Allied health career pathways blueprint

Foreword

The allied health workforce is agile, creative and dynamic, with a breadth of skills that can be applied to many exciting and varied career pathways. It delivers high-quality, safe and patient-centred care in new and innovative ways. This *Allied health career pathway blueprint* reflects the nature of the allied health workforce as it currently stands, and importantly, signals ways to tap into the career pathway opportunities and health service demands of the future.

In my contact with the allied health workforce in Victoria, I often hear that allied health career pathways follow a traditional linear path; however, what I frequently see is individual career pathways that are organic and unique in design. This is a very exciting time to work in allied health in Victoria, as we explore new and emerging roles for allied health across the sector. For example, the implementation of electronic medical record systems and the emergence of informatics in health, the use of artificial intelligence for remote service delivery, technology and business model disruptors, new partnerships between other industries and healthcare, and a more holistic focus on wellness and value-based healthcare all offer a wealth of new and exciting career opportunities for the allied health workforce.

Through my own career, I have experienced the wealth of possibilities that an allied health professional background can provide, and some of the interesting twists and turns that a career can take. There are so many doors and opportunities available to allied health, but we need to be aware and open to the possibilities. Starting out as an occupational therapist, I have held several clinical roles in Australia and the UK, then moved into more interdisciplinary leadership roles and broadened my knowledge and skills beyond my own discipline. This knowledge is critical to be able to understand, and ultimately influence beyond our patch. From here I moved into roles in health services operations, managed large teams of people, helped lead research, held executive management roles, and have now stepped into a statewide clinical leadership position with Safer Care Victoria. I still draw on my occupational therapy skills every day, using the problem-solving and interpersonal skills that are core to so many allied health professions.

This blueprint provides an opportunity, whether you are an employer or part of the allied health workforce, to recognise and take advantage of the full range of allied health workforce capabilities in the context of rapid change in the health and human services sector. I encourage you all to examine your current context, and to have discussions about the career opportunities you see, as well as how these career pathways will contribute to optimising the delivery of safe and effective services for all Victorians now and into the future.

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Chief Allied Health Officer
Safer Care Victoria
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Contents

Introduction

Allied health professionals are a vital part of the health and human services workforce and play a significant role in the provision of care across the sector. Allied health professionals' work is an integral part of person-centred care, leading to the achievement of positive health and wellbeing outcomes in key areas such as physical and mental health, chronic disease, disability, rehabilitation, forensic health and public health. As practitioners, care connectors and leaders, allied health professionals are central to the provision of safe and effective health services and delivery of care that supports the community. Ensuring the supply of an adequate, appropriately skilled and distributed allied health workforce is essential for Victorians to access suitable services when and where they need them.

The *Allied health career pathways blueprint* (the blueprint) illustrates the potential for many and varied allied health career pathways. It also provides guidance for government, industries, sectors, organisations and individuals on how to strengthen career development and progression opportunities for allied health professionals at all career stages, ensuring people remain engaged, effective and excited about their current and future roles.

The blueprint also aims to establish a shared vision and understanding of the value of allied health to optimise its contribution to the health and human services sector. Consultation with representatives from the broad range of allied health professions and key stakeholders informed the development of this blueprint. It is intended to have application and value for all allied health professionals and the organisations that employ allied health professionals across Victoria.

In describing some of the many potential allied health career pathways, the blueprint highlights opportunities to establish new pathways in emerging and yet-to-be-imagined areas across the sector to support collaborative efforts to build career development and progression. A shared understanding of the breadth, reach and possibilities of allied health career pathways will create an enabling environment leveraging the full potential of allied health professionals. This is important in the ever-changing health and human services sector, where there is an opportunity to draw on the capabilities of allied health professionals to innovate and contribute to generating solutions for the emerging and complex challenges facing the sector.

The blueprint outlines five key career pathways and opportunities and makes the case for organisations to build and support the allied health workforce through employment, development and progression opportunities. For individuals, the blueprint identifies career growth stages within the different career pathways, and the development activities that can facilitate progression through the growth stages or transition across work streams.

The department would like to extend our thanks to Raven Consulting for their work in assisting with the development of this framework, and to the many people across allied health who participated in workshops and forums, generously shared the stories of their careers, provided input and guidance on the different career stages, and helped to clarify and define the five key career streams.

Overview

The blueprint includes four sections, which can be read as a whole, or considered separately, depending on the current needs of the individual or organisation.

