

Standards of Practice for Chiropractors and Podiatrists

Profile of Competencies



College of Chiropractors of Ontario

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Background Information

Introduction

The College of Chiropractors of Ontario is one of 21 health regulatory bodies regulating health professionals in Ontario. The role of the College is to:

Ensure that our registrants meet training and educational standards before they can practice and/or use the professional titles of Chiropractor or Podiatrist

Set the standards and guidelines for conduct and practice.

Develop programs to ensure that our registrants keep improving their skills and knowledge.

Address concerns about the conduct or practice of our registrants.

In January 2001, the College of Chiropractors of Ontario initiated a project to define and describe the competencies required of the registrants of the College. Assessment Strategies Inc. was commissioned by the College to provide consultation and facilitation services for the development of the competencies. The document was updated in 2010.

The Mission of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario is to “serve and protect the public interest... to ensure that the public receives competent care from chiropractors and podiatrists. The role of the members is not only to provide safe, quality care but also to accept accountability for doing so”.

This 3rd generation competency profile is a foundational document that describes the essential competencies required of a chiropractor/podiatrist in Ontario specific to entry into the profession.

Uses of the Profile of Competencies

A competency is a cluster of related knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and / or judgment expected of a practitioner in order to practice competently in a particular activity or aspect of the profession. Competencies do not actually describe the specific knowledge required to perform competently nor do they describe the exact manner in which a procedure or activities should be performed. Rather, they focus on the desired outcomes and on the types of behaviours in which the professional should engage. Nevertheless, it is understood that the prerequisite knowledge to achieve these competencies is a vital component and is present in the entry-level practitioner.

The Profile will have several important uses. Among those uses it will:

- Serve as a guide for the development of an entry level examination;
- Serve as an instrument for the evaluation of training and education of applicants from outside Ontario;
- Provide a starting point for the development of new standards of practice;
- Serve as a resource to educators who are planning curricula for the profession;
- Serve as a resource for the review of complaints and disciplinary cases;
- Be used in the development of Quality Assurance Programs and practice assessment;
- Assist in conducting an occupational analysis.

Focus of the Profile

The focus of the Profile is on the competencies that are required for safe and effective practice by all College registrants when they are at the entry-level in the practice of the profession.

This competency document is based on the legislation, regulations and by-laws which govern the profession of Chiropractic/Podiatry within Ontario.

The College of Chiropractors of Ontario regulates both Chiropractors and Podiatrists. The Chiropractic Act (1991) defines the scope of practice of Chiropractic as: “the assessment of the foot and the treatment and prevention of diseases, disorders or dysfunctions of the foot by therapeutic, orthotic or palliative means”.

According to the Chiropractic Act, all registrants are authorized to perform the following acts:

- Cutting into the subcutaneous tissues of the foot;
- Administering by injection into feet, a substance designated in the regulations;
- Prescribing drugs designated in the regulations.

Podiatrists are also authorized to perform the following acts:

- Communicating a diagnosis identifying a disease or disorder of the foot as the cause of a person's symptoms;
- Cutting into the subcutaneous tissues of the foot and bony tissues of the forefoot.

The Profile of Competencies reflects the scope of practice of the profession while taking into account the specific restrictions defined in the Chiropody Act. In addition, the competencies are consistent with the Regulated Health Professions Act 1991, other applicable legislation and College requirements including Regulations, By-laws, Standards of Practice, College Policies, Guidelines and Position Statements. (Appendix A includes a list of some relevant documents).

The main focus of the Profile is on the competencies that should be seen in all members, irrespective of training and education. While it is understood that there are differences in the training and education of chiropodists and podiatrists, the Profile is not intended to reflect the actual level of performance or expertise with which a member will carry out the activities and demonstrate the competencies.

In summary, the Profile describes the competencies required to practice the profession in a safe and effective manner in order to ensure the protection of the public. The Profile does not, however, necessarily describe the full extent of competencies that members may possess due to their training, education or experience; nor is it the intention of the Profile to prevent members from developing their competencies beyond what is being described in this document.

Framework of the Profile

The Competencies

The Profile is based on a framework that consists of three levels of description: Categories, Elements and Performance Criteria.

Categories define the various types of broad generic functions to be carried out by practitioners.

Six broad categories of competencies were identified.



The Elements and Performance Criteria serve to break down the broad categories into smaller tasks and activities.

Competencies that are specific to podiatrists are indicated by '(podiatrists only)'.

