

Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice

Department of Health Policy

QH-POL-390

1. Statement

All identified health professionals shall be credentialed and have a defined scope of clinical practice (SoCP) to support the delivery of safe and high-quality health care within the Department of Health (the department).

2. Purpose

The intent of this policy and supporting standards is to:

- Define the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of health professionals, credentialing committees and decision makers
- Identify which health professionals are required to be credentialed and have a defined SoCP
- Describe key considerations in the credentialing and defining the SoCP process
- Define the required mandatory reporting and compliance activities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all health professionals employed, contracted, or otherwise engaged by the department divisions, branches, and business units.

Health professionals employed by a Hospital and Health Service (HHS) should refer to the *Health Service Directive: Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice (QH-HSD-034)* (the HSD) and the local HHS policy.

4. Principles

- Credentialing and SoCP supports patient safety and clinical governance. It ensures health professionals practise within the bounds of their role/position, education, training, experience, and competence, and within the capacity, capability, and available support of the facility in which they are practising.
- Recommendations and decisions are made with due care and diligence. Credentialing and SoCP is a non-punitive process underpinned by accountability, procedural fairness, natural justice, and transparency.

- Applicants are treated equally and without discrimination. All recommendations and decisions are based on the professional competence of the health professional and the capacity and capability of the relevant service.

5. Requirements

5.1. Processes for credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice

The processes, roles and responsibilities, monitoring and reporting requirements, and which health professionals are required to be credentialed and have a defined SoCP, are detailed in the department standard: *Credentialing and defining scope of clinical practice process (QH-IMP-390-2)*.

5.2. Statewide and regional scope of clinical practice

Statewide and regional services are coordinated by the department or a HHS and provided to multiple other HHSs across Queensland. The provision of these services requires health professionals to travel to facilities in other HHSs. These health professionals are therefore eligible to have an appropriate defined SoCP relevant to the service.

The department, by the nature of the organisation, is a statewide service. However, only health professionals undertaking a role or function as part of a service listed in the standard *Statewide and regional scope of clinical practice (QH-IMP-390-3)* are eligible for a statewide or regional SoCP.

Other health professionals employed, or otherwise engaged, by the department who require credentialing and SoCP will have a SoCP approved for the Department of Health only.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander considerations

In adhering to this policy, department credentialing committees must consider the impact this policy may have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, particularly cultural impacts.

7. Human rights

Human rights are not engaged by this policy.

8. Legislation

- *Acts Interpretation Act 1954* (Qld)
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld)
- *Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Act 2008* (Cth)
- *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* (Qld)
- *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (Qld)
- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* (Qld)
 - *Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012* (Qld)
- *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)
- *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld)
- *Judicial Review Act 1991* (Qld)
- *Major Events Act 2014* (Qld)
- *Medicine and Poisons Act 2019* (Qld)
 - *Medicine and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021* (Qld)
- *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld)
- *Public Health Act 2005* (Qld)
- *Public Sector Act 2022* (Qld)
- *Public Records Act 2002* (Qld)
- *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld)
- *Public Health Act 2005* (Qld)
- *Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979* (Qld)
- *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021* (Qld)

9. Supporting documents

- Standards and guidelines related to this policy
 - Credentiaing and defining scope of clinical practice process, Department of Health Standard (QH-IMP-390-2)
 - Statewide and regional scope of clinical practice, Department of Health Standard (QH-IMP-390-3)
 - Credentiaing and defining scope of clinical practice for medical practitioners and dentists in Queensland – a best practice guideline, Department of Health Guideline (QH-GDL-390-1-1)

- Guideline for Credentialing, defining the scope of clinical practice and professional support for allied health professionals, Department of Health Guideline (QH-HSDGDL-034-1:2015)
- Health Service Directives
 - Credentialing and defining scope of clinical practice (QH-HSD-034)
- Department policies, standards and guidelines
 - Statewide Services, Department of Health Policy (QH-POL-488)
 - Statewide Services, Department of Health Standard (QH-IMP-488)
- Other supporting documents
 - Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Credentialing health practitioners and defining their scope of clinical practice: A guide for managers and practitioners, available at:
<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/publications-and-resources/resource-library/credentialing-health-practitioners-and-defining-their-scope-clinical-practice-guide-managers-and-practitioners>

10. Definitions

Term	Definition
Credentialing	The formal process used to verify and review the qualifications, experience, professional standing and other relevant professional attributes of health professionals 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.
Engaged	Used in conjunction with employed, this refers to health professionals who provide services in a Queensland public health facility but are not employed by a HHS or the department. This may include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted services • Third party providers • Outreach and visiting clinical services
Health professional	Health professional means: (a) a person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law; or a person, other than a person referred to in paragraph (a), who provides a health service, including, for example, an audiologist, dietitian, or social worker.
Regional scope of clinical practice	A SoCP which is valid in defined group of HHSs. The SoCP aligns with the regional service.

Term	Definition
Regional service	A clinical service, which is the responsibility of a lead HHS or department division, that is delivered to a defined group of HHSs and locations.
Scope of clinical practice (SoCP)	The extent of an individual health professional's approved clinical practice within an organisation based on the individual's credentials, competence, performance and professional suitability and the needs and capability of the organisation to support the health professional's SoCP.
Statewide scope of clinical practice	A SoCP which is valid across all Queensland Health facilities. The SoCP aligns with the relevant statewide service.
Statewide service	A clinical service, which is the responsibility of a lead HHS or a department division and is provided to multiple locations across all of Queensland. These services are typically highly specialised clinical services.

11. Approval and implementation

Policy Custodian	Policy Contact Details	Approval Date	Approver
<i>Assistant Deputy Director-General, Workforce Strategy Branch, Clinical Planning and Service Strategy Division</i>	<i>ADDGWS@health.qld.gov.au</i>	<i>3 January 2025</i>	<i>Acting Deputy Director-General, Clinical Planning and Service Strategy Division</i>

Version control

Version	Date	Comments
1	25 June 2013	New document
2	13 June 2014	Minor updates following review
3	20 April 2015	Policy Rationalisation Project review
4	28 June 2017	Updated following the review of the corresponding Credentialing and defining the scope of clinical practice Health Service Directive and the inclusion of Schedule A – statewide/multi HHS SoCP
4.1	6 May 2020	Addition of Statewide SoCP for infectious diseases physicians and public health physicians for COVID-19 response.

Version	Date	Comments
5	9 February 2022	Updated to reflect changes in the HSD. Created a new standard for processes to implement the policy. Schedule A removed from the policy and included in a new standard for statewide and regional SoCP.
6	20 June 2023	Updated to reflect changes in the HSD.
7	3 January 2025	Updated to reflect changes in the HSD, specifically to clarify the use of a practice plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners in accordance with relevant legislative tools. Updates to statewide and regional services listed in the standard for statewide and regional SoCP.