

Allied Health Practice Profiles: Dietetics

Purpose

The Allied Health Practice Profiles (AHPP) aim to provide a resource for each profession's use when reviewing the services they provide to SA Health clients.

Allied health service structures are in the majority a matrix model and cover many clinical areas within health services. Whilst this allows for agility, flexibility and responsiveness allied health services need to be able to clearly articulate why they provide services to clients or why they refer on to other services. This AHPP outlines the continuum of service provision based on the identification of key work practices and core business for each profession.

The AHPP articulates the scope of practice that is common amongst allied health professionals (Core Practice Profile) alongside the specific scope of practice for each profession (Specific Practice Profile). These profiles will assist allied health professions when reviewing their services to identify work that is no longer supported by the business unit that requires referral on and opportunities to provide full core business services. It will also allow allied health to clearly identify where they can assist other professions in their requirement to be working at the top of their scope through provision of extended scope of practice services.

The AHPP is intended as a guide for service provision and not a restrictive or conclusive list. The profiles will evolve with time as practices develop and change and thus will be updated periodically. The online version is the correct version and once printed may be out of date.

In this environment of change and models of care development it is important that professions are clear and consistent across the state in their communication about what they can or do provide to clients in South Australia.

Information in the resource

Information in the resource focuses on clinical rather than management roles in order to keep the statements specific to clinical care undertaken by allied health professionals and assistants. The scope of practice roles are mapped across a continuum from an assistant role through to advanced and extended roles. These statements are based on core services rather than competencies to circumvent the need to attach a classification level.

Context within the Transforming Health agenda

Through the implementation of the Transforming Health agenda, allied health services are being asked to provide wide ranging information including but not limited to; describing their roles, identifying innovative practice models, providing evidence for their service models, identifying efficiencies and opportunities to work to their full scope of practice and clearly articulating how they will contribute to the Transforming Health agenda. The AHPP are a starting point for Local Health Network allied health professions to be able to clearly describe their roles, what they do and don't do and the opportunities to work towards a full scope of practice in line with Transforming Health models of care directions.

Scope of Practice Definitions

This document maps the scope of practice for dietetics across a continuum from allied health assistants through to advanced and extended scope roles. The following definitions apply to this document:

Allied Health Assistant encompasses technical staff who are trained to support allied health professionals with their practice. They may work for one professional group or a range depending on their work roles and tasks. Allied health assistants will be supervised by allied health professionals with a combination of direct and indirect support and will be assigned tasks based on their level of competence, knowledge and experience.

Transition Scope is relevant for clinicians who are new to their profession or new to their role and are developing their core skills. The time a clinician spends in transition will vary from person to person and amongst areas of practice. Clinicians in transition receive intensive support and supervision while they build their competence, skills, knowledge and clinical reasoning skills.

Consolidation Scope encompasses a degree of competence, experience and skill that allows the clinician to work relatively autonomously in their work role. They feel confident in their role, have the ability to support others in their skill development and demonstrate effective clinical reasoning and reflective practice relevant to that work role.

Advance Scope of Practice: is a level of practice characterised by an increase in clinical skills, reasoning, critical thinking, knowledge, experience and complexity of service provision so that the practitioner is an expert working within the scope of established contemporary practice¹

Extended Scope of Practice: is a level of practice which incorporates practice beyond the established, contemporary scope of practice. Competencies and training pathways for extended scope roles, for registered and self-regulating allied health professional groups, continue to be refined in South Australia¹

Patient refers to service users who utilise allied health services. For the purpose of these profiles, patient includes client, consumer, service user, customer and other similar terms

¹ Scope of Practice Roles in SA Health Policy Directive.

