

# Fact sheet for clinical supervisors

## Professional capabilities for medical radiation practice

8 November 2019



## Introduction

The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia (the Board) has published this fact sheet for clinical supervisors who supervise medical radiation practice students studying a Board-approved medical radiation practice program of study, or who supervise practitioners with provisional registration (supervised practitioners) during a period of compulsory supervised practice.

It aims to provide guidance and clarification on the purpose and use of the [Professional capabilities for medical radiation practice](#) (the professional capabilities) in the context of clinical supervision.

## Purpose of the professional capabilities

The professional capabilities describe the minimum threshold level of professional capability required for initial and continuing registration as a diagnostic radiographer, a nuclear medicine technologist, or a radiation therapist in Australia. They provide the framework for assessing student and practitioner competence. Applicants for general registration must demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the professional capabilities to be suitably qualified for registration.

## Requirements of an approved medical radiation practice program

For a medical radiation practice program to be accredited and approved, the [Medical radiation practice accreditation standards](#) (the accreditation standards) require the design and implementation of a program where the learning outcomes and assessment tasks map to all the professional capabilities. Many of the professional capabilities will be taught and assessed during periods of clinical training/work integrated learning, under the supervision of a clinical supervisor.

Students must demonstrate all enabling components for all key capabilities (in the relevant division of registration) in the clinical setting, before they complete the program. This is to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and professional attributes necessary for safe and competent practice in Australia.

## The role of clinical supervisors in supervising students

Clinical supervisors who teach and assess students from approved programs play an important role in ensuring students become work-ready practitioners, and in doing so, assure Australia's health workforce of a continuing supply of qualified and capable medical radiation practitioners.

The overall aim of approved programs is to produce graduates who are suitably qualified for general registration. It is important to acknowledge that to deliver innovation to professional practice, education providers must be free to structure their program in different ways. It is possible that education providers will structure their curricula differently in terms of when subjects/units are taught.

The periods of clinical training/work integrated learning can be scheduled at different times within the calendar year. The accreditation standards require students to cover relevant theory before undertaking clinical training/work integrated learning, but a student's level of knowledge gained before the clinical training/work integrated learning can vary depending on when it is scheduled.

There is also no requirement for students to demonstrate the key capabilities by a specific time in the program. Therefore, clinical supervisors should not expect students from different approved programs to be able to demonstrate the same key capabilities at the same point in time.

The link between education providers and clinical supervisors is critical for ensuring safe and competent practitioners. For students to succeed in the clinical training/work integrated learning environment, the expectations of both the education provider and the clinical supervisors must be aligned. Therefore, it is important that both education providers and clinical supervisors have a clear and shared understanding about the goals for any period of clinical training/work integrated learning.

Registered practitioners, employers and the public are entitled to expect that by the end of their final year, a graduating student has demonstrated all enabling components for all key capabilities, regardless of the length of the program.

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### **The role of clinical supervisors in supervising registered practitioners**

In some cases, a registered practitioner will be required to complete supervised practice as part of the requirements for registration. The reasons for supervised practice may vary, but the purpose is the same.

Supervised practice provides a structured framework in which a registered practitioner can show they demonstrate all enabling components for all key capabilities and are therefore capable of safe and independent practice.

There are clear parallels between students in clinical training and supervised practitioners; that is, at completion, other registered practitioners, employers and the public are entitled to expect they have demonstrated all enabling components for all key capabilities.