

IPPP Guidebook to Competencies

Institute of Private Practising Psychologists



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Introduction to IPPP Competencies Training and Evaluation Package

This Training and Evaluation Package has been developed to address the post graduate performance competencies required by registered psychologists in private practice in Australia. It is intended to become a part of the National Training Framework (ANTA 2001) which aims to make training and regulatory arrangements simple, flexible and relevant to the needs of industry. Extensive consultation with members and other organizations has occurred during the development to ensure that the Training Package is relevant and applicable to the widest range of practice.

This Competency Evaluation Package has been developed by the Institute of Private Practising Psychologists to cover work in all modalities of the clinical practice of psychology within private practice. Members wishing to attain the Membership Category of “Fellow” will need to successfully complete this package and demonstrate ongoing adherence to these requirements.

What are competency standards?

The philosophy behind the development of competency standards in Australia is that the professionals and industry develop and own these standards. The competency standards are an explicit public statement of what the profession does, something that has not been generally available publicly. It represents a clear statement of what is considered to be important in competent performance in private clinical practice of psychology. The professional competency standards must allow for the diversity that is proper to the practice of the profession.

Why have competency standards and evaluation?

Government authorities and Insurers (third party payers) increasingly expect practitioners to demonstrate appropriate competencies in their area of practice. (eg: SA Health Complainants Bill, SA Workcover Act, Federal Privacy Legislation, Supreme Court Rules). The number of complaints about professional practice is rising sharply and third party payers expect “best practice” standards in the delivery of professional services. Training and clinical skills while important are only a part of what constitutes the “business” of psychologists in private practice. The IPPP believes that the adoption of these competencies will set appropriate standards within the private practice profession that protect the public and comply with relevant legislative requirements, while maintaining the flexibility and diversity of practice.

Private Practice Competencies:

In 1999 the IPPP undertook to develop competency standards on behalf of the National Private Practising Organizations (Psychology Private). The development of Draft Competencies involved wide consultation with private practitioners and relevant organizations. The Draft Competencies were adopted by the IPPP as a part of constitutional amendments in August 2001. The IPPP agreed to create a new membership grade of “Fellow”. A Fellow of the IPPP must successfully complete the Competencies Evaluation Process. (IPPP GM August 2001)

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The IPPP General Meeting in August 2001 authorised the **IPPP Competency Assessment Committee** to prepare a final **Competency Evaluation Document** and recommend an appropriate **Competency Evaluation Process**.

(1) IPPP Competency Assessment Committee

Current Members: Radek Stratil (Coordinator), Garry Childs (Academic Liaison), Joseph Hinora, Lena Lebedev, Narelle McKenzie, Paul Cummins

Past members, External reviewers advisors: John Said, Kym Harris, Nicola Kaesler, Janet Stephenson, Donna Riseley, Robert Tomlian, Ed Zahra, Deb Lawton, Ross Colquhoun (NSW-ACPC)

(2) Competency Evaluation Document:

Twelve core competency areas with key assessment indicators have been recommended.

Core competencies are as follows:

- 1. Establishment and Maintenance of Professional and Business Networks***
- 2. Managing Delivery of Quality Professional Service***
- 3. Management of Financial Resources and Obligations***
- 4. Client Assessment***
- 5. Treatment & intervention***
- 6. Reporting***
- 7. Record Keeping***
- 8. Legal requirements and Ethical Considerations***
- 9. Psychologist's Personal Functioning***
- 10. Professional Performance, Continuing Education***
- 11. Supervision and Mentoring***
- 12. Training***

For details see IPPP Competencies Document (see IPPP Core Competencies: Assessment Indicators)

(3) Competency Evaluation Process.

This will involve (a) Initial Assessment Process and (b) Ongoing and periodic evaluation Process

(a) Initial Assessment Process This will involve three steps, Attendance at training workshop, self evaluation and evaluation by two peers.

Training:

(i) Workshop: The workshop will clarify the assessment process and provide training to assist practitioners to review and prepare their practice for full assessment and to Self-assess their practice and performance.

Practice assessment :

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ii) Self assessment of Private practice. Practitioners will complete and document self assessment of their practice against specified criteria in the 12 core competencies.

Evaluation by peers:

iii) “On site” assessment by a peer (member of the IPPP Competencies assessment Committee). This will involve review of the practitioner’s self assessment documents and confirmation of completion of the specified criteria by a means of an “on site visit”.

iv) ‘Off site” review by a second peer. (member of the IPPP Competencies assessment Committee) . This will typically involve review of documented evidence and obtaining additional information as required. An “on site” visit may not be required.

v) Review by Full IPPP Competencies Committee. Committee will consider self-assessment report and reports by two IPPP Competencies Evaluators members and make recommendations to the IPPP Executive based on these reports.

Recommendations: The IPPP Competencies Assessment Committee will recommend to the IPPP Executive that application for Initial Competency Endorsement by a practitioner be either:

- **Accepted**
- **Accepted subject to specified conditions** and/ or review
- **Not accepted** (reasons for non-acceptance specified)

(b) Ongoing and periodic evaluation Process

This will involve two stages: Self assessment and a review by two peers.

i) Ongoing and periodic Self assessment of Private Practice. Practitioners will self assess their practice against specified criteria in the 12 core competencies.

ii) Peer review of self assessment and optional “on site” assessment.

This will involve peer review process as described in (iii,iv,v) above. Assessment must be within two calendar years of previous assessment. This will involve review of self-assessment by both peers and may also involve an “on site” visit and practitioner interview by one or both peers.

iii) Review by Full IPPP Competencies Committee. Committee will consider self-assessment report and reports by two peers and make recommendations to the IPPP Executive based on these reports.