Part 1: Blueprint principles

This section outlines the four key principles that underpin this career pathway blueprint, and that inform the development and use of the accompanying career mapping tools. Part 1 highlights, particularly for employers and organisations, the organisational characteristics that typify structures and supports that allow allied health professionals to develop interesting, diverse, and flourishing careers. The principles are:

- **value** – allied health professionals are a versatile and highly skilled resource
- **build** – opportunities for development are critical to sustaining engaged and high performing allied health professionals
- **progress** – effective collaboration between government, industry organisations and the allied health workforce underpins successful career progression and will position allied health professionals to effect sustainable service delivery across the sector
- **impact** – diverse, dynamic structures and governance arrangements leveraging allied health professional skills and capabilities will optimise organisational decision making to meet current and emerging needs in the sector.

A checklist for organisations to consider their current level of support for allied health professionals career development is in Appendix 3.

Part 2: Allied health career pathways work streams and growth rings

Five core work streams have been identified for allied health professionals and are outlined below. However, allied health professionals' strengths in problem solving, resilience, and creativity will naturally lend themselves to developing new and innovative combinations of careers and possibilities even beyond these broad career paths.

The core work streams are:

- **practice** – clinicians, practitioners, and technicians delivering direct patient/client care
- **education** – providing instruction and education to patients, communities, health practitioners, and/or students in clinical and/or academic environments
- **research** – undertaking systematic investigation to increase knowledge and establish an evidence base, and/or involved in translating research findings into practice, policy or further research
- **management** – leading and managing service delivery, human resources, business units or departments, funding and/or projects inside or outside a direct allied health context, including advocacy
- **strategy** – driving reforms, leading and developing policy, leading change, implementing disruptive innovations, establishing principles or courses of action and/or transforming processes for an industry, sector or organisation.

Within each of these work streams, four career stages, or 'growth rings' have been identified, which serve as markers of progress and achievement. Depending on the goals, interests, and skills of an individual, the 'pinnacle' of a desirable career may occur at any point in the growth rings or may include varying levels across multiple career paths.

The four identified growth rings are:

- **gaining experience** – initial qualification and consolidation of skills
- **further skills and knowledge** – developing deeper understanding and breadth of experience
- **becoming an expert** – deep knowledge and skill in an area
- **acknowledged leader** – recognised by peers as able to guide and influence others.

Part 3: Guidance for individuals on career pathways moving across, through and between work streams

When considering the career paths and options that suit an individual, examine their interests, skills, and capabilities, and opportunities to explore and develop these aspects across their career.

Part 3 outlines possible pathways for professionals to consider in developing their talents such as

- identifying a special interest or emerging trend
- undertaking further training or education
- changing their work environment or traveling for new experiences
- considering roles outside of their department or profession
- develop relationships or networks outside of their immediate department.

Part 4: Practical application of the work streams and growth rings tool

The final section of the blueprint provides direction on how to use the work streams and growth rings concepts for planning and development and provides some real-life examples to support thinking around how to build an effective and engaging career.

Templates and further practical examples and suggestions are available in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

How to implement the blueprint

The blueprint is intended to be used by both organisations and individuals as an aid to considering how best to develop the skills, talents, and capabilities of allied health professionals.

For organisations:

- Part 1 will be particularly useful for informing strategic and workforce planning
- Part 3 may have applications for the development of position descriptions or planning for professional development opportunities.

For individuals:

- Part 2 will help people reflect on their career pathway and skill development to date
- Part 3 and Part 4 may assist with planning future career pathways and the activities needed to support career goals.

Ideally, development of a range of career paths and options will occur through effective partnerships between employers and allied health professionals.

Readers are encouraged to consider the career examples presented throughout the document that integrate the blueprint principles, key inputs in career progression and the stages of career growth to appreciate the breadth and possibilities in allied health careers. Essentially, the blueprint aims to encourage organisations and individuals to work in partnership to deliver mutually beneficial career outcomes.

Figure 1: How to implement the blueprint from the perspective of individuals and organisations through partnership

