

PP01(PM) Policy for the development and review of professional documents 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

The professional documents of the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM/faculty) of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) describe the stance of the faculty on matters concerning or related to the practice of pain medicine.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the development of faculty professional documents is responsive to an identified need, contemporaneous, based on evidence where possible or consensus where not, and subject to appropriate consultation.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to the development of new and review of existing faculty professional documents.

It does not apply to endorsement of externally produced statements or guidelines, which will be reviewed by the FPM Professional Affairs Executive Committee (FPM PAEC) in a manner that is consistent with the principles of this policy. A recommendation regarding their adoption will be made to the faculty board.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The faculty aims to promote the highest standards of patient care, including quality and safety, based on available evidence and expert consensus. The faculty promulgates documents on those issues relevant to the scope of pain medicine for which a clear need is perceived.
- 4.2 Professional documents reflect the view of the board at the time of their promulgation and as such are the collective responsibility of the board.
- 4.3 The FPM PAEC has the delegated authority from the board to oversee the process of development and review of faculty professional documents. This includes consultation with internal and external stakeholders and other interested parties as relevant. Co-badged documents will be developed and reviewed with input from the relevant organisations, with the process determined by the board.
- 4.4 Documents comprise a foreground statement that summarises the faculty's stance on the matter and a background paper that explains the basis for conclusions made. Selected documents with immediate public relevance will include a community information sheet (see Appendix A – Guidance for preparing a plain language synopsis).
- 4.5 All professional document components (the foreground statement, background paper and community information sheet) will be available on the publicly accessible college website.

5. PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 A request for development of a new professional document should be directed to the faculty in the first instance, accompanied by an explanation of need and benefit.
- 5.2 The board, through the executive / FPM PAEC, determines the need for the development of a professional document and provides the strategic direction.

- 5.3 The criteria to be applied in the decision to develop a new professional document include but are not limited to the following:
- There is alignment of the proposed document with the strategic priorities and vision of FPM and ANZCA.
 - The subject of the document is of relevance to clinical practice, especially with respect to patient safety and quality of patient outcomes.
 - The subject of the document is considered to:
 - o be inadequately addressed in existing literature and/or adaptation to the Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand context is required; and/or
 - o be of importance across the college; and/or
 - o potentially affect the reputation of the faculty and/or of specialist pain medicine physicians
- 5.4 The Director of Professional Affairs FPM Professional Affairs (DPA FPM PA) is the project manager for document development, under the direction of the FPM PAEC. The functions of the DPA FPM PA in this context include:
- Establishment of a document development group (DDG) which will usually comprise 4-8 members with recognised expertise in the subject following a process of Expression of Interest (EOI). Ideally, there should be broad representation of fellows across Australian regions and Aotearoa New Zealand, and stage of career. Liaison with appropriate individuals or groups.
 - Establishment of timelines and milestones.
 - Editing of the background paper to ensure alignment with the mission statement, clarity of intent, and consistency within and between other documents. Such editing should also ensure that the document is applicable, wherever possible, to all jurisdictions in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - Recommendations regarding the foreground statement and community information sheet.
- 5.5 The functions of the DDG include but are not limited to:
- 5.5.1 Identification of relevant evidence for review.
 - 5.5.2 Critical review of this evidence, reflecting group members' experience and expertise, and taking into account the wider economic and medico-political environment in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.
 - 5.5.3 Identification of other relevant experts for consultation.
 - 5.5.4 Development of expert consensus.
 - 5.5.5 Contribution to writing the background paper and formulation of the foreground statement.
 - 5.5.6 Ensuring that the proposed content is consistent with other professional documents, regulations and other college policies.
- 5.6 The DDG is covered by ANZCA and FPM corporate policies. Administrative support will be provided. The DDG should conduct as much of its work as possible by email and videoconference. A face-to-face meeting may be required at least once, typically for one day. Funding requires prior approval by the Executive Director, FPM.
- 5.7 The background paper should include:
- 5.7.1 The justification for the document (purpose and benefit).
 - 5.7.2 A concise review of the issues considered, with sufficient discussion to allow readers to understand the basis for and limitations of all recommendations.
 - 5.7.3 Documentation of literature search strategies and/or methods of expert consensus development.
 - 5.7.4 Lists of publications and other documents reviewed.