Category 1 - Professional Expertise

Chiropractors and Podiatrists use clinical reasoning that integrates unique knowledge, skills and attitudes to provide quality care and enhance the health and wellbeing of their patients.

1.1 Employ a patient-centered approach.

- 1.1.1 Act in a manner that is in accordance with the College Code of Ethics. (1.9.2)
- 1.1.2 Act in a manner that respects patient uniqueness, diversity and autonomy, and is in the patient's best interest. (1.1, 1.2, 1.4)
- 1.1.3 Provide the patient with relevant information throughout care. (1.6)
- 1.1.4 Empower patient to engage in their own care, and actively involve the patient in decision-making.
- 1.1.5 Build and maintain rapport and trust with the patient.
- 1.1.6 Obtain and document informed patient consent. (1.7)

1.2 Sexual abuse and mandatory reporting of sexual abuse.

- 1.2.1 Avoid behaviour that may be considered harassment or sexually inappropriate as set out within the "Sexual abuse and mandatory reporting of sexual abuse" policy. (1.10.3, 1.14)
- 1.2.2 Report any abuse of an adult and of a child. (1.10.5)
- 1.2.3 Monitor and respond to patient's physical and emotional state throughout care.

1.3 Conduct patient assessment. (2.1)

- 1.3.1 Interview patient to obtain relevant information about health conditions, and personal and environmental factors. (2.1.1)
- 1.3.2 Perform relevant assessments of lower extremity. (2.2)
- 1.3.3 Order, perform and/or interpret relevant diagnostic testing according to scope. (2.3, 2.5)
- 1.3.4 Obtain specimen for analysis according to scope. (3.8.11)
- 1.3.5 Identify comorbidities that impact approach to assessment.
- 1.3.6 Identify urgent health conditions that require immediate attention and take appropriate action.
- 1.3.7 Identify non-urgent health-related conditions that may benefit from referral to other services and advise patient accordingly.

1.4 Establish a diagnosis and prognosis.

- 1.4.1 Interpret assessment findings and other relevant information.
- 1.4.2 Formulate a diagnosis of a patient's condition based on information gathered in general assessment, diagnostic testing and physical examination. (2.6)
- 1.4.3 Formulate relevant differential diagnosis/diagnoses for podiatric conditions. (2.7)
- 1.4.4 Develop a working prognosis.

1.5 Develop, implement, and evaluate a treatment plan.

- 1.5.1 Engage in consultation with the patient, discussing treatment options. (1.3)
- 1.5.2 Develop appropriate treatment plan according to best standards and evidence-based practices.
- 1.5.3 Recognize other possible conditions that may require referral.
- 1.5.4 Follow the protocols set out in "Infection Prevention and Control" under the Standards of Practice for Chiropractors and Podiatrists. (3.5, 3.6)
- 1.5.5 Manage, treat and perform surgical and nonsurgical procedures for conditions according to best standards and evidence-based practices within scope and regulatory guidelines and standards. (3.7, 3.8, 3.9)
- 1.5.6 Prescribe, modify and dispense foot orthoses, custom fitted shoes and custom-made shoes according to the standard, "Prescription Custom Foot Orthoses".
- 1.5.7 Evaluate and modify treatment plan as indicated. (3.10- 3.13)
- 1.5.8 Ensure appropriate follow-up and continuity of care for patient. (3.14)
- 1.5.9 Develop a discharge or transition of care plan when indicated.
- 1.5.10 Manage complications arising from treatment. (3.16)
- 1.5.11 Disclose fees prior to undertaking treatment. (1.13)

Category 2 - Communication

As communicators, chiropractors/podiatrists use effective communication strategies with patients, caregivers and other health care professionals.

2.1 Use oral and non-verbal communication effectively. (4.1) (omit 4.2)

- 2.1.1 Speak clearly and concisely.

- 2.1.2 Listen actively, to build trust and foster exchange of information.
- 2.1.3 Use and respond to body language appropriately.

- 2.2 Use written communication effectively. (4.7)**
 - 2.2.1 Write in a clear, concise and organized fashion.
 - 2.2.2 Ensure written communication is legible.
 - 2.2.3 Prepare comprehensive and accurate health records and other documents, appropriate to purpose.
 - 2.2.4 Keep and maintain records according to best practices and standards. (4.7)

- 2.3 Provide patient with relevant information about their condition to allow the individual to make an informed decision in accordance with the “Health Care Consent Act for Chiropractors and Podiatrists”.**
 - 2.3.1 Adjust communication strategy consistent with purpose and setting.
 - 2.3.2 Use appropriate terminology.
 - 2.3.3 Adjust communication based on level of understanding of recipient.
 - 2.3.4 Ensure communication is timely.
 - 2.3.5 Share information empathetically and respectfully.