Part one: Principles

Part two: Work streams and growth rings

Part three: Guidance

Part four: Practical application

Use part one to inform strategic and workforce planning. Use part three for the development of position descriptions or planning for professional development opportunities.
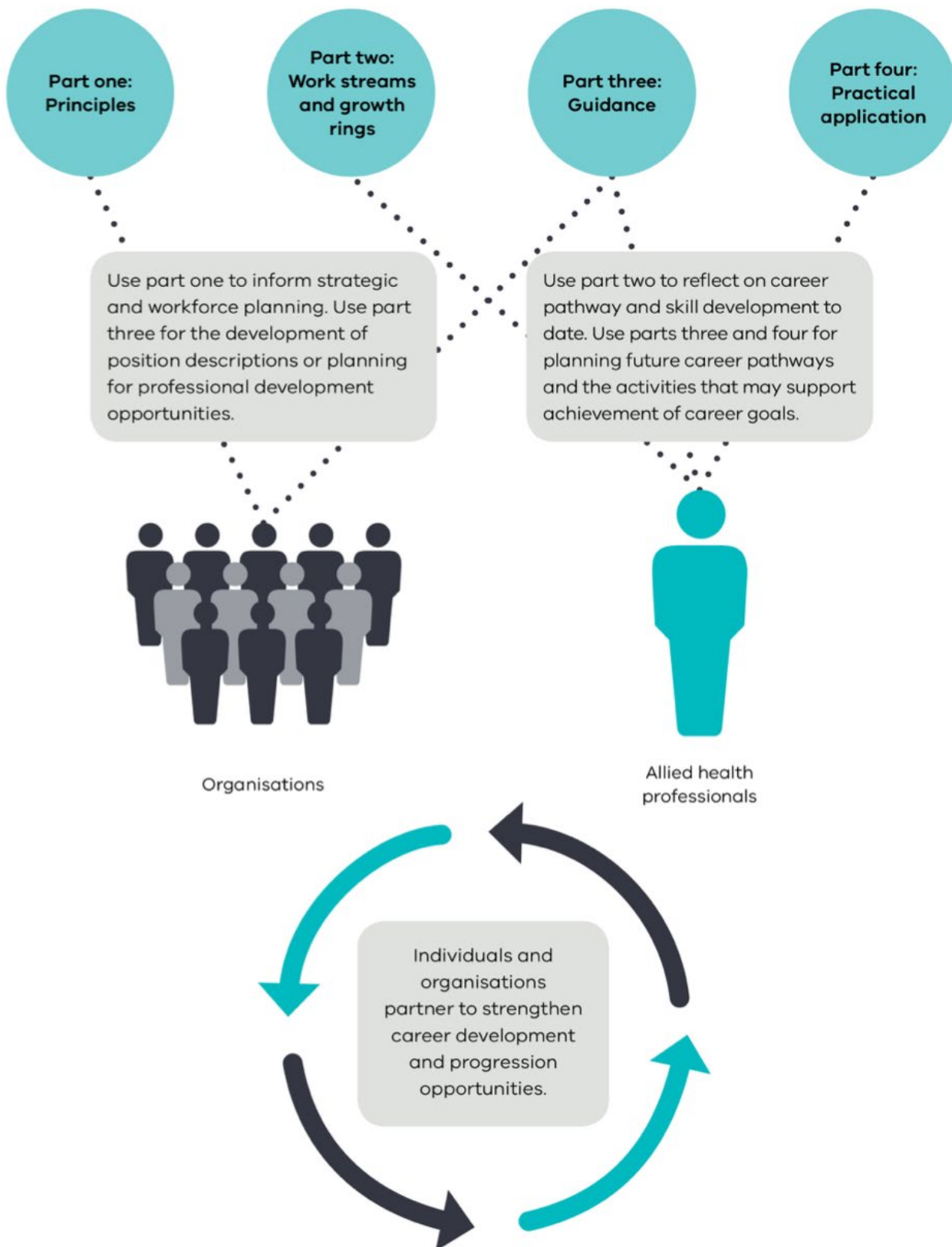
Use part two to reflect on career pathway and skill development to date. Use parts three and four for planning future career pathways and the activities that may support achievement of career goals.

Organisations

Allied health professionals

Individuals and organisations partner to strengthen career development and progression opportunities.

Part 1: Blueprint principles

Four key principles inform the structure of the blueprint and the development and use of the career-mapping tools.

The principles identify core justifications for investment in the careers of allied health professionals, noting that ensuring allied health professionals are engaged, forward-looking and invested in their careers will have benefits for both the individual and for organisations.

Figure 2: The four principles underpinning the career pathways blueprint are value, build, progress and impact

VALUE
Allied health professionals are a versatile and highly skilled resource

BUILD
Opportunities for development are critical to sustaining engaged and high performing allied health professionals

PROGRESS
Effective collaboration between government, industry, organisations and the workforce underpins successful career growth to position allied health professionals to effect sustainable service delivery across the sector

IMPACT
Diverse, dynamic structures and governance arrangements leveraging allied health professional skills and capabilities will optimise organisational decision making to meet current and emerging needs in the sector

Value

Allied health professionals are a versatile and highly skilled resource.

