

Pathway to provider recognition:

HLTSS00082 –
Applied Massage for
Pain Management Skill Set

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Background

Nationally recognised qualifications in massage therapy are the cornerstone of provider recognition criteria for all the major health funds.

These qualifications are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis to ensure currency and relevance, and to reflect evolving models of health care demand and changing workforce needs.

The Certificate IV in Massage and Diploma of Remedial Massage are updated every five years.

The most recent review of nationally recognised qualifications in the massage sector saw the development of a Nationally Recognised Skill Set, HLTSS0082 – Applied Massage for Pain Management. Training package skill sets are single units of competency, or combinations of units of competency from an endorsed training package, which link to a licensing or regulatory requirement, or a defined industry need.

HLTSS0082 Applied Massage for Pain Management incorporates three core units of competence from the HLT52021 Diploma of Remedial Massage:

[HLTMSG017 - Apply remedial massage clinical practice](#) Apply remedial massage clinical practice

[HLTMSG016 - Apply principles of pain neuroscience](#) Apply principles of pain neuroscience

[CHCPOL003 - Research and apply evidence to practice](#) Research and apply evidence to practice

CHCPOL003 Research and apply evidence to practice is a core competency within many health training package qualifications. In previous iterations of the Diploma of Remedial Massage, it was an elective. Having CHCPOL003 in the core of the Diploma and in the Skill Set will equip Remedial Massage Therapists with the critical skills to practise in an evidence-informed, research literate manner, enhancing clinical outcomes.

The development of a new unit, HLTMS016 Apply principles of pain neuroscience, was driven by several confluent factors:

- **Demand.** One in five Australians lives with persistent pain. This prevalence rises to one in three people over the age of 65.
- **Access.** 10% of Australians using interdisciplinary allied health care to manage persistent pain seek remedial massage as part of their ongoing care.
- **Knowledge and skills.** There have been significant developments in our understanding of pain over the past 20 years. Having contemporary knowledge of pain neuroscience prepares massage practitioners to deal with persistent and complex pain.

Massage and Persistent Pain

Pain is the most common reason that people seek medical help.

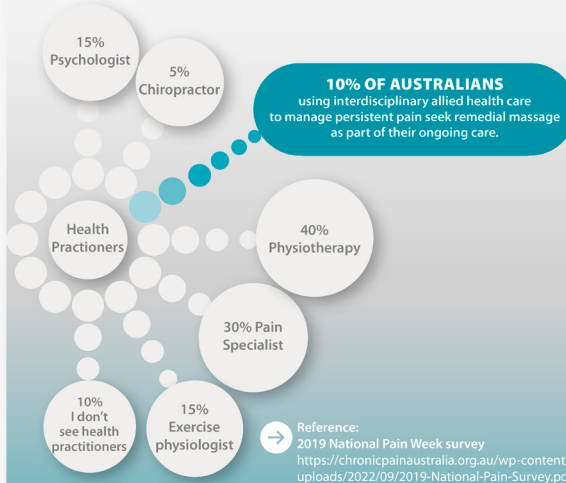
Pain is said to be chronic or persistent if it lasts beyond the normal healing time of about three months.

One in five Australians lives with persistent pain including adolescents and children. This prevalence rises to one in three people over the age of 65.

One in five GP consultations involves a patient with persistent pain and almost 5% report severe, disabling persistent pain.

Persistent pain is Australia's third most costly health condition after cardiovascular diseases and musculoskeletal conditions (also associated with persistent pain).

→ **Reference:**
Pain Facts www.painaustralia.org.au/about-pain/painaustralia-painful-facts



In 2008–09, around 1.8% of total health-care expenditure in Australia (\$1.2 billion) was attributed to back problems

In 2011, 'back pain & problems' were the third leading cause of total disease burden and injuries in Australia (3.6%)

In 2014–15, an estimated 3.7 million Australians (16%, or 1 in 6 people) had chronic back problems

People with chronic back problems are more likely to report poor quality of life than the general population

→ **Reference:**
<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/chronic-musculoskeletal-conditions/impacts-of-chronic-back-problems/data>

Australians who see a massage therapist use massage therapy to treat:



→ **Reference:**
2016 AMT patient survey

Chronic low back pain

The Kentucky Pain Research and Outcomes Study evaluated massage therapy impacts on pain, disability, and health-related quality of life for primary care patients with chronic low back pain. Participants improved on all outcomes at 12 and 24 weeks post intervention.



