

SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR CERTIFIED PEDORTHISTS IN AUSTRALIA



**PEDORTHIC ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA**

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Scope of Practice for Certified Pedorthists in Australia

Introduction

The Pedorthic Association of Australia (PAA) is the peak body for pedorthists in Australia. The PAA self-regulates the pedorthic profession through established policies, standards, codes, and criteria voluntarily upheld by PAA certified practitioners. A PAA subcommittee, the Australian Pedorthists Registration Board (APRB) Committee, manages the certification of pedorthists. Certified practitioners are qualified pedorthists registered by the Registrar who have demonstrated sufficient knowledge, skills, and experience to provide competent, safe, and high-quality pedorthic services.

The PAA Scope of Practice describes the core roles, activities, practice settings and guiding frameworks for pedorthists practising in Australia. It does not represent the level of experience, skill or competency required to carry out these roles and activities. The Scope of Practice is influenced by the context in which a pedorthist practises, personal factors, environmental circumstances, technology, legislation, education, community expectations and population health needs.¹

The PAA Scope of Practice aims to protect the health and interests of people receiving pedorthic care and inform the broader community about this small yet vital allied health profession. The health care system in Australia undergoes continuous change, and pedorthic practice needs to be innovative, agile, and adaptive in response. The Scope of Practice is not intended to limit the pedorthic profession but rather provide a basic structure that provides appropriate boundaries while remaining receptive to changes that will benefit pedorthic clients and patients.

The PAA Scope of Practice is governed by the Pedorthic Association of Australia (PAA). Underpinning the Scope of Practice are requirements for certified pedorthists to practice within their area of professional competence and continuously improve their professional knowledge and skills. The Scope of Practice has been developed in alignment with the [PAA Code of Ethics and Standards](#), the [PAA Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists](#), the [PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#) and the [Continuing Professional Development \(CPD\) for Certified Pedorthists](#).

Definition

Pedorthics is the professional field concerned with providing pedorthic footwear, orthotic appliances, and appropriate advice to a patient after assessment and analysis of the patient's condition(s). Pedorthic services include the provision of prefabricated footwear and orthotic appliances, modification of prefabricated footwear, custom-designed and fabricated pedorthic footwear and/or custom-made orthotic appliances, and advice on the need and application of pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances.

Practice settings

Pedorthists operate in retail settings, as well as working in the private and public health sectors. Pedorthists may work in independent or group private practice. They are members of multidisciplinary healthcare teams in community health centres and public hospitals, such as a high-risk foot service.

Additional pedorthic practice settings may include aged care facilities, community health services, community rehabilitation services, disability services, and universities and research facilities.

Populations

Pedorthists work with people across the lifespan, from infants through to the elderly. They treat individuals who have foot, ankle and lower limb issues arising from systemic or localised conditions, trauma, disability, and other causes. Common presentations include people with musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, and metabolic disorders.

Pedorthists collaborate with the partners, families, support people and carers of people receiving pedorthic care, as well as the public, other health professionals, health, community, government, and educational organisations, pedorthic students and pedorthic colleagues.

Roles

Pedorthists apply a person-centred and evidence-based approach to pedorthic care provision. Pedorthists employ clinical and technical expertise, and pedorthic services aim to minimise impairment, maximise function, improve mobility and promote the health and wellbeing of clients and patients. Although pedorthic practice primarily focuses on the foot and lower limb, foot problems commonly also affect the knee, hip, and spine; therefore, Pedorthists understand the structure and function of the entire human body.

There are three levels of Certified Pedorthists in Australia:

Certified Pedorthic Retailers (CRetPed Au) specialise in advice, fitting, and provision of prefabricated pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances.

Services may include:

- Client assessment to determine the need for pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances
- Providing advice and education regarding foot health, footwear, and orthotic appliances
- Identifying and selecting appropriate prefabricated pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances to meet client needs.
- Performing minor modifications and/or repair of prefabricated footwear and orthotic appliances that do not alter the device's principal function or construction
- Fitting footwear and orthotic appliances
- Selling pedorthic footwear and prefabricated orthotic appliances
- Conducting reviews of footwear and orthotic appliances
- Conducting service management activities in areas such as human resources, finance, inventory, marketing and sales, and quality improvement.