- 5.7.5 Names of all those consulted or otherwise involved in document development.
- 5.7.6 Other information as appropriate.
- 5.8 The draft professional document components (foreground statement, background paper, and community information sheet if required) will be submitted to FPM PAEC which may approve these drafts, return them with an indication of areas requiring further work or reject them.
- 5.9 FPM PAEC will decide whether further consultation is necessary. The community representative on PAEC will provide advice regarding the community information sheet (if required).
- 5.10 After acceptance by FPM PAEC, the FPM unit will circulate for comment the draft professional document components to relevant FPM and ANZCA committees, FPM Regional and National Committees and the ANZCA Policy Unit. Feedback will be collated by the FPM unit, and forwarded to the DPA FPM PA for review and revision, as required.
- 5.11 Should significant revision or clarification be recommended by the DPA FPM PA following the consultation in 5.10, determination by FPM PAEC as the oversight committee will be required before submission of a definitive document to board.
- 5.12 Following board approval, the FPM unit will coordinate dissemination of the definitive professional document components via the college website. The FPM unit may collaborate with ANZCA Policy and Communications unit to disseminate the foreground statement and/or community information sheet externally, in the public interest. The documents will be considered to be in a pilot phase for 6 months.
- 5.13 Feedback on any document will be considered by DPA FPM PA and presented to FPM PAEC.

6. PROCESS OF REVIEW OF EXISTING PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Documents should be reviewed every five years, or at the discretion of board.
- 6.2 The process by which documents are reviewed follows steps 5.4 to 5.12 above, except that FPM PAEC may give final approval of minor updates rather than the board. Where there has been a significant change to the document, final approval by the board is required.
- 6.3 The review group should include at least one member of the original DDG where possible.

RELATED ANZCA DOCUMENTS

CP24(G)BP Policy for the Development and Review of Professional Documents Background Paper

FACULTY OF PAIN MEDICINE PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS

POLICY – A document that formally states principle, plan and/or course of action that is prescriptive and mandatory.

STATEMENT – A document that describes where the college stands on a particular issue. This may include areas that lack clarity or where opinions vary. A statement is not prescriptive.

GUIDELINE – A document that offers advice on a particular subject, ideally based on best practice recommendations and information, available evidence and/or expert consensus. A guideline is not prescriptive.

This document has been prepared having regard to general circumstances, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to have express regard to the particular circumstances of each case, and the application of this policy document in each case.

Professional documents are reviewed from time to time, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to ensure that the practitioner has obtained the current version. Professional documents have been prepared having regard to the information available at the time of their preparation, and the practitioner should therefore have regard to any information, research or material which may have been published or become available subsequently.

Whilst the college and faculty endeavour to ensure that documents are as current as possible at the time of their preparation, they take no responsibility for matters arising from changed circumstances or information or material which may have become available subsequently.

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APPENDIX A – Guidance for preparing a community information sheet (plain language synopsis)

Purpose

To render accessible to the general public information contained within the professional documents that might be considered material to the public interest.

Length

The synopsis needs to strike a balance between being engagingly brief, and yet offering sufficient background and detail to enable the public to understand new information and interpret it in context.

Language

Prospectively, the document development group (DDG) should consider guidelines for writing using plain language – see for example <https://guides.service.gov.au/content-guide/writing-style/#plain-english>. After drafting, the DDG should apply a readability-checker tool before progressing the plain language synopsis for approvals and consultation – see for example Hemingway (free version: <https://hemingwayapp.com/>).

Contents

The synopsis may contain:

- a plain language ‘translation’ of the foreground statement; and
- essential background necessary to understand what is known already and what is new; and
- plain language references considered to be of sufficiently high quality and relevance to the document.

Consultation

The DDG is encouraged to invite the FPM PAEC Community Representative to offer input into development of the plain language synopsis and/or feedback on the draft before it is progressed for approvals and consultation. Note that documents remain strictly confidential (within DDG, PAEC) until after board approves the draft for pilot and external consultation.