



CIRCULAR NO (DHP/2024/03)

From	Department of Healthcare Professions/Ministry of Public Health.
To	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Podiatrists in the State of Qatar.• All focal points/ representatives of healthcare facilities in the State of Qatar
Subject	Adding scope of practice and defining registration / licensing standards for Podiatrist to the list of Allied Healthcare Practitioner
Date	04 February 2024

“Greetings from the Department of Healthcare Professions.”

The Department of Healthcare Professions pursuit (DHP) to cope with the best regional and international practices in the field of registration/ licensing, and in accordance with benchmark study and collaboration with the experts, and based on the Permanent Licensing Committee decision, in its meeting number 10, dated 25/12/2023, the Department of Healthcare Professions (DHP) is adding scope of practice and defining registration / licensing standards for Podiatrist to the list of Allied Healthcare Practitioner. Please check the attachments for all information regarding the registration/ licensing requirements and the scope of practice.

Attachments:

Podiatrist scope of practice and its registration / licensing standards.

Thank you for your cooperation, Registration Section/Department of Healthcare Professions

For further information, contact: dhpregistration@moph.gov.qa

Criteria for National Registration Requirements – Podiatrist

Criteria	Podiatrist
Definition	Podiatrists have the expertise, knowledge to diagnose, monitor and treat patients with bone and joint disorders to maintain the health and function of the foot, ankle, and lower limb. This can include dealing with skin problems and corns or correcting anatomical abnormalities like flat footedness. This also includes, but is not limited to, the analysis of gait, posture, muscular function, vascular, neurological, or dermatological and other factors, including appropriate health promotion, education, and conducting relevant and necessary diagnostic investigations.
Practice Settings	A Podiatrist may provide services in both public and private settings, including Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Healthcare setting.
Conditions managed by Podiatrist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute pain in foot/ ankle (less than 30 days) • Athlete's foot • Blisters • Ingrown toenails (non-diabetic) • Plantar fasciitis (non-surgical cases) • Nail avulsion • Heels spurs • Arthritic complaint of foot and ankle • Achilles tendonitis • Fungal toenails • Ankle sprain • Warts • Flat foot (non – surgical cases) • Bunions • Tailor's bunionette • Fractured toes and distal Phalanx – (simple)
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor's degree in podiatry. (Study duration 4 years) • Bachelor's degree in any healthcare related field along with structured accredited course in podiatry
Scope of Practice	<p>Clinical Duties of Podiatrist encompasses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake thorough assessments, including medical histories and perform physical examinations. • Interview patients and conduct a complete physical examination of the foot and ankle, including tissue, bone, and muscular structure, such physical examination that may also include those areas of the body potentially contributing to disorders, diseases, injuries, or symptoms of the foot. • Perform wound care. • Prescribe and fit orthotics, insoles, and custom-made shoes. • Assess, diagnose, and monitor common foot and lower limb concerns in children (e.g., flat feet, in toeing) • Order and perform physical therapy. • Request and interpret x-rays only.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical treatments: prescription and administration of medications and supplies for foot and ankle. <p>Note: For surgical privilege and administration of local anesthesia, applicant must apply for special privilege along with surgical logs.</p>
Licensure	Candidates should have a valid license/registration certificate accompanying the required years of experience.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas candidates: Minimum three years of experience in Podiatry. For Qatari Nationals, Qatar Universities graduates, offspring of Qatari women or offspring of residents, please refer to the DHP Circular No.13/2023.
Competency validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passing the DHP licensing examination (if available), unless exempted, please refer to Circular No.24/2020, and the qualifying examination policy at the following link: https://dhp.moph.gov.qa/en/Documents/Qualifying%20Examination%20Policy.pdf Verification of the educational qualifications and relevant graduate clinical experience.
Other Requirements for Evaluation & Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the DHP requirements for Registration/Evaluation at this link: https://dhp.moph.gov.qa/en/Pages/HowToRegisterToPracticeInQatar.aspx
Requirements for License renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the DHP requirements for License Renewal at this link: https://dhp.moph.gov.qa/en/Pages/HowToRegisterToPracticeInQatar.aspx
<p>Note: For applicants with break from practice, please refer to the DHP Break from Practice at this link: https://dhp.moph.gov.qa/en/Documents/Policy%20on%20Break%20from%20Practice.pdf</p>	

