



Certified Practicing Nutritionist Scope of Practice Statement

Scope of Practice is defined as *the full spectrum of roles, functions, responsibilities, activities, and decision-making capacity that individuals within that profession are educated, competent and authorised to perform.*

Scope of Practice for Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN)

A Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN) is a degree-qualified, clinically trained Primary Care health professional trained to provide evidence-informed nutrition care across a wide range of health settings. The scope of practice encompasses the full spectrum of roles, functions, responsibilities, activities, and decision-making capacity for which CPNs are educated, competent and authorised to perform.

Overview

The scope of practice of a Certified Practicing Nutritionist includes the autonomous or team based clinical provision of evidence-informed nutrition care in any area or sector where their Certified Practicing Nutritionist skills capabilities intersect and is not otherwise prohibited. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Primary Care,
- Secondary Care,
- Multi-disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Care,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health,
- Geriatric Care,
- Paediatric Care,
- Diabetes Care and other Metabolic disorders,
- Mental Health Care,
- Disability Care,
- Chronic Disease Care
- Weight Management.

CPNs are equipped to differentially assess, treat and manage clients' nutritional health needs, using a range of clinical tools and interventions, including personalised nutrition based on genetic

insights, while working autonomously or collaboratively within healthcare teams and/or contributing to public health initiatives. CPNs work with a wide range of populations, including but not limited to individuals with chronic conditions, metabolic disorders, and other health challenges where nutrition plays a key role in health management.

Further examples of within scope CPN activities include:

- Planning, implementing and evaluating public health nutrition policies, programs, and initiatives.
- Assessing the nutritional needs of individuals and groups, and developing customised nutrition plans, such as dietary modification and supplementation, to promote health, and prevent, or support the remediation of, illness or disease.
- Explaining the relationship between nutrition and health.
- Conducting research on the relationship between nutrition and health.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of nutrition plans.
- Providing guidance on food selection and preparation to individuals and groups.
- Developing and delivering nutrition education materials and presentations.
- Providing primary and secondary healthcare in settings that include but are not limited to private practice, specialised clinics, and community health centres.

Roles and Responsibilities of a CPN

CPNs assess, manage, and address the nutritional needs of clients and engage scientific evidence-based interventions tailored to optimise health, prevent disease, manage chronic conditions, and improve recovery.

CPNs engage the evidence-informed provision of **Dietary Services** through the use of **Personalised/Precision Nutrition** interventions based on clinical insight, derived from case-history, dietary recalls, functional and pathology testing, genetic testing [such as, single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) tests, whole exome and genome sequencing]), and from this insight, a Certified Practicing Nutritionist may utilise:

- (1) the prescription of orally administered, food-based-dietary-supplements and Therapeutic Goods Authority of Australia (TGA) approved dietary supplements that are administered in an evidence-informed manner, based on the critical evaluation of existing scientific nutrition and/or dietary data, in conjunction with clinical expertise;
- (2) the provision of scientific evidence-informed dietary advice on dietary modification; and
- (3) the provision of scientific evidence-informed advice on levels of physical activity (which support nutritional related outcomes);

all of which are implemented either independently or collectively in a personalised manner, or as a part of a wider public health activity or initiative in partnership with general and allied health practitioners, in the best interest of the client and/or community. The Scope of Practice of a Certified Practicing Nutritionist does not include the use of liquid herbs.

Personalised/Precision Nutrition means the targeted provision of **Dietary Services** through the application of Nutrition Practice by Certified Practising Nutritionists, for the purposes of optimising health including but not limited to supporting disease prevention, disease management, health remediation and recovery, and improving human performance, based on genetic, phenotypic, medical, nutritional, and other relevant information about individuals or groups of individuals, or populations.

Dietary services include scientific evidence-informed dietary advice on intake of food in substances and in liquids, and the scientific evidence-informed prescription of orally administered dietary supplements to the diet of an individual or group of individuals, or population, as well as the provision of scientific evidence-informed advice on levels of physical activity (which support nutritional related outcomes), for the purposes of optimising health including but not limited to supporting disease prevention, supporting disease management, health remediation and recovery, and improving human performance.