Allied health professionals are a versatile and highly skilled resource, demonstrating excellence across the career streams of practice, education, research, management, and strategy. Recognising and harnessing these skills will optimise and effectively utilise the value of allied health professionals across the health and human services sectors.

Allied health professionals are system and care connectors, trained in problem solving and building connections across traditional boundaries in constructive ways. They work to develop collaborative and holistic solutions to complex problems, and tend to have strong skills in interpersonal communication, teamwork, leadership, and working in shared and collaborative models.

There are significant opportunities for organisations, as employers, to realise the full potential of their allied health professional workforce, and benefit from the inclusion of allied health representatives in organisational and project governance structures and decision-making at all levels. Supporting access to career development opportunities, including those in non-clinical and traditionally non-allied health areas, will assist organisations to utilise and maximise the benefits of the wide range of skills held by allied health professionals.

Organisations that have a highly valued and integrated allied health professional workforce will often demonstrate structures and norms that:

- include allied health professionals employed and involved in decision making at all levels of the organisation
- support allied health professionals to hold roles in clinical, non-clinical and traditionally non-allied health areas across the organisation
- promote the skills and capabilities of allied health professionals to the wider organisation
- partner with allied health professionals to support access to developmental opportunities and experiences that build on clinical/technical, education, research and leadership skills and capabilities

In addition, organisations that actively support allied health professionals' achievement and engagement will demonstrate inclusive communication strategies giving allied health professionals access to information and opportunities as other professional workforces.

The blueprint illustrates the varied work areas in which allied health professionals play an important role. It also suggests actions individuals and organisations can take to build careers in the dynamic health and human services sectors. Through clear articulation of key domains that have the potential to shape the careers of an allied health professional, using the blueprint will help people realise their full career potential.

There is definitely an alignment between my current industry role and what I learned at university as an allied health professional about how to take a history, diagnose a problem, create a treatment plan, implement and review the outcome; these are skills that apply to what I do in my job now in terms of project design and implementation **(value)**.

Another big part of the role I hold now is change management – needing to work out how to work with people who are resistant to change or don't engage with the consultation process. As an allied health professional, you work I alongside people and strive to understand what is important to them, their goals and their concerns and adapt your explanations to them, and the treatment plan, in layman's terms, based on how the person presents themselves to you **(value)**.

You need to gain people's trust to effectively communicate so building rapport is important. These skills can translate to working with colleagues and customers in industry **(progress)**. I am currently driving adoption of a global business process with over 1,000 staff through a cycle of quality improvement that links back to the quality and improvement work I did in my community health service days **(impact)**.

Build

Opportunities for development are critical to sustaining engaged and high performing allied health professionals.

For organisations, providing access to both formal and informal learning and experiential development opportunities is critical to building and maintaining an engaged and high performing allied health workforce. Organisations can provide or support access to robust performance and development processes, as well as exercise organisational awareness and support for the range of potential career pathways available across the health and human services sector. Organisations that strive to build a culture of lifelong learning are more likely to experience high levels of employee engagement and retention, leading to high-quality care and positive consumer outcomes. By offering exemplary learning and development programs, organisations will also better position themselves as an employer of choice.

At the system level, key policies and resources can reflect the importance of investing in ongoing allied health training and development. Government departments provide policy guidance and support for further training. Regulatory bodies, unions and industry groups have requirements for professional development and training. Universities, training organisations and professional associations offer many avenues for professional development, while extensive training and development opportunities are also available in the broader community.

Victorian government policies and resources that support allied health training and development include:

* *Allied health: credentialing, competency and capability framework*
* *Victorian allied health research framework*
* the allied health strategic leadership development initiative
* networks and communities of practice for clinical educators and researchers
* continuing professional development grants and scholarships available to rural practitioners.

Further information about these policies and resources is available on the Department of Health and Human Services' website <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce>.

Organisations that partner and engage with allied health professionals to support development may demonstrate:

* support for a culture of lifelong learning, placing value on achieving best practice
* opportunities for clinical and non-clinical development for allied health professionals
* robust and targeted performance and development processes
* utilisation of the *Allied health: credentialing, competency and capability framework* and other allied health policy frameworks to help realise the full potential of their allied health workforce
* links between the organisational benefits of staff development, increased workforce capability, the provision of high-quality, evidence-based care and positive consumer outcomes
* recognition of the sector-wide benefits that result from organisational investment in allied health training and development
* provision of opportunities for shared roles across organisations, or short-term secondments to enable development and consolidation of new skills
* flexible work arrangements that enable creative combinations of roles.