Podiatrist - Scope of Practice

INTRODUCTION

The Scope of Practice for Podiatrist uses a competency framework built on the following five domains:

- 1. Professional and Ethical Practice**
- 2. Clinical Practice**
- 3. Leadership and Management**
- 4. Continuous Education**
- 5. Research and Development**

Each domain is described through competency requirements and performance criteria that define the standards of practice expected of the Podiatrist. This document is to be used as a foundation for all Podiatrist roles, professional development, and performance appraisal.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define the scope of practice for licensed Podiatrist in Qatar and to:

- (a) Describe the services offered by qualified Podiatrists.
- (b) Define the professional accountability, required competencies, and scope of ethical and legal practice of the Podiatrists in relation to patients, families, other members of the multidisciplinary team, community, and society.
- (c) Serve as a reference for license regulating authorities and governing professional healthcare.

DEFINITION OF PODIATRIST

Podiatrists have the expertise, knowledge to diagnose, monitor and treat patients with bone and joint disorders to maintain the health and function of the foot, ankle, and lower limb. This can include dealing with skin problems and corns or correcting anatomical abnormalities like flat footedness. This also includes, but is not limited to, the analysis of gait, posture, muscular function, vascular, neurological, or dermatological and other factors, including appropriate health promotion, education, and conducting relevant and necessary diagnostic investigations. The podiatrist's scope of practice includes areas such as feet biomechanics, gait analysis, orthopedic, rheumatology, prescription orthotics, pediatrics, sports injuries, structural problems, wound management, geriatric care, and research.



PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND ACTIVITIES

The clinical practice of a Podiatrist encompasses biomechanical assessments that are related to foot, heel, ankle, and lower limb pain which will include muscle strains, bone pain, sprains, and the like. Clinical Podiatry is acknowledging health status to perform comprehensive assessments to provide preventive care, diagnosis, and treatment of a range of problems affecting the feet, ankles, and legs. Clinical practice further includes developing and implementing an individualized treatment plan in consultation with the patient and providing evidence-based information regarding use of medications (over the counter and prescription). A Podiatrist provides in-person consultations, telephone consultations, and may provide services in both public and private settings, including Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Healthcare setting, or within a community as an independent practitioner or employee. The practice also includes providing evidence-based information in the context of treating patients. The Podiatrist should ensure to conduct effective diagnostic skills and treatment plan to educate, when interacting with patients, health care team members and others in the community, and work by the principles of family-centered care while maintaining a collaborative and supportive relationship with patients.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

1. DOMAIN ONE: PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

This domain defines the professional accountability and scope of ethical and legal practice of the Podiatrists in relation to patients, families, members of the healthcare team, community, and society.

1.1 Competency Standard: Accountability

Practitioners accept accountability for their own actions and decision-making and for its related outcomes.

Performance Criteria:

- 1.1.1 Demonstrates accountability for their own professional judgments, actions, outcomes of care and continued competence in accordance with Qatari laws and regulations and the Scope of Practice.
- 1.1.2 Records all relevant information, truthfully and fully, concerning care provided and, where appropriate, retaining records for the time specified by the local jurisdiction.
- 1.1.3 Reports, when necessary, truthfully, and fully to the client's primary health care provider, to the health care system, and/or to the appropriate social services.
- 1.1.4 Works within the limits of own competence and the boundaries of the Scope of Practice.
- 1.1.5 Seeks appropriate guidance when encountering situations beyond the limits of own competence and the Scope of Practice.
- 1.1.6 Acknowledges and respects the accountability and responsibilities of other healthcare professionals and personnel.
- 1.1.7 Takes accountability for delegation of aspects of care delivery.
- 1.1.8 Participates in activities to optimize patient access to the full range of services required for effective healthcare.
- 1.1.9 Assumes accountability for improving the quality and effectiveness of healthcare services provided.