→ **Reference:**
<https://academic.oup.com/painmedicine/article/18/7/1394/3069964?searchresult=1>

Pain populations

A 2016 systematic review published in *Pain Medicine* found that massage therapy may be beneficial for improving various patient-reported functional outcomes for populations experiencing pain and posited that massage therapy should be offered to patients for pain management.



→ **Reference:**
<https://academic.oup.com/painmedicine/article/17/7/1353/2223191>

To find your local AMT-accredited massage therapist please visit:
www.amt.org.au or call 02 9211 2441

Proposal to recognise HLTSS0082 Applied Massage for Pain Management

Currently, most major insurers recognise HLT52021 Diploma of Remedial Massage and earlier iterations for provider status.

Practitioners re-entering the industry with older qualifications currently face significant barriers to regain provider status. The only option currently available to these practitioners is to undergo recognition of prior learning or completely redo their study. This is both cost and time prohibitive: courses and RPL fees can range between \$5000 – \$24000, and training duration is at least a year. For an experienced practitioner with many years of practice under their belt, there will be a significant amount of redundancy in resitting an entire qualification.

Completion of HLTSS0082 Applied Massage for Pain Management would equip practitioners with current skills and knowledge to competently and safely return to clinical practice. Significantly, the inclusion of HLTMSG017 Apply remedial massage clinical practice includes a requirement to complete 200 hours of supervised clinical practice, which meets the educational criteria of private health funds.

AMT proposes that HLTSS0082 Applied Massage for Pain Management be recognised by the funds as a pathway to provide recognition for experienced practitioners re-entering the industry.

About the three units of competence in the skill set

HLTMSG017 - Apply Remedial Massage Clinical Practice

This unit focuses on the practical application of remedial massage in a clinical setting and includes 200 hours of direct supervision of practice. Key elements include:

- 1. Client Intake and Preparation:** Ensuring a professional and safe environment for client consultations, managing client records, and setting clear expectations.
- 2. Client Assessment and Treatment Planning:** Conducting thorough assessments to develop and execute personalised treatment plans, adjusting treatments based on ongoing assessments and client feedback.
- 3. Treatment Provision:** Performing remedial massage according to the treatment plan, ensuring client comfort and safety, and documenting progress.
- 4. Evaluation and Adjustment:** Continuously evaluating client progress and modifying treatment plans as necessary to achieve optimal outcomes.
- 5. Professional Development:** Engaging in self-reflection and seeking professional development opportunities to improve practice and stay updated with industry standards.

CHCPOL003 - Research and Apply Evidence to Practice

This unit emphasises the importance of evidence-based practice in health and community services. Key elements include:

- 1. Planning and Gathering Information:** Identifying research needs, establishing objectives, and accessing credible sources of information.
- 2. Systematic Information Gathering:** Using appropriate methods to collect relevant data, and organising information to support analysis.
- 3. Critical Analysis:** Evaluating information for its strength, relevance, and reliability, and making informed conclusions.
- 4. Application to Practice:** Using research findings to inform practice, identify areas for improvement, and develop actions to address research outcomes.

HLTMSG016 - Apply Principles of Pain Neuroscience

This unit provides knowledge and skills related to understanding and managing pain in clients. Key elements include:

- 1. Maintaining Knowledge:** Continuously researching and monitoring developments in pain neuroscience to apply the latest knowledge in practice.
- 2. Applying Principles:** Integrating pain neuroscience principles into client assessments and treatment plans, addressing biopsychosocial factors, and recognising when to refer clients for specialised care.
- 3. Reflecting on Practice:** Using feedback and self-reflection to improve practice, seeking further research opportunities, and staying informed about industry developments.

Appendix

Elements and performance criteria
of the three units of competence

HLTMSG017 - Apply remedial massage clinical practice

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to undertake remedial massage consultations in a clinical setting. This includes provision of remedial massage treatments, as well as clinic preparation for consultation, client assessment and monitoring of client progress and outcomes. It incorporates understanding of industry practices and professional development opportunities for remedial massage therapists.