Allied Health Common Core Practice Profile²

	Allied Health Assistant	Transition Scope	Consolidation Scope	Advanced Scope	Extended Scope
Assessment	<p>Gathering of background information from case notes/patient to support clinical assessment</p> <p>Gathering routine information from clients, family and service providers</p> <p>Assists AHPs with clinical assessments as directed.</p> <p>With appropriate competency based training, conducts basic screening assessments.</p> <p>Prepares assessment resources/equipment for instrumental assessments and assists AHPs with equipment operation.</p>	<p>Complex, comprehensive assessment of patient needs relevant to clinical need with supervision</p> <p>Critically analyse assessment findings in relation to clinical care needs and liaise with team to set priorities and plans with supervision</p> <p>Making valid interpretations of assessment findings based on sound clinical reasoning</p> <p>Use of appropriate evidence based tools</p> <p>Undertakes assessments in order to plan for therapy goals, ongoing care needs, potential to regain independence and suitability for rehabilitation or suitable early intervention approaches</p> <p>Is an active member of the Multi-disciplinary team in assessment, goal planning and discharge planning</p>	<p>Complex, comprehensive assessment of patient needs relevant to clinical need</p> <p>Critically analyse assessment findings in relation to clinical care needs and liaise with team to set priorities and plans</p> <p>Application of a wide range of assessment and therapeutic interventions to clients with complex needs</p> <p>Reviewing and incorporating relevant evidence and/or accepted best practice into the assessment and management of patients</p>	<p>Specialised assessment of patients</p>	<p>Highly complex and specialised clinical assessment, may take on roles of other professional groups relevant to area of specialty</p>
Case management/ Care coordination	<p>Assisting with the making of appointments and liaison with other community agencies.</p> <p>Arranging client appointments, making routine reminder calls and following up patient non-attendances as appropriate</p> <p>Monitor patients who are stable and awaiting service provision and provide updates and information as it becomes available</p> <p>Monitor patients in community settings and provide updated information to allied health professionals as available</p>	<p>Actively contribute to ward rounds and/or clinical meetings</p> <p>Contribute to multidisciplinary problem solving</p> <p>Effective communication with patients, carers, and relevant other personnel involved in patient care to facilitate improved health and discharge outcomes</p> <p>Contributes to case management processes providing information based on outcome of comprehensive assessment in conjunction with input from patient, family, carers, multidisciplinary team and service providers</p>	<p>Manages complex case coordination</p> <p>Liaising with other Health Professionals on matters relating to patient care by communicating with the relevant staff and relevant others, as necessary, to ensure patient assessment and treatment by clinician is coordinated and appropriate</p>	<p>Coordinates care of highly complex patient groups</p> <p>Coordinates case coordination over multiple services in highly complex and volatile client/clinical environments</p>	
Intervention	<p>Assisting with, and participating in group and individual intervention programs.</p> <p>Assisting with inpatient & outpatient services.</p> <p>Preparing and maintaining therapy rooms/materials and packing up/cleaning therapy rooms/resources as required</p> <p>Carrying out of predetermined programs with patients with direct/indirect supervision</p> <p>Preparing patients for therapy</p>	<p>Complex, multifaceted interventions across a range of clinical areas based on clinical need with supervision</p> <p>Run preprogramed therapy groups for patients in conjunction with other team members or with indirect supervision</p> <p>Goal setting with patients and carers to ascertain therapy priorities and methods</p> <p>Delegating appropriate tasks to assistants ensuring that dedicated tasks are performed</p>	<p>Treatment planning for intervention/support services based on comprehensive assessment</p> <p>Specialised, complex, multifaceted interventions using evidence based practice</p>	<p>Undertakes evidence based practice reviews and critical analysis to determine best practice for a given specialised area or generalist team</p> <p>Provides direction in regards to intervention strategies, practices and evidence for an allied health department or specialised area</p> <p>Developing new intervention methods based on evidence</p>	

