice.

These chiropractors demonstrate advanced competencies in the age and developmentally appropriate care of children using best practice, multi-modal techniques to enhance the function of the neuro-musculoskeletal system.

These chiropractors have clinical expertise in childhood adjusting techniques, developmentally specific rehabilitation protocols, parent/caregiver education, research translation, communication, lifestyle advice and leadership. They participate comfortably in the child's healthcare team, working closely with parents, other health care providers and the community to provide the best high quality care for each child.

## Domain 1. Clinical expertise

A Paediatric 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 practice.<sup>3</sup>

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A Titled Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A Fellow:
<p>1.1 Assesses the health status and related circumstances of the child, critically analyses these and forms a clinical impression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs a clinical and biopsychosocial assessment of the child and caregiver to inform clinical management, developmentally specific home care, lifestyle advice, and caregiver involvement</li> <li>• Applies the results of clinical and other diagnostic procedures to inform clinical management, developmentally specific home care, lifestyle advice, and caregiver involvement</li> <li>• Recognises the specific needs of particular populations</li> <li>• Recognises the different goals that may be associated with different contexts, including age, stage and presentation</li> </ul>	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Titled Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to cases with greater complexity; uncertainty; and ambiguity</li> <li>• Role modelling the application of advanced clinical expertise and collaboration with others involved in the care of the child</li> <li>• Mentoring others to achieve advanced clinical expertise.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2 Identify and prioritise issues to be addressed in a consultation with a child and/or caregiver</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the concerns and goals of the child and/or caregiver during the consultation</li> <li>• Selects appropriate tools to assist development of priority issues</li> <li>• Identifies issues which need to be addressed during future visits or with other health care practitioners</li> </ul>	

<p>1.3 Works in collaboration with the child and/or caregiver, exploring the care options available and developing agreed, evidence-based care and management plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shares decision making with the child and/or caregiver in planning care</li> <li>• Demonstrates sound clinical reasoning through evidence-based practice</li> <li>• Supports a multimodal approach to clinical management, developmentally specific home care, lifestyle advice, and caregiver involvement</li> <li>• Sources and incorporates evidence into practice</li> </ul>	
<p>1.4 Coordinates the safe and effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of care and management plans for the child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a clear sequence and flow for the entire interaction with the child and/or caregiver</li> <li>• Performs safe and effective chiropractic techniques to optimise clinical management, developmentally specific home care, lifestyle advice, and caregiver involvement</li> <li>• Monitors progress using age and stage appropriate evaluation instruments</li> <li>• Responds to changing and evolving situations across progressive interactions</li> </ul>	
<p>1.5 Collaborates effectively within the child's healthcare team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises the roles and expertise of other members in a healthcare team</li> <li>• Communicates with, consults with and refers to other members of the team to achieve the best outcomes for the child</li> <li>• Effectively manages differences and resolves conflict when collaborating in a healthcare team</li> </ul>	

<p>1.6 Collaborates effectively with others involved in the health of the child, including parents, teachers and coaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies others involved in the performance and/or care of the child</li> <li>• Documents the child and/or caregiver's wishes for communication and collaboration with others involved in their performance and/or care</li> <li>• Maintains an effective relationship with others involved, in accordance with the wishes expressed and by the child and/or caregiver</li> </ul>	
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3. Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/training/ebp-learning-modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

## 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 Titled Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A Fellow:
2.1 Practises legally, professionally and ethically in paediatric chiropractic practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adheres to relevant legislation, common law, codes, standards and other policy regulating paediatric chiropractic practice.</li> <li>• Applies professional and ethical standards in responding to challenges common in paediatric chiropractic practice</li> <li>• Recognises legal obligations relating to particular paediatric populations, including newborn, infant, child and teen, and involvement of other members of the support team</li> </ul>	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Titled Member, promoting professionalism through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role modelling professional and ethical behaviours</li> <li>• Mentoring others in professionalism</li> <li>• Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes in the paediatric chiropractic environment</li> <li>• Leading the development of stakeholder relationships within the paediatric chiropractic environment</li> </ul>
2.2 Applies a patient-centred approach to paediatric chiropractic practice, including for the patient, members in the child's healthcare team and others involved in the health and development of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respects diversity in the care and management of children</li> <li>• Provides culturally responsive care</li> <li>• Maintains a duty of care for the child and their safety in the face of multiple, competing demands</li> </ul>	