The blueprint supports individuals to take responsibility for identifying their training and development needs in line with their career goals, and to seek advice, coaching and mentorship where necessary. Individuals may then use their organisation's performance and development process to communicate their career goals to managers and negotiate opportunities to meet their development needs. The most valuable development activities will be those aligned with both the individual and their employing organisation's priorities and needs.

> My organisation supports me to participate in educational programs and conferences, and I continue to enjoy learning, expanding my knowledge base and improving the quality of care I can offer my patients **(build)**.
>
> Ongoing professional development also helps me to provide guidance and support to more junior members of staff both within my department, and externally within the broader professional community **(impact)**. I plan to undertake further study in the future as I believe that lifelong learning is essential, both for personal development, and professional improvement **(build)**.

Progress

Effective collaboration between government, industry, organisations and the allied health workforce underpins successful career progression and will position allied health professionals to effect sustainable service delivery across the sector.

Organisations that collaborate with allied health professionals engage in strategic, workforce and operational planning processes to create opportunities that optimise the organisational and governance structures supporting allied health career pathways. This collaboration can provide an opportunity to construct clear career development and progression opportunities. Clarifying the career pathways available within an organisation, exploring opportunities for new pathways, and engaging allied health professionals in career planning will help to remove barriers to enable advancement.

Organisations may consider how they can form partnerships or collaborate with other organisations to create career development and progression opportunities that also meet organisational needs. Joint appointments and secondment opportunities for allied health professionals enhance career pathways within allied health and potentially lead to advancement in the original organisation or elsewhere in the health and human services sector. Support for such opportunities helps organisations become an employer of choice and benefits the system more broadly by developing the skills and capabilities of allied health professionals to have a positive impact on service delivery decisions across the sector.

Organisations that support career progression and development opportunities for allied health professionals may demonstrate:

- inclusion of the allied health workforce in strategic, workforce and operational planning processes
- support for the development of allied health career pathways internally and in collaboration with other organisations
- communication of career options to allied health employees
- use of annual performance and development processes to understand the career goals of allied health staff members and track progress towards stated career goals.

Organisations may consider how they can form partnerships or collaborate with other organisations to create career development and progression opportunities that also meet organisational needs. Joint appointments and secondment opportunities for allied health professionals enhance career pathways within allied health and potentially lead to advancement in the original organisation or elsewhere in the health and human services sector. Support for such opportunities helps organisations become an employer of choice and benefits the system more broadly by developing the skills and capabilities of allied health professionals to have a positive impact on service delivery decisions across the sector.

> I have become aware of all my roles to date through my networks and contacts – partly through previous supervisors and managers **(value)**, but also by being proactive in creating and expanding my own connections **(progress)**. I have built relationships with colleagues and people I have met through events, forums and conferences, and have also signed up to a range of newsletters and mailing lists which have helped me to keep informed and abreast of trends and opportunities **(build)**.
>
> My career has evolved through a combination of my own interests and by working with people I admired who inspired me to consider different opportunities. The decision to walk through one door has often opened up unexpected opportunities further down the track.
>
> I feel like there will be further study ahead for me, perhaps something in health, government or business administration **(build)**. I would never have predicted this at the beginning of my career, but I am becoming more and more interested in health systems and governance through the opportunities I have in my current role to learn more about the governance of complex health organisations **(impact)**.

The blueprint identifies actions allied health professionals can take to build satisfying careers within the health and human services sector by strengthening career progression opportunities. Governments, organisations and industry bodies are encouraged to collaborate to create opportunities for investment and growth in allied health that are strategically positioned for sustainable sector-wide impact.

Organisations can use the blueprint to inform strategic organisational planning, workforce and operational planning processes, and to consider the impacts of organisational structures and governance on allied health career pathways.

This can provide an opportunity to construct clear career development and progression opportunities and recognise where allied health professional development can lead to improved outcomes for the organisation.

Impact

Diverse, dynamic structures and governance arrangements leveraging allied health professional skills and capabilities will optimise organisational decision making to meet current and emerging needs in the sector.

Organisational structures and governance arrangements affect the career progression opportunities open to allied health professionals within an organisation (Boyce and Jackway 2016). An organisation's structure dictates institutional roles and determines who has access to decision-making forums (Boyce 2001).

Representation of allied health professionals at all levels of governance and decision making will support recognition of the value those allied health professionals bring to the wider organisation. Organisations can consider the diversity of their allied health workforce and what they can deliver in relation to the organisational strategic plan.

Organisations may see opportunities to redesign existing allied health workforce structures to generate opportunities for career progression in a range of work streams, while assisting with supervision and mentoring needs, and facilitate succession planning, while increasing productivity and effectiveness.