- 2.4 Effectively Communicate information (diagnosis (podiatrists only)) identifying a disease or disorder of the foot as the cause of a person’s symptoms to the patient or their personal representative, or other health care providers. (4.4, 4.5, 4.6)**

- 2.5 Maintain confidentiality of patient information in accordance with College requirements. (4.8, 1.5)**

Category 3 - Management of Practice

- 3.1 Demonstrate practice management skills using best practices. (5.1)**
 - 3.1.1 Keep patient information in a secure, confidential and easily accessible manner, within one’s control or under a suitable arrangement (e.g., hospital record department).
 - 3.1.2 Ensure the maintenance of accurate, complete and up to date financial records consistent with College requirements.

- 3.1.3 Maintain comprehensive, accurate and timely records of patient and practice management.
- 3.1.4 Manage health records and other information in paper and electronic format.
- 3.1.5 Ensure secure retention, storage, transfer and destruction of documents.
- 3.1.6 Maintain confidentiality of records and data, with appropriate access.

- 3.2 Ensure the maintenance of a clinical environment that complies with COCOO, municipal, provincial and / or federal requirements. Cue: Biohazardous material, pharmaceuticals, sharps, equipment, building/facility. (5.2, 3.4)**
 - 3.2.1 Ensure safe and appropriate utilization of equipment and instruments.
 - 3.2.2 Ensure that an antiseptic environment is maintained in accordance with the Standards of Infection Control of the College and other municipal, provincial and/or federal regulatory bodies.

- 3.3 Ensure safety in the clinical environment.**
 - 3.3.1 Identify risks and mitigate hazards in the workplace.
 - 3.3.2 Maintain a clean, organized and accessible work environment.
 - 3.3.3 Adapt work environment to enhance emotional safety.
 - 3.3.4 Ensure regular equipment cleaning and maintenance.

- 3.4 Utilize effective management practices as appropriate to the health care delivery setting. Cue: appointments, records, follow-up or monitoring systems, information systems, insurance, etc. (5.6)**

Category 4 - Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (6.1-6.6)

- 4.1 Educate patient on preventative strategies and positive health choices.**

- 4.2 Educate patient regarding expectations of treatment plan with regard to the resolution of his/her condition.**

- 4.3 Advise patient on limitations associated with his/her condition. Cue: activity level, change in shoe-gear, etc.
- 4.4 Encourage and facilitate patient compliance.
- 4.5 Discuss the communicable factors associated with the patient's foot condition.
- 4.6 Participate in the provision and/or preparation of educational activities to the public for health promotion.
- 4.7 Maintain awareness of emerging technologies, and advocate for their application to enhance chiropody/podiatry services. (1.16)
- 4.8 Advocate for new approaches to improve patient care.
- 4.9 Promote solutions to challenges encountered in the practice of chiropody and podiatry.

Category 5 - Pharmacotherapy

- 5.1 Understand the principles of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics and apply their relevance to clinical situations. (7.1)
- 5.2 Understanding the indications, dosage, drug allergies, drug interactions, and contraindications of the drugs prescribed or administered within the classes as designated by the Chiropody Act. (7.5)
- 5.3 Explain the principles of drug delivery and the clinical impact of available pharmaceutical dosage forms. (7.2)
- 5.4 Select and /or prescribe appropriate medications, dosages, and dosage forms and effectively communicate to patients the appropriate use of medications. (7, 6)

- 5.5 **Understand the importance of laboratory tests to direct medication selection and to monitor the effectiveness of pharmacotherapy. (7.8)**
- 5.6 **Understanding the administration of inhaled substances and the use of sedation in a members practice.**
- 5.7 **Identify urgent health conditions that may arise from the use of prescribed or administered drugs which may require immediate attention and take the appropriate action.**

Category 6 - Professionalism

As autonomous, self-regulated professionals, chiropodists and podiatrists are committed to working in the best interest of patients and the public, and to maintaining high standards of behaviour.

