

Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner Program Framework

Related Policies:

- ALA Constitution
- ALPP Continuing Professional Development Policy
- ALPP Professional Indemnity Insurance Policy
- ALPP Recency of Practice Policy
- ALPP Return to Practice Policy
- ALPP Mandatory Declarations Policy
- ALPP Lymphoedema Training Policy
- Accreditation Committee Terms of Reference
- ALPP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice
- ALPP Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

Delegated Authority:

Accreditation Committee

Responsible Officer:

ALA Company Secretary

About the Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner Program (ALPP) and National Lymphoedema Practitioners Register (NLPR):

The Australasian Lymphology Association Ltd (ALA) established and maintains the ALPP as a rigorous benchmarked self regulation program which promotes professional standards of practice thereby ensuring that safe, high quality lymphoedema management services are available to people living with lymphoedema in Australia and New Zealand. A public register of accredited lymphoedema practitioners practising in Australia and New Zealand, known as the National Lymphoedema Practitioners Register (NLPR), is hosted on the ALA's website and seeks to support accessibility. The ALA promotes the ALPP and NLPR to health professionals, referrers, consumers, health insurance companies and other interested persons.

Scope:

The ALPP Framework (Framework), together with the related Policies and Procedures, outlines the structure of the ALA's Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner Program (ALPP), including the entry criteria for individuals seeking to become an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner, as well as requirements for ongoing accreditation. As well as demonstrating to their patients, employer and others their commitment to excellence in lymphoedema management, accreditation under the ALPP enables a practitioner to elect to be listed on the NLPR.

ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioners must demonstrate they are of suitable standing, have acquired an appropriate level of lymphoedema education and professional competence, meet expectations with respect to professional indemnity cover, and demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning enabling them to provide safe and effective lymphoedema management services. Additionally, ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioners are required to adhere to the ALPP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice, demonstrate recency of practice and comply with a range of mandatory declarations. Professional competence is achieved through meeting entry criteria including completing ALA accredited lymphoedema training. Ongoing learning is demonstrated through participation in lymphoedema-related continuing professional development (CPD) activities.

This Framework applies to individuals who have attained or are seeking to attain accreditation as an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner in one or more health professions. It does not apply to individuals who have allowed their status with the ALPP to lapse.

Non-compliance with this Framework and/or any of the related policies and procedures may result in loss of recognition as an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner or breach the ALPP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice and attract disciplinary action.

1. ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner Program:

The ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner Program (ALPP) accredits appropriately qualified and skilled health professionals. As defined within this Framework and the program's policies and procedures, Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioners may only deliver lymphoedema management services within the scope of practice of their primary health profession(s) and the competencies achieved through undertaking accredited lymphoedema training.

2. National Lymphoedema Practitioners Register (NLPR):

The NLPR is hosted on the ALA website and seeks to support access to lymphoedema services for consumers throughout Australia and New Zealand. Data available on the register is designed to meet the requirements of consumers while being based on evidence available to the ALA. Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioners may elect to be listed on the NLPR. One listing is available for each Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner and is included within the annual fee. At the discretion of the Accreditation Committee and the ALA Board of Directors, additional listings may be offered and these may attract an administration fee.

3. Governance Responsibilities:

The ALA Board of Directors appoints the Accreditation Committee. The selection, composition and functions of this Committee are set down in the Accreditation Committee Terms of Reference.

4. Eligibility:

Eligibility for initial accreditation and annual renewal as an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner is determined against the criteria within this Framework and related policies and procedures. Where an individual seeking to be accredited under the ALPP is unable to demonstrate full compliance with the criteria an initial application or re-accreditation may be refused or withheld until all criteria are met. These parameters may:

- be required in order to gain initial accreditation
- be required to maintain accreditation
- be time bound
- be subject to change
- include requirements such as -
 - additional or specific continuing professional development activities
 - clinical practice requirements.

Individuals may apply to be recognised under more than one profession if they meet the entry criteria for each profession independently.

Only individuals accredited by the ALPP under one or more professions are permitted to reflect this status. This applies to personal or business marketing, as well as utilising any ALA, ALPP and NLPR collateral including logo, certificate and relevant post nominals. ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioners are required to ensure their marketing collateral is in line with the ALA's Corporate Style Guide.

5. Entry pathways to accreditation:

To be considered for accreditation under the ALPP, applicants must reside in Australia or New Zealand and satisfy one or more of the pathways:

5.1 Holds and maintains registration as a medical practitioner in the country in which they reside

5.2 Holds and maintains registration as a registered nurse in the country in which they reside

5.3 Holds and maintains registration or relevant recognition as required by their profession in the country in which they reside which proves competence as an allied health practitioner, including:

- Holding a university health sciences qualification at AQF/NZQF Level 7 or higher which is accredited by the relevant national accreditation body.
- Meeting eligibility requirements for membership of a national professional organisation with a code of ethics/conduct.

