



The Australian Society of Dermal Clinicians (ASDC)

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Scope of practice and capabilities of dermal clinicians and dermal therapists

Foreword

The Australian Society of Dermal Clinicians (ASDC) is a professional association for Dermal Clinicians, Dermal Therapists, Clinical Aestheticians, and industry associates. A key role of the ASDC is to increase the professionalisation of Dermal Clinicians, Therapists and Clinical Aestheticians as non-registered health professionals through self regulatory processes. This is in alignment with the National Code of Conduct for Non Registered Health Professionals that is regulated by health complaints legislation in each state. One of the main objectives of the ASDC is to promote high standards of care to protect the public when receiving skin health services. The ASDC does this by the development of standards, guidelines and codes, creating the benchmark for safe, and ethical practice.

This document outlines the scope of practice and competencies of dermal health professionals, summarizing key standards, practice guidelines, codes, and other regulatory frameworks related to the practice of dermal health professionals in Australia. It serves as a resource for various stakeholders, including employers, public and private healthcare providers, and other healthcare practitioners, to understand the diverse roles and responsibilities within the dermal health profession. Employers can use this guidance to determine

which type of practitioner is best suited to meet the specific needs of their health service. It also provides clarity for the public when receiving treatment from a dermal health professional.

The tables provided further define the educational qualifications, list core activities, and highlight the key distinctions between different categories of dermal health practitioners. While the tables present examples of the core activities performed by dermal health professionals, it is important to note that these professionals continuously expand their expertise and grow their scope of practice throughout their careers based on continuing education and experience gained in varied clinical settings and roles.

For more information on the education pathways and core duties of midwives and endorsed midwives, please refer to the [education information on the ASDC website](#).

For more information on professional titles as recognised by the Australian Society of Dermal Clinicians (ASDC) refer to the information provided on the ASDC [website](#).

For details on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), visit the [AQF website](#)

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The following document has been developed by the Australian Society of Dermal Clinicians to provide guidance for dermal health professionals and other stakeholders working with dermal health professionals. This resource has been developed in alignment with resources published by State and Commonwealth governments, national and global health organisations, and in collaboration with allied health and health professions.

Document produced on behalf of the Australian Society of Dermal Clinicians by ASDC Executive Board. Adapted from resources provided by the AHPA collaborative and publicly accessible health and medical professions guidelines.

Version 1.0 December 2024

Review Date 2026

Education and Career Pathways of Dermal Clinicians and Therapists

The title 'Dermal Clinician' and 'Dermal Therapist' are not protected by national or state legislation at this time. The ASDC endorses consistent use of titles based on qualification and scope of practice. This will ensure that consumers and other professionals working in the skin health sector have a better understanding of who is working on their skin and what their scope of practice is.

Misleading or misrepresenting qualifications is a breach of the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Professionals that is legislated and regulated in each state.

Information that misrepresents or misleads the public regarding the qualifications of dermal health professionals can be reported to the Health Commissioner or Ombudsmen in each state.

Table 1.0

	Dermal Clinician	Dermal Therapist
Qualification/ program of study (ASDC recognised)	<p>Study duration</p> <p>Minimum requirement is three years full time (or equivalent) from an approved tertiary education provider and program at AQF 7 (Bachelor Degree)</p> <p>3 Year Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bachelor of Health Science (Clinical Dermal Therapies), *superseded Victoria University ● Bachelor of Health Science (Aesthetics) Torrens University ● Bachelor of Applied Health Science (Clinical Aesthetics) Australasian College of Health and Wellness ● Bachelor of Applied Health 	<p>Study duration</p> <p>Minimum requirement is 18 months (or equivalent) from an approved tertiary education provider at AQF 6 (Advanced Diploma, Associate Degree).</p> <p>Dermal therapists may also enter the profession from other pathways with a post graduate certificate or diploma of 12 months duration at AQF 8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diploma of Beauty Therapy + or/ Graduate Certificate in IPL and Laser Hair Reduction (SIB70110) ● Associate Degree in Applied Health Science (Dermal Therapy) Australasian College of Health and Wellness