Certified Pedorthists (CPed Au) assess clients, provide prefabricated or custom-made foot orthotics, and modify footwear to meet client needs.

(**Note:** The pathway to CPed Au registration was closed in 2020, but this registration level is recognised for re-certification purposes.)

Services may include:

- Client assessment to determine the need for pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances
- Providing advice and education regarding foot health, footwear and orthotic appliances

- Identifying and selecting appropriate prefabricated pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances to meet client needs
- Examining prefabricated footwear to determine suitability and practicability for modification
- Performing major alteration, modification and/or repair of prefabricated footwear that may change its original structure and function to meet client needs
- Providing prefabricated and custom-made orthotic appliances
- Fabricating custom-made orthotic appliances
- Fitting footwear and orthotic appliances
- Conducting service management activities in areas such as human resources, finance, inventory, marketing and sales, and quality improvement.

Certified Pedorthist Custom Makers (CPedCM Au) are tertiary qualified or equivalent and involved in all clinical, technical, and service delivery aspects of pedorthics. Certified Pedorthist Custom Makers are autonomous professionals; however, they regularly collaborate with other health professionals. Graduate pedorthists are educated in areas such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, lower limb assessment, lower limb medicine, orthoses and bracing, management of the high-risk foot, footwear design and production, and principles and practice of pedorthics.

Services may include:

- Providing advice and education regarding foot health, footwear, and orthotic appliances
- Conducting patient assessments and reviews
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating patient-centred management plans
- Identifying and selecting appropriate prefabricated pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances to meet patient needs.
- Examining prefabricated footwear to determine suitability and practicability for modification.
- Provision, alteration, modification, repair, and dispensation of prefabricated pedorthic footwear and/or orthotic appliances
- Designing and fabricating custom-made pedorthic footwear and custom-made orthotic appliances
- Research and development activities
- Advocacy on behalf of a patient and/or the pedorthic profession
- Conducting service management activities in areas such as human resources, finance, inventory, marketing and sales, and quality improvement.

Frameworks

PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics

The PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics outlines the requirements for certification and registration of pedorthists in Australia. The criteria form the framework for credentialing Pedorthists and are used by the PAA's APRB Committee to evaluate and validate pedorthists' competence, performance, and suitability to provide safe and high-quality pedorthic services.²

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Certified Pedorthists

To maintain certification and their scope of practice, all certified pedorthists must engage in ongoing professional development. The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Certified Pedorthists is a guideline for professional development activities to preserve existing competency and develop additional knowledge and skills to improve individual practice and pedorthic service provision.

Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists

The Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists describe the attributes a certified pedorthist at the level of Certified Pedorthist Custom Maker (CPedCM Au) must demonstrate to be eligible to enter the Australian pedorthic workforce and apply at any point during their career, as relevant to their role and work context.

The PAA Code of Ethics and Standards

The PAA Code of Ethics and Standards outlines the professional conduct expected of a certified Pedorthist in Australia, which includes practising only in those fields where the pedorthist is professionally competent, continuously evaluating whether they are practising within the limits of their training and experience, and identifying services outside their current scope of practice and referring the patient accordingly.

Extended Scope of Practice

Pedorthists may extend their scope of practice via additional qualifications, experience, or training. This Scope of Practice does not address extended practice activities; however, such actions may be included in the pedorthist's capability, providing the area of practice is within the professional competence of the pedorthist.

Review of Document

This standard will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every five years.

Last approved: October 2021

¹Victorian Government, Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). (2nd Ed.). *Allied health: credentialling, competency and capability framework (revised edition) Section 1: Credentialling and scope of practice. [Resource kit]*. Retrieved from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/allied-health-ccc-framework>

²Victorian Government, Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). *Allied Health: Credentialling, Competency and Capability Framework (Revised Ed.)*. Retrieved from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/allied-health-ccc-framework>