

General Competency Framework

AICE Neurorehabilitation Clinical Practice Group



INTRODUCTION

The dimensions of a chiropractor's practice

The dimensions of a chiropractor's practice can be described in terms of (see Figure 1):

- **breadth** (or scope)
The Chiropractic Board defines this as 'any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a chiropractor in their regulated health profession' 'practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct nonclinical relationship with members of the public and patients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles and any

other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of health services in the chiropractic profession.' However, an individual's scope will depend on the professional roles they perform or services they provide. This may be broad, working with a wide variety of athletes and medical conditions, or narrow, focusing on a particular athlete group or limited range of conditions.

- and
- **depth** (or performance level)
When scope is narrow, this may afford the individual to increase their expertise and performance. However 'specialisation' is not synonymous with 'advanced', as a narrow scope can occur without any enhancement in performance.

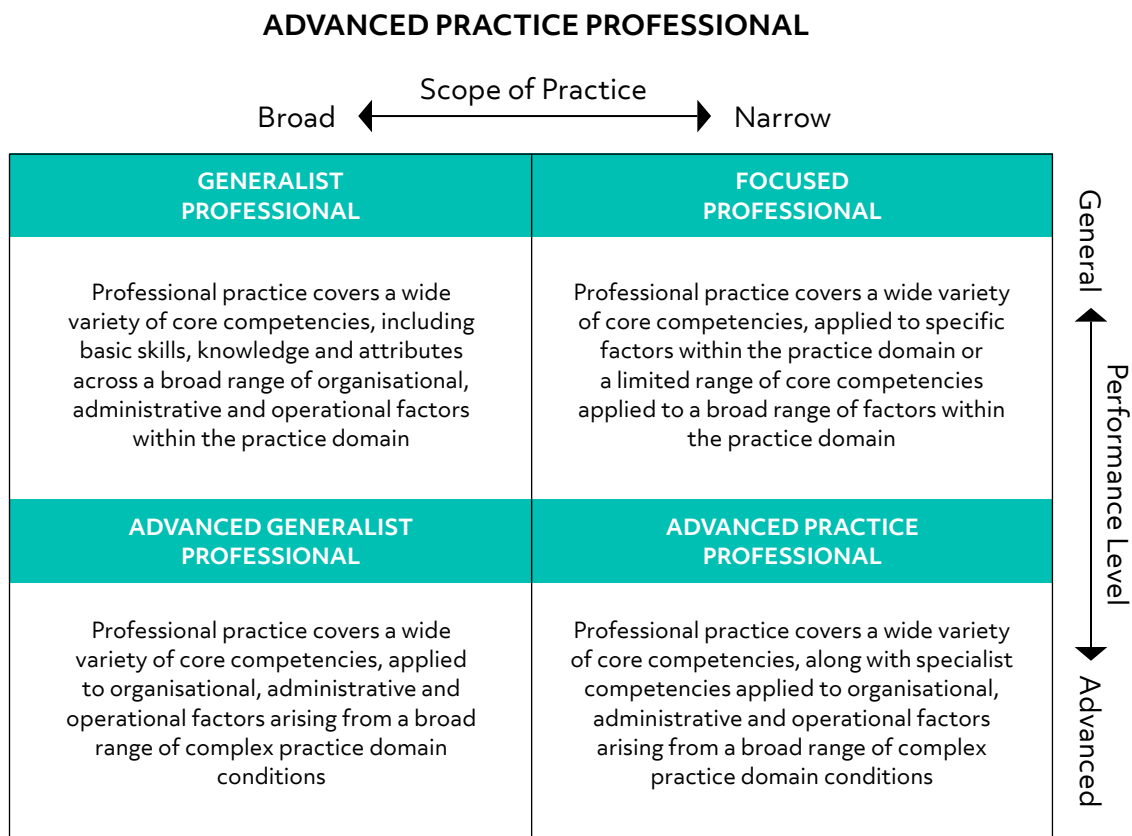


Figure 1. Image reproduced from Fergusson et al.¹

SUPPORTING AND RECOGNISING ADVANCEMENT

The Australian Institute of Chiropractic Education (AICE) supports the advancement of chiropractors in focused areas of practice, and recognises their activity and achievements as they progress through the respective advanced learning pathways.