	<p>Science (Clinical Aesthetics) Australian Dermal Science Institute</p> <p>4 Year Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Dermal Science Victoria University • Bachelor of Health Science (Dermal Therapies) *superseded Victoria University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Degree in Applied Health Science (Dermal Therapy) Australasian College of Health and Wellness • Advanced Diploma of Cosmetic Dermal Science (52923WA) & Superseded versions (52850WA, 10510NAT, 51530, 52320, 51920) AACDS and Gray Clay • Graduate Diploma in Dermal Science (52920WA) & Superseded versions (52854WA, 52707WA) AACDS and Gray Clay • Graduate Diploma in Cosmetic Nursing and Injectables (52919WA) & Superseded versions (52852WA, 52709WA) AACDS and Gray Clay
Clinical placement hours/setting	<p>3 Year Programs Students complete at least 200 hours of supervised clinical practice providing a variety of treatments and services</p> <p>4 Year Programs Students complete at least 300 hours of supervised clinical practice providing a variety of treatments and services</p>	Students complete at least 50 hours of supervised clinical practice
Educational outcomes	Dermal clinicians graduate with in-depth knowledge and established skills to treat a variety of skin concerns using different techniques and technologies. They focus on a person-centered approach and base their treatments on the latest evidence,	Dermal therapists graduate with knowledge and skills to treat a variety of skin concerns using different techniques and technologies. They focus on a person-centered approach and base their treatments combining both theoretical

	<p>combining both theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience to care for skin in persons at all stages of life and with an understanding of how all body systems impact the health of skin.</p> <p>Dermal Clinicians can recognise the normal and changing health of people in their care and work in collaborative care arrangements with other health and allied health professions as required.</p> <p>Dermal Clinicians develop strong critical thinking skills that can be applied in various settings where they work. In addition, dermal clinicians are skilled communicators and have developed foundational skills in research, leadership, and clinical practice</p>	<p>knowledge and hands-on experience to provide care and manage tasks and contingencies within the scope of their role and responsibilities.</p> <p>Dermal therapists are skilled communicators and can recognise the normal and changing health of people in their care in order to refer when required.</p>
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Scope of Practice of Dermal Clinicians and Therapists

The qualifications in **Table 1.0** encompasses the full scope of the profession at the graduate entry level, however the scope of practice for individual dermal health professionals is shaped and can broaden with further education, training and experience and as such evolves over time. Other factors that can impact scope of practice include the health needs of the clients they work with, the setting in which they work which can be both clinical and non clinical, the practitioner’s level of competence and confidence, and the policy requirements of the setting in which they work.

Table 2.0

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Dermal Clinicians provide skin health services to assist with managing common skin problems and can provide advice and management to assist with common conditions and disorders relating to skin, adipose, hair, and nails. They can assess and manage within their scope of practice acute and chronic skin conditions that may be associated with medical and chronic health conditions or skin changes as part of their treatment. More common client groups include but are not limited to those seeking cosmetic medical or surgical procedures, the aged, diabetics, people with vascular disease, lymphatic dysfunction, and cancer.</p>	<p>Dermal Therapists provide skin health services to assist with managing common skin problems in the general population. This includes concerns about general skin health or appearance as well as prevention and management of ageing and skin problems associated with photodamage. Dermal Therapists can provide advice and management to assist with common conditions and disorders relating to skin, adipose, hair, and nails.</p>
<p>What do dermal health professionals do?</p>	<p>Main Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consults with and assesses client’s skin conditions, concerns, 	<p>Main Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completes skin analysis and assessment to determine

	<p>disorders and detects underlying medical conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Performs skin surveillance including assessment for lesions, skin cancer and refers for medical review● Advises on strategies to achieve optimal outcomes pre and post surgery including wound healing and scar management● Develops, implements and monitors treatment plans for client's skin health concerns and dermatological conditions.● performs a variety of non-surgical cosmetic and reconstructive procedures to enhance skin health and appearance● Provides education and assesses risks for clients with chronic health problems such as diabetes, cancer and vascular disease● Provides adjunctive therapy for dermatological conditions such as pigment, superficial vascular conditions and scarring using topical therapies, manual techniques and energy-based devices including but not limited to class IV lasers, medical micro-needling, clinical strength peels● Uses Class IV Lasers for Tattoo Removal● Refers to and collaborates with other healthcare professionals,	<p>appropriate treatments for clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Applies various dermal therapy treatments for skin rejuvenation, age management and acne treatments such as microdermabrasion and cosmetic grade peels● Uses laser and intense pulsed light devices for hair reduction treatment● Provides non-invasive, superficial treatment of pigment and superficial vessels (telangiectasias)● Perform a variety of non-surgical procedures within their scope to enhance skin appearance● Provides advice to clients on skincare and maintenance, including product recommendation
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	such as dermatologists, vascular and plastic surgeons as needed	
Clinical Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private practice • Integrated specialist services including Plastic Surgery, Cosmetic Medicine, Dermatology, • Vascular and Skin Cancer Medicine clinics • Outpatient health services • Community and public health services • Aged care • Disability and rehabilitation services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private practice • LASER clinics • Beauty clinics and medi spas • Integrated specialist services including Plastic Surgery, Cosmetic Medicine and Dermatology clinics
Further Specialisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melanographer/Dermoscopist - specialised screening for skin cancer using dermoscopy and imaging. • Lymphoedema practitioner - specialised oedema management to assess and manage chronic oedema, lymphoedema or undergoing cancer treatment • Cosmetic and Reconstructive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic and Reconstructive Tattooist - providing re-pigmentation services for lips, eyes, brows, nipple and areola as well as scars.