Dietary advice is the provision of evidence-informed guidance and recommendations on dietary intake of food in substances and in liquids to an individual or group of individuals, or population, and can include the provision of scientific evidence-informed advice on levels of physical activity (which support nutritional related outcomes) to an individual or group of individuals, or population, for the purposes of optimising health including but not limited to supporting disease prevention, supporting disease management, health remediation and recovery, and improving human performance.

Dietary Advice

It is within the scope of a CPN to provide personalised, individual, group or population based dietary advice including but not limited to personalised meal planning.

Prescription and Compounding of Dietary Supplements

Clinically trained Nutritionists are included under Section 42AA of the Australian Therapeutic Goods Act (https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/tga1989191/s42aa.html) and Schedule 8 Item 4 of the Therapeutic Goods Act Rules and Regulations (https://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/legis/cth/consol_reg/tgr1990300/sch8.html) supported with Schedule 5 Item 6 of the Therapeutic Goods Act Rules and Regulations (https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_reg/tgr1990300/sch5.html). Under Section 42AA clinically trained Nutritionists are recognised as Health Professionals and this legislation underpins their prescribing capacity. It is in scope for a CPN to autonomously prescribe orally administered food-based dietary supplements and Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)-approved dietary/nutritional supplements (including ‘practitioner only’ supplements), and when needed, to extraneously compound nutritional supplements, to address nutrient deficiencies or enhance health outcomes.

Physical Activity Advice

It is within the scope of a CPN to provide guidance on levels of physical activity that support nutrition-related health goals.

Comprehensive Health Assessments and Health Status Monitoring

It is within the scope of a CPN to conduct detailed assessments by gathering and analysing client health information, including but not limited to medical history, dietary habits, and clinical tests. CPNs use their knowledge of anatomy, physiology, biological chemistry, pathophysiology, functional pathology, genetics, pharmacology, counselling and nutritional prescribing, to evaluate health status, identify variations, and formulate and implement customised/personalised nutrition care plans to manage conditions, support recovery, and improve overall health.

Primary Care Independent Clinical Practice

CPNs are prepared for independent primary care clinical practice through intensive supervised clinical practicum training, ensuring they are equipped to provide personalised nutrition care to individuals and groups. They are fully equipped to manage clients independently from graduation, with a strong emphasis on personalised nutrition interventions. It is within the scope of a CPN to operate autonomously, making independent clinical decisions about the differential assessment, treatment, and management of clients' nutritional needs.

Client-Centred Care

It is within the scope of a CPN to use motivational interviewing techniques, counselling and collaborative decision-making, to engage clients in their health journey and empower them to take active roles in their own care.

Collaboration and Team-Based Care

It is within the scope of a CPN to work collaboratively within multidisciplinary healthcare teams, interacting with other health professionals to provide comprehensive care. CPNs contribute valuable nutritional expertise in team settings, enhancing patient outcomes.

As primary care providers, CPNs can work both independently and as part of multidisciplinary teams, collaborating with medical doctors, allied health professionals, and other healthcare practitioners when necessary to provide comprehensive, patient-centred care.

Decision-Making and Autonomy

It is within the scope of a CPN to make independent clinical decisions related to nutrition care, including the diagnosis and treatment of clients' nutritional issues, the prescription of supplements, and the planning of personalised care strategies/plans.

It is within the scope of a CPN to practice autonomously, managing all aspects of client care, including clinical examination, differential assessment, nutritional treatment planning, and follow-up, without needing to refer clients to other practitioners unless the assessed needs of the client are beyond the CPN scope of practice.

Client Management:

It is within the scope of a CPN to be responsible for monitoring client progress, adjusting treatment strategies as necessary, and maintaining comprehensive documentation of care.

Public Health and Community Engagement

It is within the scope of a CPN to develop, implement, and evaluate community nutrition programs. It is within the scope of a CPN to engage with public health initiatives and contribute to population-level health strategies aimed at addressing global, national, and local health challenges. It is within the scope of a CPN to design and manage public health nutrition programs that address key health issues, using behaviour change strategies and scientific evidence to improve outcomes for individuals, communities and populations.

Boundaries of Practice

CPNs work within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession and recognise when to refer clients to other healthcare professionals.