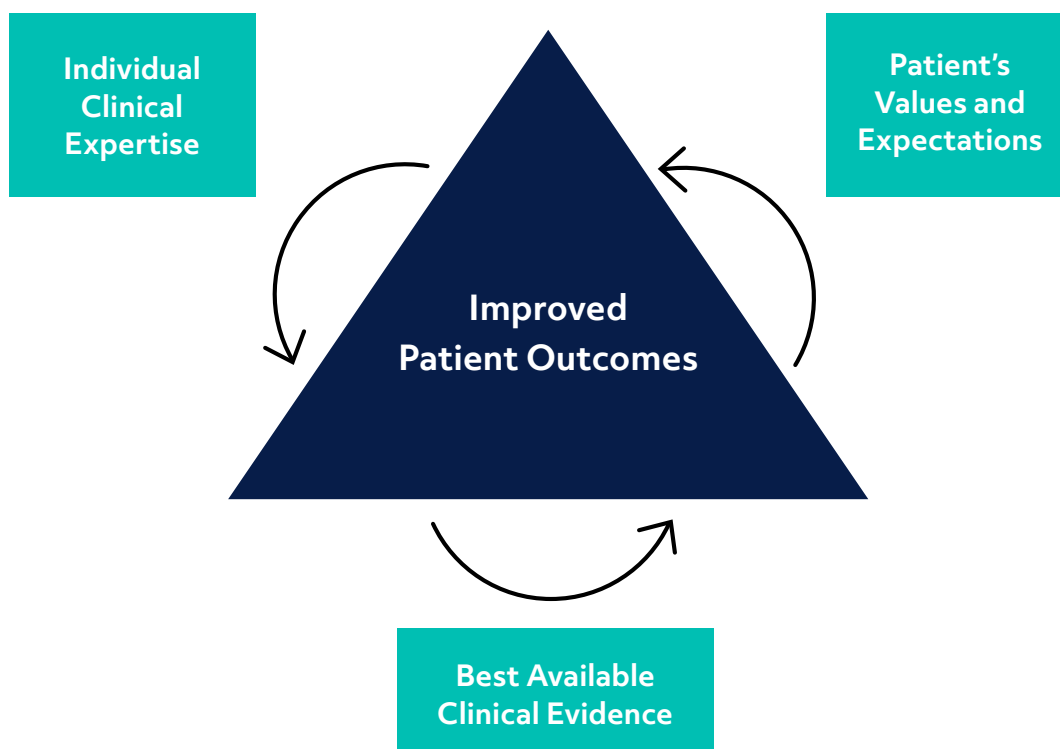
Formal and independent recognition of advancement in a focused area of practice will identify chiropractors with the additional experience and qualifications achieved, to peers, the community, referrers and employers. Note, however, that it does not replace any registration requirements of the Chiropractor Board of Australia.

Progression through the AICE advanced learning pathways is recognised at three stages beyond the competence achieved at initial registration: trainee, member and fellow. Advancement is achieved through a combination of education and training, and clinical experience.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RECOGNISING ADVANCEMENT TO EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Evidence-based practice involves 'integrating the best available research evidence with clinical expertise and the patient's unique values and circumstances' to provide the best possible outcomes for patients.²

Supporting the advancement of chiropractors will not only support individual chiropractors capacity to contribute to healthcare, but also support the ongoing development of an evidence base for chiropractic practice that can continue to drive improved outcomes for patients at a system level.



1. Fergusson L, et al. Work-based learning and research for mid-career professionals: two project examples from Australia. *Interdisciplinary Journal of E-Skills and Lifelong Learning*. 2018;14. At: <http://www.ijello.org/Volume14/IJELLV14p019-040Fergusson4321.pdf>
2. Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCED SPECIAL INTEREST CHIROPRACTORS

The Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors has been developed to support:

- Awareness and understanding of the performance expectations of Members and Fellows of the AICE, for the profession, health sector and broader community
- Application of a consistent and fair assessment of individuals progressing through the respective advanced learning pathways.

The Competency Framework describes:

- the competencies in which advancement is recognised, incorporating knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours
- the level of performance expected at each of the stages in the AICE advanced learning pathway, for each of the focused practice domains.

Each Competency Framework encompasses four broad domains:

1. Clinical expertise
2. Professionalism
3. Research and Education
4. Leadership and influence.
5. Business

USING THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS IN THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATION

In the accreditation of education programs, in Australia and internationally, there is a continuing emphasis on an outcome-focused approach. This is partly because a prescriptive input-based focus, e.g. defining curriculum, inhibits innovation and

hinders responsiveness to the rapidly changing healthcare and education environments.

