

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Definitions

Complex – Complex professional work denotes work which includes various tasks involving different and unrelated processes and methods. It depends on analysis of the subject, phase or issues involved in each assignment and the appropriate course of action may have to be selected from the many alternatives. The work involves conditions and elements that must be identified and analysed to discern interrelationships.

Corporate Impact – is a measure of the effect of decisions made or advice required in a position on agency policies and operations and the achievement of program directives. Corporate Impact is direct in the case of decisions taken. The effect of advice or recommendations is a measure of the influence of advice or recommendations upon the decision maker and the consequences for the organisation of the decision made.

Critical – Critical professional work is used in the sense commonly accepted in technological areas in relation to a critical component, critical issue or critical decision. It means a cornerstone, or fundamental decision, requiring the exercise of sound professional judgement of the effects of a decision within a particular professional field.

Health Professional – The term Health Professional will include but not be limited to the following professions; Biomedical Engineers and Technicians, Cardiac Perfusionists, Cardiac Technologists, Dental Therapists/Prosthetists, Hygienists, Dieticians, Environment Health Officers, Environmental Scientists, Forensics Scientists, Genetic Councillors, Health Information Managers, Mammographers, Medical Laboratory Scientists and Technicians, Neurophysiologists, Neuro-psychologists, Nuclear Medicine Technologists, Occupational Therapists, Orthotists/Prosthetists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Podiatrists, Psychologists, Radiographers, Radiation Therapist, Radio-Pharmacists, Remedial Therapists, Social Workers, Sonographers, Speech Pathologists, and Thoracic Technologists. Professions identified as “Health Professionals” will have a level of knowledge commensurate with an associate diploma or bachelor degree or equivalent qualification in a Health specific discipline. In all cases, relevant experience is required in addition to the formal qualification. This list is not definitive. Additions may be agreed to as new or emerging professions gain recognition, as well as removal from the list as professional evolution guides a profession in a differing direction.

Novel – Novel professional work encompasses work requiring a degree of creativity, originality, ingenuity and initiative and of a type not normally undertaken in a department or significant organisational unit within a department. The term may refer to the introduction of a new technology or process used elsewhere.

Professional Judgement – involves the application of professional knowledge and experience in defining objectives, solving problems, establishing guidelines, reviewing the work of others, interpreting results and providing and assessing advice or recommendations and other matters which have an element of latitude or decision making.

Professional Knowledge – includes the knowledge of principles and techniques applicable to the profession. It is obtained during the acquisition of professional qualifications and relevant experience.

Professional Isolation – refers to the situation where a Health Professional is the only Health Professional of their discipline at their site and is not supported by a structured professional supervision or mentoring programme.

Professional Supervision – refers to supervision given to subordinate health professional, which requires the exercise of professional judgement and consists of:

- Setting guidelines for the work of the health professional
- Suggesting approaches to the conduct of professional work
- Solving technical problems raised by subordinate health professionals
- Reviewing and sometimes checking the work of other health professionals

New Graduate – A newly qualified Health Professional with less than 6 months, full time equivalent, employment experience within the health industry in which the qualification applies.

Recent Graduate – A Health Professional with a minimum of 6 months and up to 24 months experience within the field covered by their qualification.

Sole Practitioner – refers to a practitioner who performs normal professional work in isolation under general professional guidance without a structured supervision programme.

Sole Practitioner Allowance – refers to the higher rate of pay paid to persons, covered by the HP2 classification, as compensation for working in isolation under general professional guidance without a structured supervision programme. However the higher rate of pay is only payable for the period of work when the changed conditions occur.

Student Education – Participate in a range of teaching /training activities in the workplace e.g. tutorials, lectures, placements, supervision.

Work Value

For the purpose of this review, work value relates to “the nature of the work, skill and responsibility required or the conditions under which work is performed.”

Reference: National Wage Case of October 1993

Differences in the value of work as defined by the Work Level Standards are based on the skill, responsibility, accountability and level of supervision required.

WORK LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

Health Professional Level 1

Definition

This is the professional commencement level. The level is the initial professional, industry based formation phase of a new and recent graduate Health Professional; this is in recognition of the fact that they have limited practical experience in the application of their professional knowledge.

Description

The expectation is that staff at this level will only work to established principles, techniques and methods.

Work of all new graduates is subject to professional supervision of a more senior Health Professional for the equivalent of a full time year. They do not provide supervision or training of other professional staff or students.

This level is to be used for all new and recent graduates including pre-registration years, professional development year, and internship year.

Health Professional Level 2

Definition

A Health Professional at this level will have successfully completed a minimum of 12 months paid professionally relevant workplace experience and all relevant professional requirements for progression from Level 1. For professions bound by mandatory registration, all registration requirements must be fulfilled and registration awarded to the Health Professional.

Description

Initially, work is subject to professional supervision. As experience is gained, the contribution and level of professional judgement increases and professional supervision decreases, until a wide range of routine professional tasks are capable of being performed with little technical direction.

May be required to provide general supervision of and /train Health Professional 1, technical and other non-professional staff.

Will be required to exercise independent judgment on routine matters. They will require professional supervision from more senior members from the profession when performing novel, complex or critical tasks.

Health Professional Level 3

Definition

A Health Professional at this level may perform novel, complex or critical professional work under professional supervision or may perform normal professional work as a sole practitioner under general professional guidance.