Settings of Practice

A Certified Practicing Nutritionist primarily operates in private practice or government and business sector settings but is not precluded from engagement in other sectors and settings where their skills capabilities intersect such as but not limited to Primary Care, Multi-disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Aged Care, Diabetes, Mental Health, Disability, Chronic Disease, etc.

Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

A CPN must adhere to the Code of Conduct and professional requirements set forth by AARPN, and additionally ensure they are compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations in all aspects of their practice.

CPNs are expected to maintain professional integrity and deliver services in an ethical, patient-centred manner.

CPNs must protect client confidentiality and adhere to privacy legislation and regulations. CPNs must ensure that informed consent is integral to their practice.

Tools, Interventions, and Techniques

CPNs are skilled in using a wide range of clinical tools and techniques to support their practice, including but not limited to:

- Clinical Assessments: Gathering detailed health and dietary information through interviews, laboratory testing, and genetic testing where applicable.
- Nutritional Interventions: Recommending and prescribing dietary modifications, therapeutic supplements and physical activity-based lifestyle changes to improve client health outcomes.
- Supplement Prescription: Prescribing evidence-based dietary supplements and therapeutic products to address specific health needs.

Education and Continuing Professional Development

CPNs must engage in ongoing professional development to maintain and expand their clinical knowledge and competencies. CPNs are required to meet the professional development standards

set by the AARPN Certification Committee, ensuring their skills and knowledge are up to date and they remain current with emerging trends and scientific advancements in nutrition science.

Supervision and Mentoring

While CPNs are fully qualified to practice independently upon graduation, they may seek mentorship or supervision in specialised areas of practice as part of their ongoing professional development. More experienced practitioners may serve as mentors to new practitioners, guiding them in their professional growth.

Emergency and First Aid Responsibilities

CPNs are trained to recognise and respond to emergency situations within their practice settings. They follow established safety protocols and are equipped to provide first aid in clinical situations when necessary.

Cultural Competence

CPNs provide culturally sensitive care, recognising and respecting the diverse backgrounds of the clients they serve. They ensure that their nutrition assessments and interventions are inclusive, respectful, and adapted to the individual needs of clients from various cultural and social contexts.

Cultural Safety

CPNs are equipped to work with diverse populations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, ensuring that their care is respectful of and aligned with cultural values.

Advanced Scope of Practice is the demonstrated evidence of increased skills, reasoning, knowledge, and experience leading to expert status in one or more areas of practice within the current scope of practice of a profession. For a Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN) advanced scope of practice signifies a highly specialized level of practice that involves clinical leadership, research, and contributions to the advancement of the Certified Practicing Nutritionist profession. Practitioners operating within an advanced scope have demonstrated exceptional expertise through but limited to extensive clinical experience, and/or post-graduate qualifications or advanced certifications approved by the AARPN Certification Committee.

An advanced scope of practice may include, but is not limited to:

- **Clinical Leadership:** Acting as a lead clinician in multidisciplinary teams, guiding nutritional care plans for metabolic disorders, food allergies, chronic disease, aged care, disability or mental health.
- **Specialist Nutrition Services:** Delivering specialized nutrition services in niche areas, such as but not limited to oncology nutrition, paediatric nutrition, or nutritional support for autoimmune diseases, with the required specialist certifications and training.
- **Research and Evidence Synthesis:** Conducting and applying research in nutritional science, critically evaluating emerging evidence, and contributing to clinical guidelines and policy development within the nutrition field.

- **Education and Mentorship:** Leading educational programs for other health professionals, mentoring emerging practitioners, and contributing to the credentialing and standard-setting processes for the CPN profession.
- **Advanced Clinical Governance:** Designing, implementing, and overseeing clinical protocols, quality assurance processes, and best practice guidelines within a nutrition practice setting.

Extended Scope of Practice is a discrete knowledge and skill base additional to the recognised scope of practice of a profession and regulatory context of a particular jurisdiction. For a *Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN)* extended scope of practice refers to the practice activities that go beyond the standard scope defined in the Certified Practicing Nutritionist Scope of Practice Statement. It encompasses additional responsibilities and functions acquired through further education, specialized training, or professional experience. These activities must be evidence-based, align with recognized standards in the allied health sector, and be approved by the *AARPN Certification Committee* in consultation with relevant industry partner(s) and the *AARPN Board*.

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