

Public consultation on proposed professional capabilities for paramedics

Response to consultation questions

Organisation Name

Advance Care Planning Australia (<https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au/>) (ACPA)

Background information

Advance Care Planning Australia (ACPA) is a national program funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, enabling Australians to make the best choices for their life and health care. Our purpose is to build the foundation for a national collaborative approach to advance care planning.

Advance care planning (ACP) is the process of planning for future health and personal care whereby the person's values, beliefs and preferences are made known so they can guide decision-making at a future time when that person cannot make or communicate his or her decisions. ACP is more important than ever as part of Australia's COVID-19 health care planning. The Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza 2019 cites the importance of Advance Care Directives as part of a coordinated response. Australian Governments have committed to addressing the palliative care and ACP needs of Australians through the *National Palliative Care Strategy 2010: Supporting Australians to live well at the end of life* and inclusion of ACP obligations in *Aged Care Standards (Standard 2)* and obligations under the *National Quality and Safety Standards (Standards 2 and 5)*. Furthermore, legislation exists in all states and territories to promote ACP across Australia. In the context of the current global pandemic, an ageing population and increased prevalence of chronic illness, a large proportion of Paramedics will encounter individuals with palliative care needs and as such, the proposed professional capabilities for paramedics should reflect these practice requirements.

Contact details

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Proposed professional capabilities for paramedics

1. Does any content need to be added to this document?

Yes.

There are a number of health care practitioner standards and codes of conduct which reflect the current legislation and policy climate, including the *Paramedicine Board of Australia- Code of Conduct*. This code states that "in caring for patients or clients towards the end of their life, good practice involves, when relevant, facilitating advanced care planning".

In light of this background, ACPA recommends additional content to be included in the proposed professional capabilities to reflect current legislation and policy. This statement could be included in *Domain 1: The professional and ethical practitioner*, under sub-point '1. Practice ethically and professionally, consistent with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements'. The proposed evidence statement would be:

- Demonstrate understanding of advance care planning including ability to identify and enact an advance care directive and identify and contact the patient's substitute- decision maker where appropriate.

OR

Domain 1: The professional and ethical practitioner, under sub-point '2. Provide each patient with an appropriate level of dignity and care'. The proposed addition would be included with the final point under 'Appropriate professional behaviour'. The evidence statement would include the below addition:

- respects, and so far as possible upholds the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of every patient. This includes their role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process and in maintaining health and wellbeing ***and facilitating advance care planning where appropriate.***

OR

Domain 3: The evidence-based practitioner, under sub-point '1. Make informed and reasonable decisions'. The proposed evidence statement would be:

- Identify and enact a patient's advance care directive where indicated

OR

Domain 5: The paramedicine practitioner, under sub-point '2. Assess and monitor the patient capacity to receive care'. The proposed addition for evidence would be:

- Identify and enact a patient's advance care directive where indicated