1.2 Competency Standard: Ethical Practice

Podiatrists work within the framework defined by the Code of Professional Conduct for Podiatry, the Scope of Practice for Podiatry, and the Clinical Competencies for the Practice of Podiatry and integrates knowledge and evidence from the disciplines defined in the Detailed Content Outline when providing care for patients.

Performance Criteria:

- 1.2.1 Engages in ethical decision-making with respect to own professional responsibilities or where ethical issues affect healthcare delivery or clinical decision-making.
- 1.2.2 Preserves patient confidence by respecting their privacy, dignity, and confidentiality.
- 1.2.3 Acts as patient advocate protecting the patient's and their families' rights in accordance with Qatari law, WHO code and policy, and conditions of employment.
- 1.2.4 Upholds the highest standards of ethical conduct as outlined in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Article 12).
- 1.2.5 Maintains confidentiality and makes every reasonable effort to ensure the security of written, verbal, and electronic patient information.
- 1.2.6 Respects the patient's right to be fully informed establishing a context for self-determination, assent, and informed consent.
- 1.2.7 Acts sensitively and fairly giving due consideration to diversity, including cultural and religious beliefs, race, age, gender, physical and mental state, and other relevant factors.
- 1.2.8 Liaises and collaborates with other healthcare professionals and personnel to ensure that ethical practice is maintained.
- 1.2.9 Questions, when appropriate, healthcare practice where the safety of patients or healthcare professionals is at risk and where the quality-of-care warrants improvement.
- 1.2.10 Acts where the safety of care is compromised and where necessary reports observed activity that may be risking patient safety.
- 1.2.11 Demonstrates professional integrity in matters where a conflict of interest could be construed.

1.3 Competency Standard: Legal Implications

Podiatrist always act in accordance with relevant legislative, regulatory and policy guidelines.

Performance Criteria:

- 1.3.1 Practices in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.
- 1.3.2 Practices in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, and within the legal framework of the respective geopolitical regions or settings.
- 1.3.3 Maintains valid registration and licensure to practice in Qatar.
- 1.3.4 Recognizes and acts upon breaches of laws and regulations relating to the professional role.

2 DOMAIN TWO: CLINICAL PRACTICE

This domain encompasses the key principles of the Podiatrist's role in providing evidence-based education about diagnosis and treatment plan to families, health professionals, educators and the community through various means including counseling, teaching, client information fact sheets, curriculum development, and multimedia campaigns.

2.1 Competency Standard: Protect, Promote and Support Podiatry.

Participates in the development of policies at local, regional, national, and global levels which protect, promote, and support the practice of podiatry in all situations including emergencies.

Performance Criteria:

- 2.1.1 Provides information that is evidence-based and free of conflict of interest.
- 2.1.2 Provides competent services for clients and performs a comprehensive assessment.
- 2.1.3 Undertake thorough assessments, including medical histories and perform physical examinations.
- 2.1.4 Interview patients and conduct a complete physical examination of the foot and ankle, including tissue, bone, and muscular structure, such physical examination that may also include those areas of the body potentially contributing to disorders, diseases, injuries, or symptoms of the foot.
- 2.1.5 Prescribe and fit orthotics, insoles, and custom-made shoes.
- 2.1.6 Assess, diagnose and monitor common foot and lower limb concerns in children (e.g. flat feet, in toeing).
- 2.1.7 Order and perform physical therapy relevant to podiatry.
- 2.1.8 Request and interpret x-rays only.
- 2.1.9 Choose and perform appropriately:
 - 2.1.9.1 Medical treatments: prescription for medicine and supplies for foot and ankle.
- 2.1.10 Provides follow-up services as required.
- 2.1.11 Evaluates potential or existing challenges and factors that may impact meeting a client's treatment plan.
- 2.1.12 Assesses and provides strategies to initiate and continue treatment when challenging situations exist/occur.
- 2.1.13 Provide treatment to patient population that includes:
 - 2.1.13.1 children with lower limb pain, walking difficulties or congenital abnormalities such as club foot.
 - 2.1.13.2 Patients with sport related injuries and patient whose work puts stress on their feet for long hours that result to feet injury.
 - 2.1.13.3 Patients requiring footwear or foot health advice to treat anomalies.