The Competency Frameworks form a core part of an outcome-focused approach to accreditation. Education providers will be expected to map how their program learning outcomes map to the relevant performance level in the relevant Competency Framework.

However, to support a common understanding of expectations, guidance relating to specific aspects is provided to support application of the Competency Frameworks in the development and provision of education programs.

USING THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS IN THE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

As the Competency Frameworks identify the performance expectations of Members and Fellows of the AICE, the process applied by AICE in assessing individuals is mapped against the framework to support transparency, consistency and fairness.

Performance of competencies may be demonstrated through direct assessment by AICE and/or by completion of recognised postgraduate education programs.

AICE recognises that there are individuals who have obtained the experience and qualifications defined in the respective Competency Frameworks, and are already performing at the level of Member or Fellow. As such, grandfathering provisions are being developed. For a limited period of time, and through a transparent and consistent process, individuals may be exempted from proceeding through the assessment process if it can be demonstrated that they are already performing at the expected level.

Competency Framework for Advanced Special Interest Chiropractors: Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor

Definition:

A Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor focusses on managing patients with a range of neuro-musculoskeletal conditions, symptoms and/or dysfunction. They are committed to providing an evidence-based, patient-centric, interprofessional and collaborative approach to neurologically-based Chiropractic care.

A Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor's training is competency-based in the latest clinical neuroscience and includes the use of non-pharmaceutical, non-surgical interventions that leverage the principles of neuroplasticity. They

utilise a range of therapies including (but not limited to) manual and proprioceptive therapies, neuromodulation, brain-based exercises, vestibular/balance and visual exercises, cognitive exercises, nutritional advice, amongst others. The aim is to restore and/or improve neurological function and reduce symptoms with tailored care with the patient's goals in mind.

They endorse a multidisciplinary team approach, which includes working closely with families, support groups as well as medical and allied health professionals.

Domain 1. Clinical expertise

A Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor has an advanced level of clinical expertise. The individual's clinical expertise is integrated with the best available evidence (clinically relevant and drawn

from studies with the least possible bias) and the patient's unique values and circumstances to improve patient outcomes through evidence-based practice.³

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
<p>1.1 Assesses the health and functional impairment status and related circumstances of patients, critically analyses these and forms a clinical impression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performs a <i>clinical and bio-psychosocial assessment</i> to inform the management, rehabilitation, prevention and performance enhancement of neuro-musculoskeletal (n-MSK) injury and neurological impairment. Applies the results of <i>clinical, laboratory and other diagnostic procedures</i> to inform the management, rehabilitation, prevention and performance enhancement of neuro-musculoskeletal (n-MSK) injury and neurological impairment. Recognises the specific needs of particular populations including children, older adults and those with specific conditions. Recognises the risks and needs associated with specific activities, including sports, home, learning and work-related environments Recognises the different goals that may be associated with different contexts, including sports, home, learning and work-related environments 	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to cases with greater complexity; uncertainty; and ambiguity Enhanced competency in performing and interpreting electrodiagnostic, physiological and other advanced diagnostic tests for the purpose of evaluating and making recommendations for patients with n-MSK disorders Enhanced competency in using advanced therapeutics (both clinical applications and instrument modalities) for the management of patients with n-MSK disorders Role modelling the application of advanced clinical expertise and collaboration with others involved in the care and performance of the person with n-MSK impairment Mentoring others to achieve advanced clinical expertise.
<p>1.2 Identify and prioritise issues to be addressed in a consultation with an individual with n-MSK impairment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the concerns and goals of patients during the consultation Selects appropriate tools to assist development of priority issues within the patient Identifies issues which need to be addressed during future visits or with other health care practitioners 	

3. Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

<p>1.3 Works in collaboration with the patient, family, support groups, medical and allied professionals, exploring the care options available and developing agreed, evidence-based <i>care and management plans</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares decision making with the patient in planning care • Demonstrates sound clinical reasoning through evidence-based practice • Supports a <i>multimodal treatment approach</i> to the management, rehabilitation, prevention and performance enhancement of neuro-musculoskeletal (n-MSK) injury and neurological impairment. • Supports the integration of neuro-rehabilitation exercise in the management, rehabilitation, prevention and performance enhancement of neuro-musculoskeletal (n-MSK) injury and neurological impairment. • Sources and incorporates evidence into neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice 	
<p>1.4 Coordinates the safe and effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of care and management plans for the n-MSK impaired patient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a clear sequence and flow for the entire interaction with the patient • Performs safe and effective <i>adjustive, manipulative, manual and other corrective procedures</i> to optimise the management, rehabilitation, prevention and performance enhancement of neuro-musculoskeletal (n-MSK) injury and neurological impairment. • Monitors progress using n-MSK related <i>performance evaluation instruments</i> • Responds to changing and evolving situations across progressive interactions 	

<p>1.5 Collaborates effectively in a multidisciplinary team to support the patient, family, support groups, medical and allied professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upholds the role of a Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor in a multidisciplinary team • Recognises the roles and expertise of other members in a <i>multidisciplinary team</i> • Communicates with, consults with and refers to other members of the team to achieve the best outcomes for the patient • Effectively manages differences and resolves conflict when collaborating in a multidisciplinary team 	
<p>1.6 Collaborates effectively with others involved in the performance and care of a patient, including family, support groups, medical and allied professionals and administrators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies others involved in the performance and/or care of the patient • Documents the patient's wishes for communication and collaboration with others involved in their performance and/or care • Maintains an effective relationship with others involved, in accordance with the wishes expressed and by the patient 	

Domain 2. Professionalism

Professionalism embodies a range of individual characteristics and values. It is a fluid construct that is demonstrated largely through situational awareness and contextual judgement. It incorporates a duty of care to make the care of patients the chiropractor's first concern:

- Being ethical and trustworthy;
- Being patient-centred, including culturally aware, having respect for diversity and communicating effectively;
- Being self-aware, reflecting regularly on their practice and working within the limits of their competence;
- Keeping their knowledge and skills up-to-date; and
- Being committed to safety and quality in healthcare.

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
2.1 Practises legally, professionally and ethically in neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to <i>relevant legislation, common law, codes, standards and other policy regulating neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic practice.</i> • Applies professional and ethical standards in responding to <i>challenges common in neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic practice</i> • Recognises legal obligations relating to particular patient populations, including children, elderly individuals, cognitively challenged patients and involvement of other members including support group, family, medical and allied professionals 	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member, promoting professionalism through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role modelling professional and ethical behaviours • Mentoring others in professionalism • Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes in the neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic environment • Leading the development of stakeholder relationships within the neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic environment
2.2 Applies a patient-centred approach to neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic practice, including for the patient, members in the multidisciplinary team and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respects diversity in the care and management of patients • Provides <i>culturally responsive care</i> • Maintains a duty of care for the patient and their safety in the face of <i>multiple, competing demands</i> 	
2.3 Communicates effectively with patients, and others involved in their performance and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts <i>communication</i> style to the patient's level of <i>health literacy</i> • Information about a patient's goals and preferences, and information to inform their care, is gathered • Two-way communication (spoken, 	

	<p>written and non-verbal) engages the patient in <i>shared decision-making</i> and care planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured communication techniques are used to improve the transfer of clinical information and responsibility with those involved in the performance and care of the patient • Relevant, accurate, complete and timely information is documented in the health care record to support care of the patient 	
<p>2.4 Maintains and extends competence in neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinely self-assesses and critical evaluates personal knowledge, skills and expertise in neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic • Uses internal and external sources of information in evaluating own knowledge, skills and expertise in neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic • Continuously pursues learning and professional development in neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic 	
<p>2.5 Collaborates to continuously improve quality and safety of neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies common risks to quality and safety in the delivery of neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic services • Implements <i>activities to improve quality and safety</i> in the delivery of neuro-rehabilitation Chiropractic services 	

Domain 3. Research and Education

The ability to acquire and apply the best available evidence from multiple sources is a critical component of evidence-based practice. A Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractor integrates the best available evidence with their clinical expertise and the patient's unique values and circumstances to

improve patient outcomes.⁴

As Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractors progress to Fellow status, they will also contribute to the evidence base and facilitate the integration of evidence into practice through education of peers and students, within and outside the profession.