² All Allied Health Professionals will include these core services in their role

	<p>Monitoring patients response to intervention and modifying to a limited extent to meet patients level of function</p> <p>Liaising with clinicians regarding patient progress and their response to interventions</p> <p>Making of therapy resources Preparing therapy services, rooms, resources, etc.</p> <p>Escorting and/or organising transport for patients to/from therapy areas</p>	<p>safely and effectively</p> <p>Sets therapy goals and implements appropriate management/therapy, counselling and education to patients and carers with non-complex needs.</p> <p>Provides programs for AHAs</p>		<p>based practice, technology, patient needs and available resources</p>	
Interdisciplinary care	<p>Articulate role in interdisciplinary team and assist as required</p>	<p>Articulate role within interdisciplinary team</p> <p>Seek support from senior members of team as required</p> <p>Working collaboratively with members of other disciplines within the hospital or community setting</p> <p>Contribute effectively to interdisciplinary team planning regarding care and treatment of client</p> <p>Attending and actively participating in ward rounds and/or client meetings</p>	<p>Participate in interdisciplinary clinical and planning activities</p>		
Service provision/ Coordination	<p>Disseminating information to patients</p> <p>Sending/receiving referrals completed by clinician</p> <p>Following up on support services on request</p> <p>Maintains patient appointment scheduling including associated booking system requirements, transport etc.</p>	<p>Managing complex needs of patients, carers and families as relevant to caseload with support</p> <p>Identifying required support services</p> <p>Making referrals to support services</p> <p>Contacting support services and other systems to coordinate and collaborate regarding service provision</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate clinical handover for patients being transferred to the care of other professionals using appropriate tools and guidelines relevant to organisation.</p> <p>Advising and liaising with external organisations which may require exchange of information on patients to ensure appropriate care of patients by a variety of communication processes involving professionals, family and/or relevant others</p>	<p>Managing complex needs of patients, carers and families as relevant to caseload</p> <p>Manages discipline staff resourcing, goods and services to ensure service needs are met which ensure optimal outcomes for patients, carers and families, other consumers/stakeholders</p>	<p>Developing service delivery models/services/clinics based on unmet need</p> <p>Evaluating service delivery models/services</p>	
Advocating		<p>Provides an integrated approach to patient management through counselling, discussion, educating and training patients, families, carers and staff in specific techniques to be followed</p>	<p>Advocating for clients and their family within the hospital and when referring to community services and other agencies</p> <p>Encouraging the active participation of patients and their families/ carers in their</p>		

		<p>Liases with families/carers, other health service staff and relevant community service agencies with regards to assessment findings and recommended management plans</p> <p>Advocates for clients and their family in order to access appropriate ongoing management e.g. referral to community services and agencies</p>	<p>assessment and treatment, enabling them to achieve the optimal level of independence</p> <p>Implements new initiatives which improve outcomes for patients, families and / or community, involving consumers in consultation and development of relevant policies and procedures</p>		
Discharge planning	<p>Delivering resources or information to patients</p> <p>Giving routine information about services in the community</p>	<p>Makes referrals to external service providers and coordinates care for discharge</p> <p>Referrals are accepted and responded to by community agencies</p> <p>Ensures relevant and appropriate clinical handover and completion of appropriate discharge documentation</p> <p>Contacts support services to coordinate service provision</p> <p>Contributes to complex discharge planning</p>	<p>Leads complex discharge planning</p>	<p>Applies expert clinical knowledge in regards patient care to ensure safe and sustainable discharge across a range of highly complex patient needs</p>	
Documentation	<p>Assisting the inpatient staff by helping to prepare documentation and supportive resource information</p> <p>Documentation in medical records, and written and verbal reporting on intervention</p> <p>Document service provision/ education/ resources/ equipment provided to patients</p> <p>Documents clinical handover to other care providers using established systems</p> <p>Adheres to minimum standards for documentation</p>	<p>Documented evidence of intervention in case notes</p> <p>Document assessment findings, intervention outcomes, discharge plans, family/carer needs/concerns, ongoing needs and potential barriers for discharge/recovery</p>	<p>Provision of high quality written reports/assessment to be included in case notes</p> <p>Completes appropriate documentation as per allied health, discipline and service guidelines</p>	<p>Writes proformas, guidelines and standards for documentation</p> <p>Support staff with complex documentation needs</p> <p>Document data, patient outcomes, discharge planning outcomes, barriers to discharge etc. for management or hospital wide committees</p>	
Supervision	<p>Participates in direct and indirect supervision activities</p>	<p>Participate in supervision, performance appraisal, professional development, clinical reflection</p> <p>Supervise students as appropriate</p> <p>Seeking guidance and supervision from experienced staff when more complex problem solving , professional decision making and practice skills are required</p>	<p>Participate in supervision, performance appraisal, professional development, clinical reflection</p> <p>Supervise students and clinical staff as required</p> <p>Provide professional supervision and management to clinicians within team</p>	<p>Participate in supervision, performance appraisal, professional development, clinical reflection</p> <p>Supervise supervisors</p> <p>Coordinate and supervise student supervision program</p> <p>Conduct performance appraisals</p>	
Quality assurance / Risk	<p>Collection and analysis of data to provide information on patient progress or services</p> <p>Participation in team quality activities, research and evaluation maintaining required statistics, recording accurate and timely workload data</p>	<p>Participating in quality improvement activities, research and performance enhancement programs</p> <p>Contributing to the development of departmental and organisational procedures and policies</p>	<p>Participate in quality management, quality assurance and risk management activities</p> <p>Contribute to service development</p> <p>Encourage and foster positive culture and safe work environment</p>	<p>Develop and implement quality, risk management projects and monitor quality of service provision</p> <p>Develop and maintain an appropriate system of referral and work allocation ensuring</p>	