- Being recognised as meeting the standards of a profession which practises in health, disability or related systems, in an evidence-based paradigm using an internationally recognised body of knowledge, has clearly articulated competency standards and a defined scope of practice which aligns with lymphoedema management.
- Holding specialised expertise to undertake a direct patient care role in preventing, diagnosing and/or treating a range of conditions and practising autonomously or, where deemed appropriate, as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- Being recognised by a regulatory or self-regulatory body with enforceable regulatory mechanisms.
- Application to broader public health outcomes.

5.4 Demonstrates eligibility for Ordinary Membership – Remedial or Ordinary Membership - Advanced with Massage and Myotherapy Australia through the satisfactory completion of a recognised AQF Level 5 or higher qualification OR a NZQF Level 5 or higher qualification recognised by Massage New Zealand for recognition as a registered massage therapist.

6 Initial accreditation:

To gain accreditation, applicants must:

- Fulfil the requirements of the relevant pathway as detailed in 'Clause 5 Entry pathways to accreditation' of this Framework
- Provide evidence of successful completion of lymphoedema training accredited by the ALA; refer ALPP Lymphoedema Training Policy and listing of accredited training on www.lymphoedema.org.au
- Demonstrate compliance with the ALPP Continuing Professional Development Policy if completion of the ALA accredited lymphoedema training was more than two years prior to the application
- Comply with the ALPP Professional Indemnity Insurance Policy
- Comply with the ALPP Recency of Practice Policy if completion of the ALA accredited lymphoedema training was more than two years prior to the application
- Comply with the ALPP Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Practice and other mandatory declarations
- Pay the relevant fee.

The usual annual cycle is 1 January to 31 December. At the discretion of the ALA Board of Directors, fees may be pro-rated for applications received throughout the year.

7 Renewal of accreditation:

7.1 The usual annual cycle is 1 January to 31 December. Renewal notices will be issued at least 28 days prior to the commencement of a new cycle.

To remain current, accreditation must be renewed annually, in consecutive years and when due.

- 7.2 In addition to payment of relevant fees, renewal is subject to:
- Completion of continuing professional development requirements (see ALPP Continuing Professional Development Policy)
 - Holding professional indemnity insurance cover (see ALPP Professional Indemnity Insurance Policy)
 - Meeting recency of practice requirements (see ALPP Recency of Practice Policy)
 - Agreeing to mandatory declarations (see ALPP Mandatory Declarations Policy)
 - where selected, compliance with biennial audit, see 'Clause 11 Audit' of this Framework
 - other requirements as determined from time to time.
- 7.3 Evidence to support renewal must be kept for a minimum of three years and made available upon request.
- 7.4 If all requirements for renewal are not received by 31 December, a practitioner's listing(s) on the NLPR will be suspended and they will not be eligible to utilise any materials which reflect their status as an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner until satisfactory completion of renewal requirements.
- 7.5 If all requirements of renewal are not completed annually by 31 March, recognition as an ALA Accredited Lymphoedema Practitioner lapses. Practitioners wishing to re-join the Program must undertake the full process as detailed in 'Clause 6 Initial accreditation' of this Framework.
- 7.6 At the discretion of the Accreditation Committee, an individual whose status has lapsed by less than 6 months may be reinstated after completing all renewal requirements without the need to reapply.
- 7.7 Individuals who allow their status to lapse will be required to complete an initial accreditation application by fulfilling all criteria relevant on the application date.

8 Continuity of accreditation:

If at any stage during their accreditation under the Program, a practitioner's ability to practice is removed or restricted by a regulator, professional association or other body, the practitioner must advise the ALA in writing within two (2) working days. The practitioner's accreditation status and any NLPR listing will be removed until evidence is provided that all restrictions are removed.

9 Resignation:

Subject also to 'Clause 7 Renewal of accreditation' of this Framework, a practitioner may at any time resign from the Program by submitting their notice in writing and indicating the effective date of their resignation.

10 Career Breaks:

Individuals may take a career break by applying to the Accreditation Committee utilising the prescribed Leave of Absence form. On approval by the Accreditation Committee, the online register will be updated to reflect this status and the individual will be notified of the criteria they will need to meet on their return.

To return to active status from a leave of absence, the individual must meet the renewal requirements as detailed in 'Clause 7 Renewal of accreditation' of this Framework and other requirements as determined from time to time by the Accreditation Committee.

11 Audit:

The Accreditation Committee is required to conduct a biennial audit of not less than 10% of individuals accredited under the Program. The audit will ascertain that each selected individual has completed all criteria specified in 'Clause 7 Renewal of accreditation' in this Framework. Individuals selected for audit must comply with requests for additional information. Non-compliance with requests within a reasonable timeframe will be deemed as failure to complete the relevant criteria and, at the discretion of the Accreditation Committee, the individual may be denied the opportunity to renew or be required to complete additional criteria to remain accredited.

This document is a designated Bylaw of the ALA.

Approved by the Accreditation Committee and ALA Board

Version/Date Approved: Version 1, TBC

Date Effective: TBC, subject to ratification of proposed Constitution on 27 May 2020

Date of Next Scheduled Review: 1 June 2022