<p>2.3 Communicates effectively with children and/or caregiver, and others involved in their care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapts communication style to the child and/or caregiver's level of health literacy</li> <li>• Information about a patient's goals and preferences, and information to inform their care, is gathered</li> <li>• Two-way communication (spoken, written and non-verbal) that engages the child and/or caregiver in shared decision- making and care planning</li> <li>• Structured communication techniques are used to improve the transfer of clinical information and responsibility with those involved in the care, growth and development of the child and/or caregiver</li> <li>• Relevant, accurate, complete and timely information is documented in the healthcare record to support care of the child.</li> </ul>	
<p>2.4 Maintains and extends competence in paediatric chiropractic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routinely self-assesses and critical evaluates personal knowledge, skills and expertise in paediatric chiropractic</li> <li>• Uses internal and external sources of information in evaluating own knowledge, skills and expertise in paediatric chiropractic</li> <li>• Continuously pursues learning and professional development in paediatric chiropractic</li> </ul>	
<p>2.5 Collaborates to continuously improve quality and safety of paediatric chiropractic services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies common risks to quality and safety in the delivery of paediatric chiropractic services</li> <li>• Implements activities to improve quality and safety in the delivery of paediatric chiropractic services</li> </ul>	

## 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 Paediatric Chiropractor integrates the best available evidence with their clinical expertise and the patient's unique values and circumstances to improve patient outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

As Paediatric 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 Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
3.1 Critically evaluates paediatric chiropractic practice in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews literature sources relevant to neuromusculoskeletal conditions, paediatric chiropractic practice and business management</li> <li>Critically appraises the research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertakes peer review activities in paediatric chiropractic practice</li> <li>Leads and mentors others in the critical evaluation of research</li> </ul>
3.2 Applies research evidence into own practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes the extent to which confidence may be placed in the research evidence</li> <li>Establishes the applicability of the research evidence to the circumstances of the child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads the incorporation of evidence in the design, implementation and evaluation of paediatric chiropractic practice</li> </ul>
3.3 Identifies gaps in the evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognises areas of uncertainty and identifies gaps in the evidence base for paediatric chiropractic practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulates research questions to address research gaps</li> </ul>
3.4 Designs and delivers research projects to address gaps in the evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participates in research planning with the guidance of more experienced colleagues</li> <li>Generates evidence at a practice/service level suitable for presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies areas for innovation and advances in practice</li> <li>Generates new evidence suitable for presentation at a research symposium</li> <li>Authors primary evidence outcomes in peer-reviewed journals</li> <li>Mentors others in research projects</li> </ul>

<p>3.5 Plan and deliver education activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participates in the education of others (children and/or caregiver, students, peers and other health professionals) with guidance from more experienced colleagues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivers education to chiropractic students, peers, members of the public and other healthcare or industry stakeholders, relevant to paediatric chiropractic practice</li> <li>Delivers education at national and/or international levels, relevant to paediatric chiropractic practice</li> <li>Shapes national education and CPD practice, relevant to paediatric chiropractic practice</li> </ul>
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4. Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/training/ebp-learning-modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

## Domain 4. Leadership and Influence

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

## 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.<sup>5</sup> 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 Titled Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA A Fellow:
5.1 Uses business models that are patient-centred and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies needs of the child that can be met with chiropractic care in various environments</li> <li>Identifies and implements standardised processes in practice that support quality chiropractic care</li> <li>Collaborates to develop business models with others involved in the care and growth and development of the child for better health outcomes and business sustainability</li> </ul>	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Titled Member, promoting professional, sustainable and innovative business practices through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role modelling professional business behaviours</li> <li>Mentoring others in business models and practice</li> <li>Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes for business models and practice in the paediatric chiropractic environment</li> </ul>
5.2 Manages resources for safe and effective care and continuity of paediatric chiropractic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes physical and technology infrastructure to support chiropractic care and practice management</li> <li>Uses physical, financial and human resources effectively and efficiently</li> <li>Manages personal and professional demands throughout the career life cycle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively managing business model transitions for various environments</li> <li>Leading interprofessional collaborations with those involved in the care and health and development of the child to optimise business models and achieve better health outcomes</li> </ul>

<p>5.3 Uses information and data to inform practice improvements and minimise risk in the paediatric chiropractic environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks data that accurately reflect care outcomes</li> <li>• Analyses data to discern relationships between investments and outcomes</li> <li>• Recognises the impact of system factors and resource availability on practitioner and patient safety</li> <li>• Implements change to improve care and practice management</li> <li>• Takes action to minimise risk</li> </ul>	
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5. Core principles of Health Care Practice Management. Australian Association of Practice Management. At: <https://www.aapm.org.au/Your-Profession/Core-Principles-of-Practice-Management>