The skills in this unit must be applied in accordance with Commonwealth and State or Territory legislation, Australian standards and industry codes of practice.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Undertake client intake procedures.	1.1 Prepare self, treatment area and equipment for client consultation in accordance with organisational protocols work health and safety (WHS) and legal and ethical considerations. 1.2 Greet client using a clear voice and professional manner. 1.3 Ensure client records are complete including consent to commence consultation and to access health records. 1.4 Direct client to treatment room. 1.5 Review client records with client to inform consultation. 1.6 Clarify client expectations and identify client motivation for wanting to receive remedial treatment. 1.7 Provide clear information about scope and limits of services to be provided.
2. Conduct client assessment.	2.1. Perform assessment appropriate to meet client needs. 2.2. Collect accurate and relevant information from assessment and document to inform treatment plan.
3. Develop treatment plan.	3.1. Analyse and integrate health history and assessment findings to formulate appropriate treatment plan and allocated time. 3.2. Outline and discuss treatment plan and expectations with client. 3.3. Obtain and record informed consent for remedial treatment.
4. Provide remedial massage.	4.1. Follow organisational protocols to physically prepare the client for treatment. 4.2. Perform remedial treatment according to treatment plan. 4.3. Adjust treatment as required according to client feedback and therapist ongoing assessment. 4.4. Reassess client post-treatment and document findings to inform ongoing treatment plan. 4.5. Discuss ongoing treatment plan and post-treatment recommendations.
5. Evaluate returning client progress and adjust treatment.	5.1. Seek client feedback about treatment outcomes and implementation of post-treatment recommendations. 5.2. Compare changes from initial and recent presentation with expectations in the treatment plan. 5.3. Determine need for adjustment to treatment plan based on evaluation of client progress. 5.4. Identify and respond to factors that may be inhibiting client progress. 5.5. Prepare comprehensive referrals, reports and documentation. 5.6. Document all findings in client treatment plan.
6. Develop professional practice.	6.1. Use feedback from others and self-reflection to determine improvements to own practice. 6.2. Identify areas of own practice for further research and development to support client outcomes. 6.3. Proactively seek and respond to professional development opportunities. 6.4. Identify current and emerging industry developments and networks that can support improvement of own practice.

CHCPOL003 - Research and apply evidence to practice

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to apply the principles of pain neuroscience in health care assessment and treatment.

This unit applies to a broad range of health care practitioners.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENTS <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes</i>	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Plan information gathering activities.	1.1 Identify situations where research may be required to support and improve own work practice. 1.2 Evaluate current trends in own area of practice. 1.3 Establish and define research objectives. 1.4 Identify and access credible sources of data and evidence.
2. Gather information.	2.1 Evaluate and select methods of gathering information . 2.2 Gather information using a systematic approach. 2.3 Establish relevance of information according to objectives and work requirements. 2.4 Facilitate analysis by organising information in a way that supports its analysis and future use.
3. Analyse information.	3.1 Prioritise information based on the information need. 3.2 Compare and contrast different sources of information. 3.3 Assess the strength, relevance, reliability and currency of the information in the context of own work. 3.4 Assess the feasibility, benefits and risks associated with the information. 3.5 Make and document conclusions based on findings.
4. Use information in practice.	4.1 Assess ways in which different aspects of information may be used. 4.2 Use information and learning from research to identify potential areas for change in current practice. 4.3 Identify issues that require further research and evaluation. 4.4 Develop actions to address outcomes of research.

HLTMSG016 - Apply Principles of Pain Neuroscience

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to establish the information need, gather information and critically analyse the information for relevance to own work.

This unit applies to health and community service workers who need to research existing information to support and improve their work practice.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENTS <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes</i>	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Maintain practical knowledge of the principles of pain neuroscience.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1. Research and monitor credible sources of information relevant to pain neuroscience.1.2. Interpret credible sources of information to identify recent developments in pain neuroscience relevant to health care assessment and treatment.1.3. Reflect on application of recent developments in pain neuroscience to own health care assessment and treatment practice.
2. Apply principles of pain neuroscience to health care assessment and treatment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1. Consult with client and review client health records to gather client pain presentation information.2.2. Discuss biopsychosocial factors that may impact on pain presentation with the client.2.3. Discuss health care treatment options and client expectations relevant to pain presentation with the client.2.4. Document health care treatment plan to meet client needs including pain presentation.2.5. Recognise pain presentation needs that are beyond scope of own practice and offer referrals where needed.
3. Reflect on practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3.1. Use feedback from others and self-reflection to determine improvements to own practice.3.2. Identify areas of own practice for further research or development to support client outcomes.3.3. Proactively seek and respond to professional development opportunities relevant to pain neuroscience.3.4. Identify current and emerging industry developments and networks that can support improvement of own practice.



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