2.2 Competency Standard: Professional Conduct Principles

Adheres to a standard of reasonable care set by the Code of Professional Conduct principles as below.

Performance Criteria:

- 2.2.1 Acts with due diligence.
- 2.2.2 Preserves the confidentiality of clients.
- 2.2.3 Reports accurately and completely to other members of the healthcare team.
- 2.2.4 Exercises independent judgment and avoids conflicts of interest.
- 2.2.5 Maintains personal integrity.
- 2.2.6 Upholds the professional standards expected.
- 2.2.7 Complies with the Disciplinary Procedures, Practitioners are personally accountable for acting consistently to safeguard the interests of clients and justify public trust.

2.3 Competency Standard: Communication and Teamwork.

Consistently communicates relevant, accurate and comprehensive information in verbal, written and electronic forms in a timely manner to ensure the delivery of safe, competent, and ethical care.

Performance Criteria:

- 2.3.1 Demonstrates cultural competence across patient groups.
- 2.3.2 Obtains the client's permission to provide care and treatment and utilizes appropriate counseling skills and techniques.
- 2.3.3 Uses the principles of family-centered care while maintaining a collaborative, supportive relationship with clients.
- 2.3.4 Makes referrals to other health care providers and community support resources when necessary.
- 2.3.5 Works collaboratively and interdependently with other members of the health care team to deliver coordinated services to families.
- 2.3.6 Works with others to affect change and produce positive outcomes through the sharing of knowledge and to ensure that other members of the health care team remain fully informed.

3 DOMAIN THREE: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Exhibits leadership qualities required to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the public by providing the internationally recognized measure of knowledge in Podiatry.

3.1 Competency Standard: Leadership

Exhibits leadership qualities and practices safely, efficiently, and ethically.

Performance Criteria:

- 3.1.1 Applies clinical reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving skills to the organization, provision, management, and evaluation of diagnostic tests.
- 3.1.2 Manages self to ensure effective workload prioritization and time management.
- 3.1.3 Provides feedback, offers suggestions for change, and deals effectively with the impact of change on own practice, the team and/or on the organization.
- 3.1.4 Protects patient population by adherence to the principles and aim of the International Code of Practices and subsequent relevant World Health Assembly's resolutions.
- 3.1.5 Advocates for, and contributes to, the creation and maintenance of a positive working environment and teamwork.
- 3.1.6 Advocates for practice of Podiatrists in all settings.
- 3.1.7 Supports practices which promote podiatry and discourage practices which interfere with podiatry by the following criteria:
 - 3.1.7.1 Exercises care in choosing a method of treatment appropriately.

3.2 Competency Standard: Quality Improvement and Safety

Ensures organizational quality and safety standards as per guidelines and participates in continuous quality improvement.

Performance Criteria:

- 3.2.1 Practices in accordance with approved quality standards and guidelines reflecting recognized evidence based best practice.
- 3.2.2 Seeks evidence from a wide range of credible sources to maintain, extend and evaluate the quality of diagnostic services.
- 3.2.3 Maintains documentation of all client contacts, assessments, treatment plans, recommendations, and evaluations of care.

- 3.2.4 Obtains a client's consent, before initiating a consultation, to share clinical information with other members of the client's healthcare team as required.
- 3.2.5 Operates within the limits of the scope of practice.
- 3.2.6 Discloses any actual or apparent conflict of interest, including a financial interest in relevant goods or services, or in organizations which provide relevant goods or services.
- 3.2.7 Ensures that commercial considerations do not influence professional judgment.
- 3.2.8 Withdraws voluntarily from professional practice if the practitioner has a physical or mental disability that could be detrimental to clients.

3.3 Competency Standard: Use of Techniques and Devices and safe practice

Provides evidence-based information to the client regarding the use of techniques, appliances, and devices.