Organisations that have dynamic structures that embrace diversity and innovation may demonstrate:

- recognition of how organisational structures can contribute to career growth opportunities
- generation of opportunities for allied health professionals to progress their career across the range of potential work streams
- involvement of allied health professionals in all levels of governance and decision making.

My organisation strongly believes in staff development and provides a range of workshops that have helped me to build my skills in financial management, people management and building a positive workplace culture **(build)**. I also had the opportunity to work part time for 12 months on a local government project **(progress)**.

After returning from maternity leave, I moved into a part-time management role and a second role at another health service one day a week that complemented my PhD research **(progress)**.

After developing my research skills over the next 12 months I applied for a Grade 3 allied health research position and was then a Grade 4 research lead role, which was created by my organisation in response to the recognition of the importance of translational research and the benefits associated with the development of research initiatives within the health service **(impact)**.

The blueprint advocates for diverse and dynamic structures and recognition of the contribution allied health professionals can make to decision making processes. The blueprint outlines key actions that allied health professionals can take to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills required to make a meaningful contribution at the organisational level from the perspective of the various work streams.

Improving organisational outcomes

By enabling allied health professionals to develop diverse and engaging careers, and supporting people to choose from multiple career pathways, and move between pathways, organisations can improve staff engagement, reduce turnover, and improve service delivery.

Increasing the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of staff increases quality and safety, improves service efficiency and effectiveness, and leads to better consumer outcomes and experiences. Supporting engaging careers is not only good for individuals, it is useful and cost effective for organisations.

A checklist for considering how well your organisation is currently doing in supporting your allied health professionals is included in Appendix 3.

Part 2: Allied health career pathways work streams and growth rings

The blueprint describes allied health career pathways across a range of work streams. It explores the potential breadth and depth of allied health careers and describes attributes, capabilities and skills commonly found in allied health professionals working across these streams. It is important to note that the career pathways depicted in this blueprint are not exhaustive and there are career paths possibilities beyond those depicted.

The blueprint applies to allied health therapy and science professions, and any other professionals who identify as allied health in Victoria. This blueprint is for individuals and organisations that employ allied health professionals. The blueprint is pertinent to government organisations, health and human services organisations, education providers, industrial and professional bodies, medical technology and pharmaceutical companies, and the public, private and not-for-profit settings.

Work streams

The blueprint identifies five work streams for allied health professionals:

- **practice** – clinicians, practitioners, and technicians delivering various types of direct and indirect care to consumers, including through advanced or specialised skills
- **education** – providing instruction and education to build understanding and capability of health practitioners, patients, communities, and/or students in clinical and/or academic environments
- **research** – undertaking systematic investigation to increase knowledge and establish an evidence base, and/or involved in translating research findings into practice, policy or further research
- **management** – leading and managing service delivery, human resources, business units or departments, funding and/or projects inside or outside a direct allied health context, including advocacy
- **strategy** – driving reforms, leading and developing policy, leading change, implementing disruptive innovations, establishing principles or courses of action and/or transforming processes for an industry, sector or organisation.

Allied health professionals often have roles that contain elements of different work streams or more than one work role. Opportunities for leadership, decision making, and growth occur across each of the work steams. The streams are helpful indicators of the focus of the work, or the roles, a person might have throughout their allied health career. The work streams show what the future might look like, or how a career pathway, with transition points, progresses within or across organisations and sectors. Diagrammatically, the work streams present as portions of a pie chart as shown in Figure 3.

Growth rings

The blueprint identifies four growth rings as key progression points that occur within all work streams:

- gaining experience
- further skills and knowledge
- becoming an expert
- acknowledged leader.

The blueprint is based on the following concepts:

- Everyone has the same starting point. Every person embarking on an allied health career starts as an entry-level practitioner.
- Individuals define their own career progress. It is an individual's responsibility to determine what career progress means to them, what they aspire to in their career and therefore what their career pathway will

look like. It is important to note that an individual's definition of their career progress is likely to evolve over time.

- Careers can be fluid and multidimensional. Movement through work streams and growth rings occurs in many directions and so do career pathways.
- Partnerships between individuals and organisations can foster opportunities for career growth. When individuals and organisations are working in partnership there is a potential for enhanced career growth through the alignment of the priorities and needs of individuals and their employing organisation.

Diagrammatically, the growth rings present as lines moving concentrically from the centre to the periphery of a pie chart, which converts this to a spider chart (or radial graph) as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Allied health work streams and growth rings
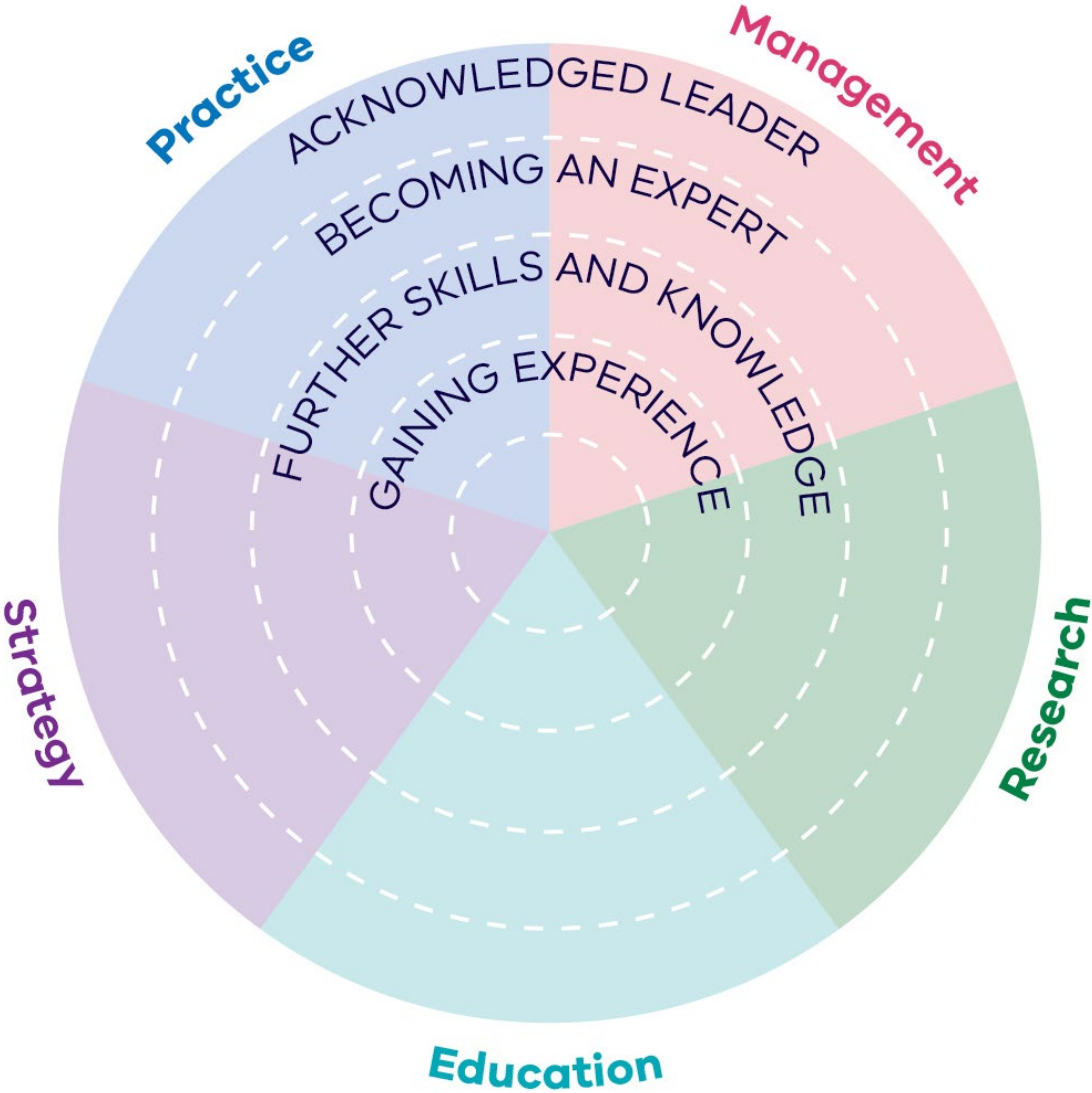
Depending on their level of knowledge, skills and experience in each area, allied health professionals working across more than one stream may be situated in a different growth ring for each stream.

The next section describes the skills, knowledge and attributes relevant to each growth ring. The career development and progression activities outlined for each growth ring do not form a definitive list. Individual allied health professionals will undertake their own investigation, including talking to peers, managers and mentors, to determine the most appropriate and achievable activities for their personal circumstances.

Allied health career pathways blueprint

When looking at each growth ring, individuals may consider the relevant capabilities in the *Allied health: credentialing, competency and capability framework* to help identify the developmental steps and experiential opportunities to aid their career progression. Appendix 2 also presents further suggested actions to help allied health professionals move through growth rings, depending on their current and potential future work streams.

