



Australian Institute of

**Paramedic  
Practitioners**

**Community**

**Paramedic**

**Practice**

**Framework**



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# Community Paramedic Practice Framework

## Introduction

Paramedicine evolved from the discipline of medicine. As paramedicine emerges out of its pre-hospital silo and integrates more broadly into healthcare systems, paramedicine once again looks to collaborate with medicine and other health professionals. It is for this reason that the Australian Institute of Paramedic Practitioners (AIPP) has established this Community Paramedic Practice Framework where we clearly articulate paramedic integration and articulation into primary healthcare. The Community Paramedic is the initial clinical tier in the evolution for paramedic integration in primary healthcare.

Paramedics are primarily educated to respond to medical emergencies. In that context they assess, diagnose and initiate treatment for patients in a community setting. Community Paramedics build upon this existing knowledge, skill and experience and have completed additional primary healthcare education at Graduate Certificate level (or an AIPP approved equivalent). This additional education creates a clinician who can conduct holistic biopsychosocial assessments, apply clinical reasoning, make evidence-based decisions, provide acute and long-term care, and assist others with treatment planning.

Integral to the Community Paramedic model is a nuanced mix of clinical autonomy and collaboration. Essential to practice is, knowledge of limitations, inclusion in a multidisciplinary team, professional integrity, reflective practice, and continual professional development. These essential professional capabilities result in a clinician that is committed to patient centred, safe and collaborative healthcare.

This Community Paramedic Practice Framework has been developed to describe a range of capabilities that Community Paramedics are capable of and adhere to. The Framework sets standards for the knowledge, skills and professional attributes required to be a Community Paramedic.

## The Framework

The Australian Institute of Paramedic Practitioners has divided the Framework into four elements:

- **Element 1.** Performs accurate clinical assessment and diagnosis
- **Element 2.** Develops care plans within a person-centred approach
- **Element 3.** Prescribes and provides appropriate patient care
- **Element 4.** Evaluates own practice, promotes the profession, and strives to improve patient care

The framework should be reference source for a range of individuals and agencies, including paramedics, health professionals, educators, government, policy makers, employers, regulatory authorities, and the community.

## **Element 1. Performs accurate clinical assessment and diagnosis**

Community Paramedics will:

- Have a comprehensive understanding of established and evolving biological, psychological, sociological, epidemiological, environmental, and behavioural sciences.
- Possess the ability to listen and communicate clearly, effectively and in a cultural appropriate manner with patients, their family/carers, and other health professionals.
- Elicit an accurate and organised patient history, including current and past problems, family, social, occupational, situational and lifestyle features, from the patient, and other sources.
- Identify gaps in health literacy and cultural misinterpretations and adjusts communication methods to promote rapport and to ensure clinician and patient understanding.
- Consider the impact of comorbidities, including the effects of co-existing pathologies and prior treatments.
- Conduct comprehensive and focused clinical examinations to obtain appropriate and accurate objective data to inform clinical reasoning and enable differential diagnosis.
- Conduct focused and relevant assessments that yield appropriate and accurate data that informs differential, and provisional diagnosis.
- Synthesise all aspects of the patient's history, clinical examinations, and assessments to make evidenced based decisions.
- Practice patient centred healthcare when performing clinical examinations, assessments and proposing healthcare plans.
- Within professional practice capabilities, executes, and largely adheres to, existing health care plans.
- Consult with other health professionals when existing care plans no longer meet patient needs.

## **Element 2. Develops care plans within a person-centred approach**

Community Paramedics will:

- Mitigate against bias, heuristics and uses evidence to when reviewing a patient.
- Deliver individualised and culturally appropriate care plans and communicates this effectively to the patient and carers.
- Identifies gaps in health literacy, takes time and adjusts communication methods to clarify patient understanding and incorporate their preferences into care delivery.
- Openly discusses care and responds to patients' and family/carers' questions, concerns, and preferences.
- Involve patients and family/carers in decision making in the delivery of care, including communicating risk and benefits of treatment, enabling the patient to make fully informed choice(s).
- Respect and promote dignity of risk and the right of the patient to make informed decisions about their health/illness.
- Consider legal and bio-ethical principles when discussing treatment.
- Collaborates effectively with other health professionals to review care plans and make referrals as required.
- Advocates for improved access to healthcare, the wider healthcare system and support policy decisions that affect health and quality of life.

### **Element 3. Provides appropriate patient care**

Community Paramedics will:

- Consider the patients' unique biopsychosocial context and their capacity to access and adhere to a care plan and medication regime.
- Continually evaluate the risk and benefits of care plans and medications.
- Evaluate patients' health literacy and capacity to continue, adjust or adhere to, agreed care plans.
- Provide culturally and socially appropriate information to achieve consensus and understanding.
- Apply information gathering, clinical reasoning, and collaboration when considering a continuation, review, or adjustment of a care plan.
- Deliver patient centred health care within professional capabilities.
- Risk assess, prioritise, and if required, refer, care that is outside of professional capabilities.
- Collaborate effectively with the patient and the patients' principal healthcare provider in the delivery, development, or modification of care plans.
- Communicate effectively with other members of the patient's health care team.
- Disclose the details of adverse or near miss events to the person receiving care and other health professionals.
- Mitigate harm and reports adverse or near miss events to appropriate authorities.
- Via continuing professional development, maintains and develops knowledge and skills unique the clinical setting and patient requirements.

## **Element 4. Evaluates own practice, promotes the profession, and strives to improve patient care**

Community Paramedics will:

- Recognise the limits of own professional capabilities and involve other professionals, as required, to contribute to safe and efficient patient care.
- Work with other health providers to review and expand effectiveness of the Community Paramedic role.
- Accept responsibility to promote, protect and advance the health and wellbeing of individuals communities and populations.
- Understand the factors that contribute to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and/or Māori and Pacific peoples, including history, spirituality and relationship to land, diversity of cultures and communities, epidemiology, social and political determinants of health and demonstrate effective and culturally competent communication and care for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and/or Māori and Pacific peoples.
- Advocates for self, Community Paramedics, patients and the vulnerable or disadvantaged members of the community.
- Self-evaluate own professional practice and demonstrate lifelong learning behaviours.
- Actively participate in clinical reflection, case review, and quality systems.
- Keeps up to date with health advancements through ongoing professional development and self-education.

## Glossary:

### Attributes:

Are characteristics that underpin competent performance. Refer to the [PBA](#) Professional Capabilities for registered paramedics

### Competence:

The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective and/or superior performance in a profession/occupational area.

### Person/people:

In these Standards, person/people are used to refer to those individuals who have entered a relationship with a Community Paramedic. Person/people encompass patients, clients, consumers, and families that fall within the Paramedic Practitioner scope and context of practice.

### Professional Practice:

Key generic examples of competent performance. They are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. They assist the assessor when using their professional judgement in assessing paramedic practitioner practice. They further assist curriculum development.

### Scope of practice:

The scope of paramedicine practice is that in which paramedics are educated, competent to perform and permitted by law. The actual scope of practice of individual practitioners is influenced by the settings in which they practise, the health needs of people, the level of competence and confidence of the paramedic and the policy requirements of the service provider.

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## For Further Information:

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