

## **Evolution of core professional activities to support programmatic assessment in dietetics**

Claire Palermo<sup>1</sup>

Andrea Bramley, Andrea Begley, Janica Jamieson, Janeane Dart and Olivia Wright

<sup>1</sup> Monash University

### **Abstract**

**Background** – Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) are essential tasks executed by a health professional used to describe activities learners will be competently perform independently (1). Dietetics in Australia were early adopters of this assessment innovation and developed an original set of EPAs in 2016, however national uptake has been poor. This study aimed to revise EPAs to align with current professional competency standards and contemporary definitions of EPAs.

**Summary of work:** The research team reviewed the existing EPAs in relation to evolving evidence on EPAs for entry level learners. A new set of seven Core Professional Activities (CPAs) were developed through a series of four consensus development workshops, drawing on a convenience sample of dietetics educators across Australia and New Zealand (n=62). The CPAs were mapped to the current national competency standards and included reference to a previously published dietetic entrustment scale.

**Results.** The word ‘entrustable’ was replaced with ‘core’ to reflect the shifting positioning and more central role of learner’s in assessment. Detailed descriptions of activities required by the learner to execute the CPA were drafted alongside milestone descriptors to support judgement decision. Existing tools to assess independence and generate performance data to contribute to programmatic assessment were identified, highlighting the many and multiple processes that universities use to inform assessment decisions.

**Discussion.** As programmatic assessment is becoming common practice in dietetics, the usefulness of the role of CPAs in making decisions around independence and drawing on multiple assessment data points needs evaluation. Fundamental principles of assessment including training of assessors, credible and dependable assessment tools, and student agency, remain critical to support quality assessment.

**Implications:** For CPAs to have utility, the processes for uses (learners, supervisors/educators and faculty) need to be simple, requiring further work in dietetics. Evolution of core professional activities to support programmatic assessment in dietetics

### **References (maximum three)**

1. Ten Cate O. Nuts and bolts of entrustable professional activities. J Grad Med Educ. 2013 Mar;5(1):157-8.