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
3.1. Critically evaluates neuro chiropractic practice in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews literature sources relevant to neuro-musculoskeletal conditions, neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice and business management Critically appraises the research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertakes peer review activities in neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice Leads and mentors others in the critical evaluation of research
3.2. Applies research evidence into own practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes the extent to which confidence may be placed in the research evidence Establishes the applicability of the research evidence to the circumstances of the patient being treated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the incorporation of evidence in the design, implementation and evaluation of neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice
3.3. Identifies gaps in the evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises areas of uncertainty and identifies gaps in the evidence base for neuro chiropractic practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates research questions to address research gaps
3.4. Designs and delivers research projects to address gaps in the evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in research planning with the guidance of more experienced colleagues Generates evidence at a practice/service level suitable for presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies areas for innovation and advances in practice Generates new evidence suitable for presentation at a research symposium Authors primary evidence outcomes in peer-reviewed journals Mentors others in research projects

4. Clinical Information Access Portal (CIAP). Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice and CIAP. NSW eHealth. At: <https://www.ciap.health.nsw.gov.au/learning/modules/module1/evidence-based-practice-is.html>

3.5. Plan and deliver education activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in the education of others (patients, families, students, peers and other health professionals) with guidance from more experienced colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers education to the chiropractic students, peers, members of the public and other healthcare or industry stakeholders, relevant to neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice Delivers education at national and/or international levels, relevant to neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic practice
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Domain 4. Leadership and influence

As Neuro-Rehabilitation Chiropractors progress towards Fellow status, their leadership role will move beyond leadership of themselves and their own practice, to a role in sharing a vision for the

profession for the future, and using initiative and innovation to respond to change and drive progress.

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
4.1 Contributes to a strategic vision for neuro chiropractic in Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages with the strategic vision for neuro chiropractic in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shapes the strategic vision for neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic in Australia
4.2 Engages with colleagues, patients, others involved in their life and care, and the broader health and clinical neuroscience sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes positive relationships with colleagues involved in the performance and care of patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads interprofessional collaborations with those involved in the care and life of the patient, and the broader health and clinical neuroscience sector
4.3 Encourages and influences innovation, improvement and service development in neuro chiropractic practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays awareness of the political, professional and public environment in which innovation and change occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champions innovation and change through political, professional and public support and commitment Serves as a role model, coach and mentor for others
4.4 Recognises and responds to community expectations in the healthcare of patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of the public and community good in healthcare, including stewardship of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness of community expectations of neuro chiropractic practice and promote professional accountability amongst colleagues Influence the profession's response to issues of societal accountability Demonstrate exemplary professional accountability to athletes, the community and the profession

Domain 5. Business

Sound business practices are important for maintaining a sustainable practice while innovating to meet the multi-faceted needs of patients in the rapidly changing healthcare environment. Practice management involves a broad range of activities, including financial management, human resource management, planning and marketing, information

management, risk management, governance and organisational dynamics, and business and clinical operations.⁵ Health care and chiropractic practice are highly regulated environments, and practices must be managed in accordance with legal and professional responsibilities.

COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Member:	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA Fellow:
5.1 Uses business models that are patient-centred and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies needs of patients that can be met with chiropractic care in various environments Identifies and implements standardised processes in practice that support quality chiropractic care Collaborates to develop business models with others involved in the care and performance of the patient for better health outcomes and business sustainability 	<p>Extends performance beyond that achieved as a Member, promoting professional, sustainable and innovative business practices through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role modelling professional business behaviours Mentoring others in business models and practice Leading and contributing to the design and revision of policy and processes for business models and practice in the neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic environment
5.2 Manages resources for safe and effective care and continuity of neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes physical and technology infrastructure to support chiropractic care and practice management Uses physical, financial and human resources effectively and efficiently Manages personal and professional demands throughout the career life cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively managing business model transitions for various environments Leading interprofessional collaborations with those involved in the care and performance of the patients to optimise business models and achieve better health outcomes
5.3 Uses <i>information and data</i> to inform practice improvements and minimise risk in the neuro-rehabilitation chiropractic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks data that accurately reflect care outcomes Analyses data to discern relationships between investments and outcomes Recognises the impact of system factors and resource availability on practitioner and patient safety Implements change to improve care and practice management Takes action to minimise risk 	

5. Core principles of Health Care Practice Management. Australian Association of Practice Management. At: <https://www.aapm.org.au/Your-Profession/Core-Principles>