Performance Criteria:

- 3.3.1 Evaluates, critiques, and demonstrates the use of techniques and devices which support the practice of Podiatry.
- 3.3.2 Monitors for devices that may be marketed without evidence to support their usefulness and may be harmful to the clinical practice of podiatry.
- 3.3.3 Critiques and evaluates the use of techniques, appliances and devices which support or may be harmful to initiation and/or continuation of treatment plan.
- 3.3.4 Use medical equipment, including blood pressure gauges, scales, mechanical examination tablets, x-ray machines and other laboratory equipment appropriately.
- 3.3.5 Process reusable medical devices and equipment.

4 DOMAIN FOUR: CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

This domain defines the responsibilities of the Podiatrist to encourage education of others as well as personal development and growth.

4.1 Competency Standard: Education and Facilitation

Demonstrates commitment to the development of other members in the healthcare team, as well as patients, families, community, and society.

Performance Criteria:

- 4.1.1 Shares and disseminates professional knowledge and research findings with others.
- 4.1.2 Acts as a resource person for patients and healthcare professionals.
- 4.1.3 Contributes to the formal and informal education to enable development, implementation, and evaluation of appropriate, acceptable, and achievable treatment plans.
- 4.1.4 Contributes to the development of students and colleagues facilitating and where appropriate coordinating learning opportunities.
- 4.1.5 Takes opportunities to learn together with other healthcare professionals in order to contribute to healthcare improvement.

4.2 Competency Standard: Lifelong Learning

Assumes responsibility for own professional development through lifelong learning to ensure continued competence and performance improvement.

Performance Criteria:

- 4.2.1 Undertakes regular self-assessment and reviews own practice through reflection, peer review, competency assessment, critical examination, and evaluation.
- 4.2.2 Instigates planned updating knowledge and skills for safe, person-centered, evidence-based practice.
- 4.2.3 Actively engages in ongoing professional development and performance improvement of self and others.

4.3 Competency Standard: Promotion of Health and Patient Education

Takes part in health promotion and patient education.

Performance Criteria:

- 4.3.1 Applies knowledge of resources available for health promotion and health education.
- 4.3.2 Selects appropriate teaching aids.
- 4.3.3 Provides education about foot care at different ages of the child.
- 4.3.4 Provides culturally competent education and information that also reflects level of comprehension.
- 4.3.5 Evaluates clients' understanding of all information and education provided.

5 DOMAIN FIVE: RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

This domain articulates the requirement for the Podiatrist to incorporate best available evidence to provide quality health care and contribute to the creation and/or implementation of knowledge through active participation.

5.1 Competency Standard: Evidence-Based Practice

Provides evidence-based information to assist the client to make decisions regarding conditions affecting the foot, ankle, and related structures of the leg.

Performance Criteria:

- 5.1.1 Provides evidence-based education about foot care and treatment plans to families, health professionals, educators, and the community. This can be through various means including counseling, teaching, client information fact sheets, curriculum development, and multimedia campaigns.
- 5.1.2 Critiques, evaluates, and incorporates research findings into practice.
- 5.1.3 Facilitates the development of policies which protect, promote foot care and treatment.
- 5.1.4 Participates in the formulation of evidence-based practice based on best available credible research and/or national and international professional consensus and guidance and audit.

5.2 Competency Standard: Using Data and Information Systems

Uses data systems to enhance the quality and delivery of patient care.

Performance Criteria:

- 5.2.1 Acquires the information technology skills needed to inform and provide optimum healthcare care and document outcomes accurately.
- 5.2.2 Disseminates personal or third-party research, practice development and audit findings with colleagues and peers.
- 5.2.3 Promotes dissemination, use, monitoring and review of professional standards and best practice guidelines.

- 5.2.4 Understands how to use technology and data to assist in problem identification and identification of deficiencies that can be remediated to enable improvements in patient care.
- 5.2.5 Analyzes data accurately and comprehensively leading to appropriate interpretation of findings and development of implementation plans.



References:

- [1] Podiatrist Board of New Zealand:
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- [5] Allied Health profession Australia-
<https://ahpa.com.au/allied-health-professions/podiatry/>
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- [7] Department of health- U.A.E:
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