	Tattooist - providing re-pigmentation services for lips, eyes, brows, nipple and areola as well as scars.	
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Further information

For further information about the expectations for professional practice for Dermal Clinicians and Dermal Therapists you can refer to the following documents.

[Code of Ethical Practice for Dermal Clinicians and Therapists](#)

[The Standards of Practice for Dermal Clinicians and Therapists](#)

[Membership categories and education requirements](#)

Skin Management Pillars: Dermal Health Professionals

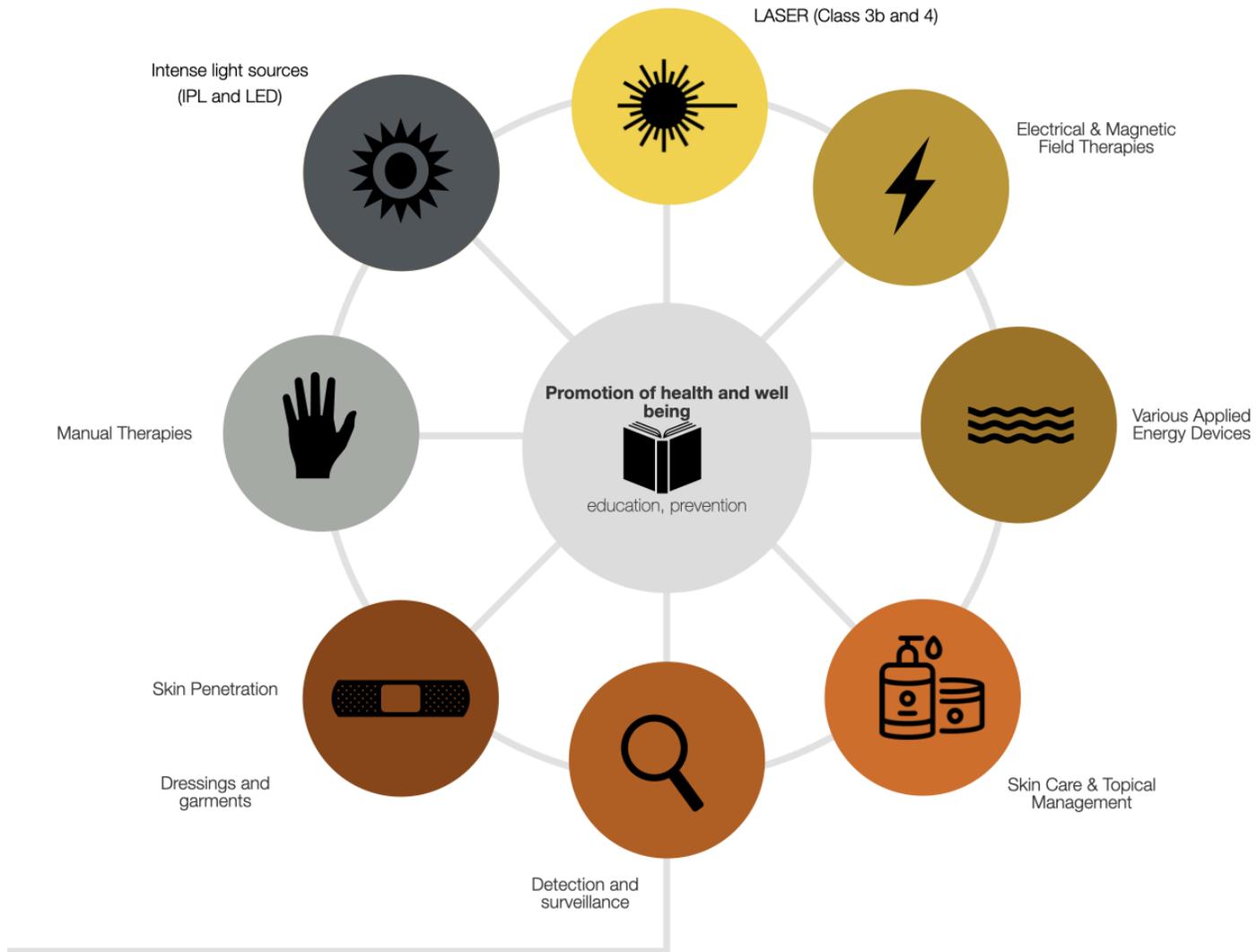


Figure 1. Pillars of Skin Management

Legal and Regulatory Requirements Pertaining to Practice of Dermal Clinicians and Therapists

Although Dermal Clinicians and Therapists are not registered health professionals, they are commonly recognised as providers of health services. In 2015 the Council of Australian Governments (since 29 May 2020, reformed as the National Federation Reform Council (NFRC) established a National Code of Conduct for Non-Registered Health Care Workers. It is accepted that the aim of this was to protect the public by setting a minimum standard of practice to ensure health services are provided by competent, and ethical practitioners.

Since the establishment of the Code of Conduct, it has been implemented and adapted within each state and territory. At the present time, the Code of Conduct is regulated in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory . The following laws, regulations, and standards also apply to those providing dermal therapy or skin health services. These include consumer protection laws, employment law, criminal law, tort law (negligence), the law of contracts, health complaints law, and laws that regulate medicines, therapeutic goods, and equipment.

Figure 1. State and Territory Regulation of unregistered health care providers¹.

Commonwealth	Legislation, Regulations and Codes
	Work Health and Safety ACT(2019), Regulations and Codes of Practice Australian Consumer Law (2010) Fair Work Act and Regulations (2009) Therapeutic Goods Act Therapeutic Goods Regulation Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code (2021) The Privacy Act (1988) Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998

¹ It is expected that Dermal Clinicians and Therapists are responsible for maintaining currency and adhering with regulations, guidelines and ACTS that relate to professional practice including but not limited to workplace occupational health and safety, privacy and management of health records, standards of care and human rights, working with vulnerable populations including children, aged and disabled, anti-discrimination, cultural competency, bullying/ harassment, assault and battery and defamation.

	Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety (Licence Charges) Act 1998 Biosecurity Act (2015)		