	Develops resources e.g. handouts	Actively promote contribution of allied health staff to the delivery of high quality health care Contribute to service development and planning Evaluate own practice	Work in collaboration with other health professionals to achieve optimal client outcomes Develop and foster a culturally appropriate, respectful and safe work place	equitable distribution of workload within the team Developing and maintaining team priority setting Monitoring workloads and practice standards through regular supervision Represent team/service at working parties/committees as required Conducting relevant research and promulgating the results Leading and supporting team members in conducting research and evaluation activities	
Professional Development	Maintaining and developing knowledge and skills in relation to position requirements Undertakes Credentialing / competency training for advanced AHA roles e.g. swallow screening.	Maintaining and developing clinical and professional knowledge and skills Participating in departmental and organisational professional development programs Complete annual professional plan and training as required to maintain registration/professional association membership as required	Professional development undertaken and where relevant, current approaches are integrated into clinical practice Understand and identify professional strengths, limitations and challenges Complete annual professional plan and training as required to maintain registration/professional association membership as required		
Education/ Research	Support group work planning and interventions Prepare for education sessions as directed by clinician Provide research support to implement research projects such as collection of data	Contribute under direct supervision to development of research proposal Conduct literature reviews to support research proposal Collection and collation of data Run pre-prepared education sessions for patients and their families/community members/staff	Develop a research proposal and implement with direct support Conduct research into current practice standards Run education sessions/clinics/presentations on a range of topics relevant to clinical expertise for staff, consumers, community groups, students	Provide education to other health professionals in relation to advanced roles and tasks Developing an education strategy for a local health network or department Lead research projects requiring ethics approval, organisational support or specialised research skills	Provide education to other health professionals in relation to extended scope roles and tasks
Equipment Provision	Maintains equipment required for services Assists therapists in the issue and adjustment of equipment/aids for patients Assists clinicians in operation of equipment for instrumental assessment. Cleans and maintains clinical equipment. Key equipment reprocessing including cleaning and high level disinfection of clinical equipment with appropriate training. Assists with ordering and supply of patient equipment and general clinic supplies				

Dietetics Specific Practice Profile³

Dietitians are responsible for assessing and treating dietary needs in patients to ensure their nutritional needs are met. Dietitians also support the nutritional and dietary needs of patients with issues relating to weight, digestion, chronic disease, growth, medical issues or surgical interventions. They provide education about diet, dietary supplements, enteral feeding and energy requirements. Dietitians may work with individuals or groups providing clinical or health promotion services. They also support kitchen services in the provision of organisation wide diets and dietary needs.