6.1 Comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

- 6.1.1 Comply with applicable federal and provincial / territorial legislation. (1.10, 1.10.1, 1.10.2)
- 6.1.2 Comply with regulatory requirements.
- 6.1.3 Maintain confidentiality and privacy as appropriate.
- 6.1.4 Delegate controlled acts in accordance with Assignment, Orders and Delegation Policy.(1.12)

6.2 Behave ethically.

- 6.2.1 Use an ethical framework to guide decision- making.
- 6.2.2 Address real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. (1.14)
- 6.2.3 Promote services in an ethical manner in accordance with College Code of Ethics. (1.9.2)
- 6.2.4 Charge a reasonable and customary fee for the services provided. (1.9.1)

6.3 Embrace social responsibility as a health professional.

- 6.3.1 Maintain awareness of issues and advances affecting the health system locally, nationally and globally.
- 6.3.2 Demonstrate awareness of the social determinants of health and emerging trends that may impact the practice of chiropody/podiatry.

6.4 Act with professional integrity.

- 6.4.1 Behave with honesty and respect for others.
- 6.4.2 Behave in a manner that values diversity.
- 6.4.3 Work within the chiropody/podiatry scope of practice and personal level of competence. (1.8)
- 6.4.4 Accept accountability for decisions and actions. (1.11)
- 6.4.5 Maintain professional deportment. (1.9, 1.15)
- 6.4.6 Maintain professional boundaries.
- 6.4.7 Respond constructively to changes affecting the workplace.

Appendix A

Legislation and Other documents that make up “College Requirements”

This is a list of some of the relevant legislation, regulations, by-laws, guidelines, policies, standards, etc. that regulate the practice of registrants of this College. This list is neither all-inclusive nor exhaustive.

Legislation may change, new acts may be adopted, and the College may be required to establish new standards, policies and guidelines.

Legislation

- Regulated Health Professions Act and Procedural Code, 1991 (RHPA)
- The Chiropractic Act 1991
- College Specific Regulations under the Act
- Other profession specific Acts and their regulations under the RHPA
- Health Care Consent Act
- Public Hospitals Act
- Ontario Health Insurance Act
- Healing Arts Radiation Act
- The Good Samaritan Act
- Personal Health Information Protections Act (Not yet enacted)
- Ontario Health and Safety Act
- WHIMIS
- Employment Standards Act
- Human Rights Code
- Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Health Cards and Numbers Control Act, 1991
- Health Care Accessibility Act
- Child and Family Services Act
- Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act
- Long-Term Care Act, 1994
- Nursing Homes Act
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 [\[1\]](#)
- Insurance Act and Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule

College Relevant Materials

- Bylaws
- Policies and Procedures
- Code of Ethics
- Policy statements

- Abuse Prevention Plan
- Standards of Practice
- Profile of Competencies
- Guidelines
- Standards of Infection Control

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms	
<i>Definitions Scope of practice:</i>	The breadth and limits of the practice, as defined by legislation. Includes the activities and acts that can be legitimately engaged in by the profession at large or by the individual practitioner.
<i>Standards of practice</i>	The practices, guidelines and regulations that the practitioner must follow in order to practice effectively, safely and ethically within the profession and within the jurisdiction. Usually represents minimum requirements.
<i>Standards of practice</i>	Describe the outcomes that must be obtained at the end of the educational program. An example of an educational objective might be: "Is able to distinguish between an acute case of a specific disease and a benign case". Educational objectives often describe the method by which mastery of the objective will be assessed, e.g., "Is able to list at least four features of pericarditis."
<i>Educational objectives</i>	Describe the outcomes that must be obtained at the end of the educational program. An example of an educational objective might be: "Is able to distinguish between an acute case of a specific disease and a benign case". Educational objectives often describe the method by which mastery of the objective will be assessed, e.g., "Is able to list at least four features of pericarditis."
<i>Competence</i>	The combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide services in a safe and effective manner.
<i>Competency</i>	A behaviour statement that describes the required knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and/or judgment expected of a practitioner in order to practice competently.
<i>Body language</i>	A nonverbal communication where thoughts, intentions, or feelings are expressed by physical behaviors, such as facial expressions, body posture, gestures, eye movement, touch and the use of space

<i>Patient</i>	A patient is a recipient of chiropody/podiatry services. In some circumstances a patient may be represented by their substitute decision maker.
<i>Deportment</i>	Deportment refers to presentation, behaviour, manner of speaking, appearance, grooming and personal hygiene.
<i>Diversity</i>	Diversity refers to variation among people including, but not limited to, variation based upon factors such as race, ethnicity, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, and disability
<i>Documents</i>	Documents refers to patient records of care, workload data, medical- legal reports, referrals, letters, emails and similar written materials relating to practice, etc.