State	Code of Conduct	Health Complaints	Legislation
Victoria	Code of Conduct for General Health Services	Health Complaints Commissioner	Health Complaints Act 2016 Health Records Act 2001 Health Records Regulations 2012 Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations Freedom of Information Act 1982 Freedom of Information (Access Charges) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017.
New South Wales	Code of conduct for unregistered health practitioners	Health Complaints Commission	Public Health Regulation 2012 Public Health ACT 2010 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1988 Code of conduct for unregistered health professionals Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008
Queensland	National code of conduct for health care workers (Queensland)	Office of the Health Ombudsman	Human Rights ACT 2019 Public Health ACT 2005 Information Privacy Act 2009 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations Radiation Safety Act 1999 Radiation Safety Regulation 2021 Standard for non-ionising radiation apparatus—medical or cosmetic procedures, or related practices (2021) Standard for premises—non-ionising radiation apparatus (2021) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 (MPA) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021

South Australia	Code of conduct for certain health care workers	Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner	Health and community services complaint ACT 2004 Freedom of information act 1991 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations The Controlled Substances Act 1984 Controlled Substances (Poisons) Regulations 2011
Western Australia	National code of conduct for health care workers in Western Australia-consultation	Health and disability Services Complaints Office	Health and Disability Services Complaints ACT 1995 Freedom of information act 1992 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations Radiation Safety Act 1975 Radiation Safety (General) Regulations 1983 Radiation Safety (Qualifications) Regulations 1980
Tasmania		Health Complaints Commissioner Tasmania	Health Complaints Act 1995 Health complaints code of conduct amendment 2018 Personal Information Protection Act 2004 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations Radiation Protection Act 2005
Northern Territory	Code of Health and Community Rights and Responsibilities National Code of Conduct for unregistered health care workers -implementation in the Northern Territory Information Paper	Health and Community Services Complaints Commission	Health and Community Services Complaints Regulation 1998 Information Act 2002 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers	Health Services Commissioner	Health Records (Privacy and Access) ACT 1997 Privacy ACT 1988 Human Rights Commission ACT 2005 Information Privacy Act 2014 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations