



AACMA
澳大利亚针灸中医学会

FACTS about the continued practice of Chinese Medicine

Chinese medicine became a registered profession under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) in July 2012. To date, there has been **no** Government directive for allied health practitioners to cease practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, the Government is keen that this sector maintains their essential health service to the public.

[Excerpt from the Australian Government's Department of Health Webpage](#)

REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HEALTH WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

8.2 Allied health workforce (Page last updated: 24 May 2013)

Utilising the umbrella term 'allied health' to represent the various health disciplines, excluding doctors and nurses, is a relatively new concept. The use of the term allied health was coined in the 1990s and has been increasingly used at service delivery and policy levels. The impetus to utilise the term and to be viewed as a 'collective profession' was seen as important in the drive to gain greater autonomy and influence for allied health disciplines in strategic leadership, and by symbolising integration within the health system.

There is no one definition which prescribes the disciplines considered as allied health. At the meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in July 2006, agreement was reached to establish the NRAS for health professionals, beginning with the ten professional groups registered in all jurisdictions, of which seven fall under the allied health banner: chiropractic care, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, and psychology (refer to Chapter 3).

A further four allied health professions joined NRAS on 1 July 2012: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners, medical radiation practitioners and occupational therapists. A description of the above disciplines included under NRAS is outlined in Chapter 2.

During a recent webinar, **Professor Michael Kidd AM** Principal Medical Advisor to the Department of Health had this to say about Allied health practitioners and COVID-19;

"Q: Can you please clarify what is considered essential allied health?"

That's easy. All allied health in Australia is essential. It's absolutely essential that our allied health professionals are able to continue to operate and provide services to the people of Australia during this time of national emergency."

"Q: Should we be still seeing people face-to-face or moving all contact to telehealth?"

The Minister of Health has been very clear in the announcements about telehealth, that although we're encouraging telehealth to be used when it is appropriate to do so, it is still absolutely essential that face-to-face consultations are available when they are required."

Transcript from Department of Health **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Update – Primary Care and Allied Health Webinar** Thursday, 2 April 2020 – 11:30am Canberra Time - Transcript by Professor Michael Kidd AM (Host), Dr Nick Coatsworth and Alison McMillan)

Information current as at 6th April 2020. AACMA Advises that information is subject to change.