



Certified Practicing Nutritionist Fitness-to-Practice Policy

Fitness to Practice refers to whether a practitioner has the appropriate skills, knowledge, character, and health to practice their profession safely and effectively. For a Certified Practicing Nutritionist (CPN), Fitness to Practice encompasses maintaining the professional standards, competencies, and ethical responsibilities required to deliver safe, effective, and high-quality nutrition care. A CPN must continuously demonstrate their ability to perform their professional duties to the highest standards of clinical practice while adhering to the legal and ethical frameworks of their profession. For a CPN, Fitness-to-Practice also includes the holding of current and fit-for-purpose Professional Indemnity and Public and Products Liability insurance, current First Aid certification, a minimum of a current Police Clearance for working with vulnerable populations (with preference for Working With Children Checks), and compliance with annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

Competency and Knowledge

A CPN must possess and maintain the skills and knowledge required to assess, diagnose, and manage clients' nutritional health needs effectively. This includes staying current with the latest scientific advancements in nutrition, personalised nutrition, and functional and genetic testing, and applying evidence-based practices to optimise health, manage disease, and support recovery.

- **Ongoing Professional Development:**
CPNs must engage in regular continuing professional development (CPD) to ensure their skills and knowledge are current and aligned with emerging trends in Clinical Nutrition and dietary science.
- **Application of Expertise:**
CPNs must demonstrate their ability to apply their expertise in clinical settings, including personalised nutrition assessments and interventions to develop effective care plans for individuals and populations.

Professional Integrity and Ethical Conduct

CPNs are expected to practice with integrity, ensuring their conduct aligns with the ethical guidelines set forth by the AARP Board. They must prioritise patient safety and confidentiality, uphold informed consent, and act in the best interest of their clients at all times.

- **Ethical Practice:**
CPNs must adhere to a high standard of professional ethics as per their Code of Conduct Part 1 – Practice Guidelines and Code of Conduct Part 2 - Ethics and additionally ensuring that their practice

is client-centred, respectful, and inclusive. They must recognise and address conflicts of interest and work within their scope of practice and within legal and ethical boundaries of their profession.

- **Confidentiality and Consent:**

Protecting client confidentiality and ensuring informed consent is integral to Fitness-to-Practice. CPNs must be vigilant in maintaining the privacy of client information in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Health and Wellbeing

To ensure Fitness to Practice, CPNs must maintain their own physical and mental health to practice safely and effectively. This includes recognising when personal health issues may impact their ability to deliver care and taking appropriate measures to address them.

- **Self-Care and Health Management:**

CPNs must manage their health proactively, recognising when they are not fit to practice and seeking appropriate medical or professional support to ensure they can continue to provide safe and effective care.

- **Monitoring and Reporting:**

CPNs must assess their fitness to practice regularly and report any conditions or circumstances that may impair their ability to practice safely to the AARPN Certification Committee and their professional association (if not a an association member of AARPN), ensuring that client care is not compromised, and that the practitioner receives the professional support necessary.

Professional Character

A CPN must demonstrate strong character and professionalism in all aspects of their practice, ensuring they uphold the trust placed in them by clients, colleagues, and the public.

- **Integrity and Accountability:**

CPNs must practice with honesty, accountability, and transparency. They are responsible for delivering care that meets the professional standards and legal requirements of their profession.

- **Cultural Competence:**

CPNs must provide culturally sensitive care that respects the diverse backgrounds of the clients they serve. They must ensure their practice is inclusive and tailored to the individual needs of clients from various cultural and social contexts.

Safety and Risk Management

Fitness to Practice also requires CPNs to adhere to safety protocols and risk management practices that safeguard both clients and practitioners.

- **Client Safety:**

CPNs must demonstrate the ability to assess risks accurately and manage client care in a way that minimises the risk of harm. This includes recognising when a client's needs are beyond their scope of practice and making appropriate referrals to other healthcare professionals.

- **Emergency Preparedness:**

CPNs must be trained in first aid and emergency response protocols, ensuring they can respond effectively to urgent situations within their clinical settings.

Fitness-to-Practice for Certified Practicing Nutritionists is a commitment to maintaining the highest standards of clinical competency, ethical conduct, personal health, and professional character. CPNs must continuously demonstrate their ability to deliver safe, effective, and client-centred care, ensuring the trust placed in them by their clients and the public is upheld at all times.

Review date: 10 October 2027.