Recommendations: The IPPP Competencies Assessment Committee will to recommend to the IPPP Executive that an application for IPPP Competency Endorsement by the practitioner be either:

- **Accepted**
- **Accepted subject to specified conditions** and/ or review
- **Not accepted** (reasons for non-acceptance specified)

Special review: This will only occur in response to exceptional circumstances such as a serious complaint relevant to Competency Endorsement of a practitioner by a relevant Authority or a party (eg: Health Fund, Health Ombudsman , Workcover, DVA other relevant parties).

Special Review by Full IPPP Competencies Committee. Committee will conduct special review and make recommendations to the IPPP Executive based on the outcome.

Recommendations: The IPPP Competencies Assessment Committee will recommend to the IPPP Executive that an existing IPPP Competency Endorsement of a practitioner be either:

- **Continued**
- **Continued subject to specified conditions** and/ or review
- **Suspended subject to specified conditions** and/ or review
- **Withdrawn** (reasons specified)

4. Applicants for Competency Evaluation

Members of the IPPP and non-members may apply.

IPPP Members: Competency assessment is open to all ordinary members of the IPPP. The IPPP will be approaching relevant private practice organizations on a national basis in the near future to participate in this Training and Evaluation Package.

Affiliates: Members of affiliated private practice organizations are eligible to apply under existing reciprocal agreements within Psychology Private (ie: the former 'Federation of Organisations of Privately Practising Psychologists' Associations').

Non members may undergo evaluation subject to an additional processing fee (as the process is partially subsidised by membership fees) provided they satisfy criteria for the relevant IPPP membership grade and statutory requirements.

5. Fees and charges

These will be based on costs of administration and professional time.

Core Competencies - Explanatory notes:

Please read the following explanatory notes in conjunction with the Competencies document (see attachment)

Documentation:

The IPPP recommends that Members keep a folder(s) containing relevant documentation, information or resources (eg IPPP Member Resource Kit) . Information may be in an electronic form where appropriate. Please keep relevant documents and receipts (attendance at professional development courses, symposia, meetings, etc) in one folder to assist during the evaluation.

1. Establishment and Maintenance of Professional and Business Networks

Section A, B & D require documented evidence of attendance. Where applicable, certificates of attendance should be stored in one folder.

Section E requires documents such as practice publicity material, advertising, PR and other professional and promotional material” . This should include the IPPP Information pamphlet for clients.” It may also include evidence of other therapeutic materials, loan books, or self-help exercises used by the practitioner. Interview with the practitioners should confirm and clarify this information.

2. Managing Delivery of Quality Professional Service

Documentary evidence may include feedback or advisory letters to GPs, practice pamphlets and flyers. These should be kept in a specially allocated folder, or the Member’s Guidelines Folder to assist in the assessment process.

Section D requires documents relevant to the Complaints Review process and legislative documents. Interview with the practitioners will demonstrate understanding of the process and the requirements relevant to appropriate legislation (ie: SA Psychological Board, and the Health Ombudsman)

Section E this may involve physical inspection of the main practice location. IPPP Constitution and Code of Ethics specify requirements for the conduct of private practice. At best, professional rooms and amenities should be separated from practitioner’s domicile. Where this is not so, the practitioner must ensure that consulting area and client amenities are appropriately separated from private living quarters and confirm to the appropriate local council regulations.

3. Management of Financial Resources and Obligations

This will not be intrusive or reveal confidential financial information. The main purpose is to establish that sound financial management is in place, which ensures continuation of practice and protection of the public; (ie evidence of relevant insurance). Practitioners should be familiar with the IPPP Services and Fees Guidelines, Psychology Board Account Guidelines and Workcover Gazetted Item Numbers and Account Preparation Guidelines.

4. Client Assessment

5. Treatment, intervention

6. Reporting

The evaluation of these units will acknowledge the diversity of individual clients and relevant intervention approaches used by psychologists in private practice. Documented evidence may include viewing of relevant handbooks, articles, guidelines (eg: IPPP “Treatment and best practice guidelines, IPPP- Law Society Psycho-legal Agreement, Workcover Guidelines for Psychologists”) and or discussion with the practitioner.

Please note the proposed format for establishing this competency - the psychologist will be asked to prepare three case histories that reflect aspects of his/her practice. One of these will be used during this process.

7. Record Keeping

Documentary evidence (eg IPPP Record keeping guidelines) supplemented with verbal information regarding the legal obligations imposed by the relevant State and Federal Acts. Additional practice locations: Where there are a number of consulting locations or where practitioner works “off site” (home visit, hospital visit, worksite visit) there needs to be a system and a process for appropriate storage, transit and security of client information. Client information may be held at one location or at each location. If client files are in transit they need to be protected for confidentiality. Access to files by other persons (administrative staff) must conform to legislative requirements.

8. Legal requirements , Ethical Considerations

A: i) Documentary evidence of SA Psychological Practices Act, Regulations under the Act
ii) Documentary evidence of other relevant Acts relating to private professional practice such as reporting requirements. Privacy Act, Nursing Act, Mandatory reporting Act, Firearms Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Workcover Act
iii) Knowledge of SA Psychological Act, Regulations and other requirements and relevant requirements under other Acts (practitioner interview)

B: Documentary evidence (ie IPPP ethical guidelines, and other such documents as may be published by SA Psychology Board, Workcover SA and bodies such as APS, ASH, SAAH, etc) and Practitioner interview.

9. Psychologist’s Personal Functioning

10. Professional Performance, Continuing Education

11. Supervision mentoring

12. Training

The IPPP Competencies Committee hopes that these sections are sufficiently self-explanatory.

Comments, feedback;

Member feedback is requested to assist us in the improvement of the Competencies format. The final document will be presented to the General Meeting of Members in late 2002 for adoption. The Competency Evaluation Process will commence in 2003.