Dietetics	Allied Health Assistant	Transition Scope	Consolidation Scope	Advanced Scope	Extended Scope
Assessment	Assisting dietitians with nutrition screening and other clinical assessments	Provide timely nutrition assessment, diagnosis and prognosis to inpatients and outpatients with direct/indirect supervision	Comprehensive nutrition assessment, diagnosis and prognosis utilising evidence based assessment for specialty clinical areas Application of a wide range of assessment and therapeutic interventions to clients with complex needs Critically analyse nutritional issues in relation to clinical care needs and liaise with team to set priorities and plans	Assessment of highly complex nutritional issues EG.ICCU/ ICU muscle measurements	Assessment of gastrostomy tubes & stoma sites Assessment of Insulin regime
Case management/ Care coordination			Case management role may be undertaken within the multidisciplinary team in relation to complex patients in the community or acute setting especially those with nutritional issues		
Intervention					
Specialised therapeutic diets / enteral feeding	Preparing enteral feeds/therapeutic diets as directed by dietitian	Provide appropriate specialised therapeutic diets and formula for individual patient care through liaison with food services with accurate calculation of enteral and infant formula recipes and input into quality programs to ensure accuracy and safety.	Provide appropriate specialised therapeutic diets and formula for individual patient care through liaison with food services with accurate calculation of enteral and infant formula recipes and input into quality programs to ensure accuracy and safety Contribute to the development and review of operational guidelines and procedures particularly for the preparation of infant formula, processing of expressed breast milk and special diets	Provide appropriate specialised therapeutic diets and formula as required for patient care through developing and reviewing food services ordering processes	Insertion of NGT Replacement of gastrostomy tubes
Nutritional counselling and support	Giving patients routine resources and education materials Responding to general/patient enquiries and provide accurate and appropriate information	Provide appropriate nutritional care, education and support for both inpatients and outpatients and their carers with direct/indirect supervision	Provide appropriate nutritional care, education and support for both inpatients and outpatients and carers		Education on insulin adjustments
Service provision/ Coordination				Nutrition input into allocated specialist health care teams at a level of professional independence through appropriate nutritional care, education and support for both inpatients and outpatients Providing advice to managers/others on professional service delivery development, practice and redesign in response to demand and patient needs Working with highly complex patients requiring extraordinary support	Gastrostomy management

³ Specific dietetic roles will provide a range of these core services

				measures and supporting other dietitians with complex patient care	
Equipment provision	Maintenance of equipment required for dietetics services Assisting therapists to issue and adjust patient equipment/aids	Prescribing basic feeding equipment for patients	Prescribing feeding equipment for patients with complex issues		
Food Service		Contribute to the training of community and hospital based staff through input into predetermined programs and in-service educational activities	Provide an advisory role and education for the interface between the food service department and the wards Provide day to day support and oversight of procedural compliance for the menu coordinators, diet kitchen, formula and Expressed Breast Milk room staff Contribute to the review of all menus to ensure cost-effective meal choices, portion sizes, meal preparation and standards for recipes which meet the nutritional and cultural requirements of the hospital's clients		
Education		Contribute to education and primary health care activities for consumers, the community and broader groups in line with departmental priorities Provided responses to enquiries from individual members of the public or health professionals in line with department procedures Assist with the development and review of relevant health promotion printed and web based resources for the broader community with strong consumer involvement	Provide responses to enquiries from individual members of the public or health professionals in line with department procedures Contribute to education and primary health care activities for consumers, the community and broader groups in line with departmental priorities Develop and review relevant health promotion printed and web based resources for the broader community with strong consumer involvement Contribute to the nutrition advocacy role of the department including disseminating public health nutrition messages through links with the media when approved	Coordinate responses to enquiries from individual members of the public or health professionals in line with department procedures Contribute to the training of community and hospital based staff through input into programs and in-service educational activities Contribute to the nutrition advocacy role of the department including disseminating public health nutrition messages through links with the media when approved	
Advocating		Advocating for patients with dietary issues and needs to ensure they receive appropriate supplements, enteral feeds, equipment and support at home	Advocating for highly complex dietetic clients to ensure they receive appropriate supplements, enteral feeds, equipment and support at home		
Discharge planning		Co-ordinating appropriate and well organised discharge from dietetics	Organising discharge supports for patients with highly complex feeding/nutritional needs		
Documentation		Documenting information concerning the nutritional assessment, diagnosis, treatment and effectiveness of treatments of patients in hospital case notes by writing concise, complete entries	Document high level reports regarding patients with complex nutritional needs		

Version Control and Change History

Version	Date From	Date to	Amendment
V1	September 2017	September 2020	