Description

At this level, staff perform as part of an organisational unit, general professional work or professional work of a specialised nature and accept technical responsibility and accountability for these tasks.

In addition to normal professional work, staff may also be expected to perform difficult or novel, complex or critical professional work under professional supervision, or normal professional work where they are isolated from immediate professional supervision.

Health Professionals at this level are expected to exercise independent professional judgement when required in solving problems and managing cases where principles, procedures, techniques and methods require expansion, adaptation or modification. Staff may carry out research under professional supervision and may be expected to contribute to advances of the techniques used.

Work at this level may include supervision and professional supervision of HP Level 2, Level 1 and undergraduate students.

Professionals at this level may also be required to train HP Level 1 and HP Level 2 staff with respect to the professional work performed by the organisational unit.

Health Professional Level 3 – Recognition of Competency

Definition

Health Professionals at this level will be able to exercise independent judgement based on extensive specialist knowledge or broad generalist knowledge.

Description

Health Professionals at this level will perform to the same standard as a Health Professional 3. A Health Professional 3 having achieved competency recognition will have demonstrated professional achievement through possession of relevant post-graduate qualification or undertaken professional courses to improve skills and knowledge in their discipline.

They will actively participate in professional activities and networks, encouraging staff to also participate, to improve the quality and outcomes of the service.

Guidelines

Application to this level may only take place after a minimum of 3 years, or equivalent, experience at the HP3 level. Discipline specific competency weightings for assessment of entry into this level will be developed on a service wide basis.

Health Professional Level 4

It needs to be recognised that while the work level standards clearly delineates different streams, most Health Professionals at this level will have elements of all three streams. However, the differing streams allows for dedication to a specific function or a dominant function.

1. Senior/Specialist Practitioner Stream

Definition

Health Professionals at this level will be able to perform novel, complex or critical work with a high level of expertise and assume responsibility of performing a consultative role within their professional field of specialty.

Description

A senior Health Professional demonstrates a high level of expertise in a specific area and is consulted for professional advice by other professionals from their work area and works in an area that requires high levels of specialist knowledge as recognised by their employer.

They are expected to contribute to the development of their field of expertise in their own workplace, and be actively contributing to the development of professional knowledge and skills in their field of work as demonstrated by positive impacts on service delivery.

2. Tutor/Educator/Preceptor Stream

Definition

Health Professionals at this classification will have responsibility for the provision of clinical training and professional development for students and Health Professional staff.

Description

The Health Professional Level 4 Tutor has responsibility for the co-ordination of student education and student resources in the workplace for their professional group. They will facilitate and build strong links with tertiary education bodies.

A tutor/educator/preceptor will make significant contribution to the development of professional education for their profession and may have responsibility for the teaching and training of other Health Professionals.

They are required to maintain up to date practical clinical skills and participate within departmental programs.

3. Manager

Definition

Will have professional responsibility for a specific team or clinical unit within a department and undertakes a workload in that department.

Description

Health Professionals at this level are required to provide regular feedback and appraisal regarding the performance of staff.

They are responsible for maintaining effective relationships within the department to ensure priorities are met.

Health Professionals at this level assist with the development and implementation of policies, procedures, standards and practices for hospital(s) or broader health service(s).

They are responsible and accountable for providing a professional level of services to the hospital(s) or broader health service(s) or oversee the management of aspects of services and the staff.

In some circumstances persons perform the role of team/project leader requiring the co-ordination of the work of a number of professionals and /or other staff. The staff co-coordinated need not necessarily be in the same discipline as the leader. The health professional that works at this team/project leader level should have skills and the experience necessary to perform all the tasks undertaken by the team or have the

knowledge and professional judgement to seek and utilise specialist advice when it is required.

Health Professional Level 5 – Manager

Definition

This position under broad policy control undertakes the roles of senior Health Professional Practitioner and/or senior Professional Manager.

Description

Persons at this level are expected to have extensive experience in their professional field and knowledge of national and international trends and advances to perform professional leadership and advocacy.

Programs, strategies and priorities are generally decided at a higher management level but they have the authority to decide on how to achieve results within limits of available resources.

Decisions at this level have direct consequences on the achievement of results for the area that the person is responsible.

The role of senior Health Professional Manager at this level directs an organisational element or team of professionals and other staff, requiring considerable co-ordination and is responsible for human, physical and financial resources under the control of the position. The Health Professional manager contributes directly to the development of agency policy for the work area and has a sound understanding of the wider policy and strategic content.

Health Professional Level 6

Classification of a position at Health Professional Level 6 requires careful consideration in comparison with Health Professional Level 5 positions in regard to the level of accountability, complexity, competencies and professional judgement required to determine whether it carries a level of responsibility beyond that of a Health Professional Level 5.

Definition

The position may under broad policy control and direction undertake the role of senior Health Professional Manager having a high level of accountability, competency, professional judgement and responsibility.

Description

The Health Professional 6, within their area of responsibility will exercise a high degree of independence in the determination of overall strategies, priorities, work standards and the allocation of resources. Work performed has a high corporate impact.

The senior Health Professional Manager at this level leads, directs and co-ordinates a major function or a work area in an agency. They have significant responsibility for the human, physical and financial resources under their control.

Persons at this level may be responsible for initiating planning and contribute significantly to the development of agency or government policy.