Gaining experience

The blueprint assumes all allied health professionals start at an entry-to-practice level – the centre of the circle. Within this growth ring, allied health professionals will integrate their theoretical knowledge with real-world practice and continue to consolidate their foundational skills. Establishing a commitment and approach to lifelong learning is very important at this stage. For most allied health professionals, education and training within this growth ring focuses on continuing professional development.

Professional development activities within this growth ring could include:

- in-service training
- clinical or technical skills workshops
- short professional development courses
- attending conferences
- participation in clinical supervision and reflective practice.

Exposure to a broad range of experiences will also help allied health professionals at this early career stage to determine the type of work they like and may wish to pursue over the longer term. Individuals should look for opportunities that will help them to understand the nature and requirements of different work streams. Examples include:

- participating in or leading project work (service development, quality assurance)
- supporting or participating in research and education activities
- engaging in professional association activities.

Building professional relationships will enable formal and informal exploration of different work streams, and may include mentoring, shadowing, or coaching interactions. Consideration should be given to exploring shorter term contracts or secondments into alternative roles or workplaces, to enable deeper understanding of the wealth of possibilities available across allied health and beyond.

Further skills and knowledge

Within this growth ring, allied health professionals continue to build their theoretical knowledge and in-depth experience in a topic or field, therefore adding further value to their initial training, qualifications and associated experience. This career stage focuses on the utilisation of the further skills and knowledge obtained. It may present opportunities for process and practice improvements or opportunities to transition to a new work stream.

While it may not be an essential requirement for career progression, this growth ring will often involve undertaking additional formal training or qualifications. Additional study can enhance clinical, technical, research or business and management skills and may increase career opportunities.

Allied health professionals with clear career goals may have already formed an understanding of the training and/or qualifications available to them to support their career progression. Others may need to consider their interests and aspirations, review options outside their current work stream, and determine if additional training or qualifications could be useful. Discussing career goals with peers, mentors and supervisors can often be helpful in determining the way forward.

Allied health professionals may consider undertaking postgraduate study (postgraduate certificate to masters degree level) in:

- specialised clinical or technical skills (new technologies, advanced techniques)
- education (teaching and training, facilitation, adult learning)
- research (research methods)
- management (people, organisational, financial, informatics or project management)
- strategy (public health, policy analysis).

Becoming an expert

Allied health professionals in this growth ring are emerging experts in their chosen field. They demonstrate a depth of knowledge in an area, or a breadth of knowledge across a field. The opinions of emerging experts may contribute to the development of position papers, strategic plans and research designs. A focus on continued professional development is essential to achieving expertise. Learning activities may be experiential development opportunities, for example, presenting at conferences, mentoring and coaching, participation in communities of practice and publication of systematic reviews or original research.

Beyond the learning activities already identified, allied health professionals in this growth ring may consider:

- leadership training or leadership development programs
- professional courses on communicating with impact
- effective people management courses
- informatics and health economics
- undertaking a doctoral degree in a relevant field or topic.

Experts may promote the establishment of new career opportunities by identifying new services or roles and building business cases to drive and resource their implementation. Allied health practitioner experts may also undertake roles that include additional responsibilities centred on their area of expertise, such as subject matter expert, senior advisor or senior project manager.

Acknowledged leader

Acknowledged leaders provide local, national and international advice and guidance in their area of influence. Depending on their work stream, their affiliation with allied health may no longer be entirely evident from their role title.

To maintain standing as an acknowledged leader, it is important to maintain currency of knowledge and skills through continuing education and practice. Understanding the broader environment that influences their area of knowledge is also extremely valuable and enables an acknowledged leader to extend their sphere of influence.

The professional development focus for acknowledged leaders may include:

- establishing mentoring arrangements
- peer networking
- ongoing leadership coaching
- supervision of masters or doctoral students
- executive management and public administration courses
- governance and company director training.

Acknowledged leaders are at the forefront of activities within and external to the workplace and recognised as a role model for others. Acknowledged leaders usually play a leading role across diverse contexts and settings and perform consistently over many years.

Part 3: Moving across, through and between work streams

The possible actions that may facilitate career progression through the growth rings will be unique to each allied health professional depending on base skill levels, development opportunities, special interests and work context.

Career opportunities and key inputs that inform decision making

The blueprint aims to help allied health professionals understand available and emerging career opportunities, and possible pathways to access those opportunities. It is a self-assessment tool that may assist with organisational performance and development processes.
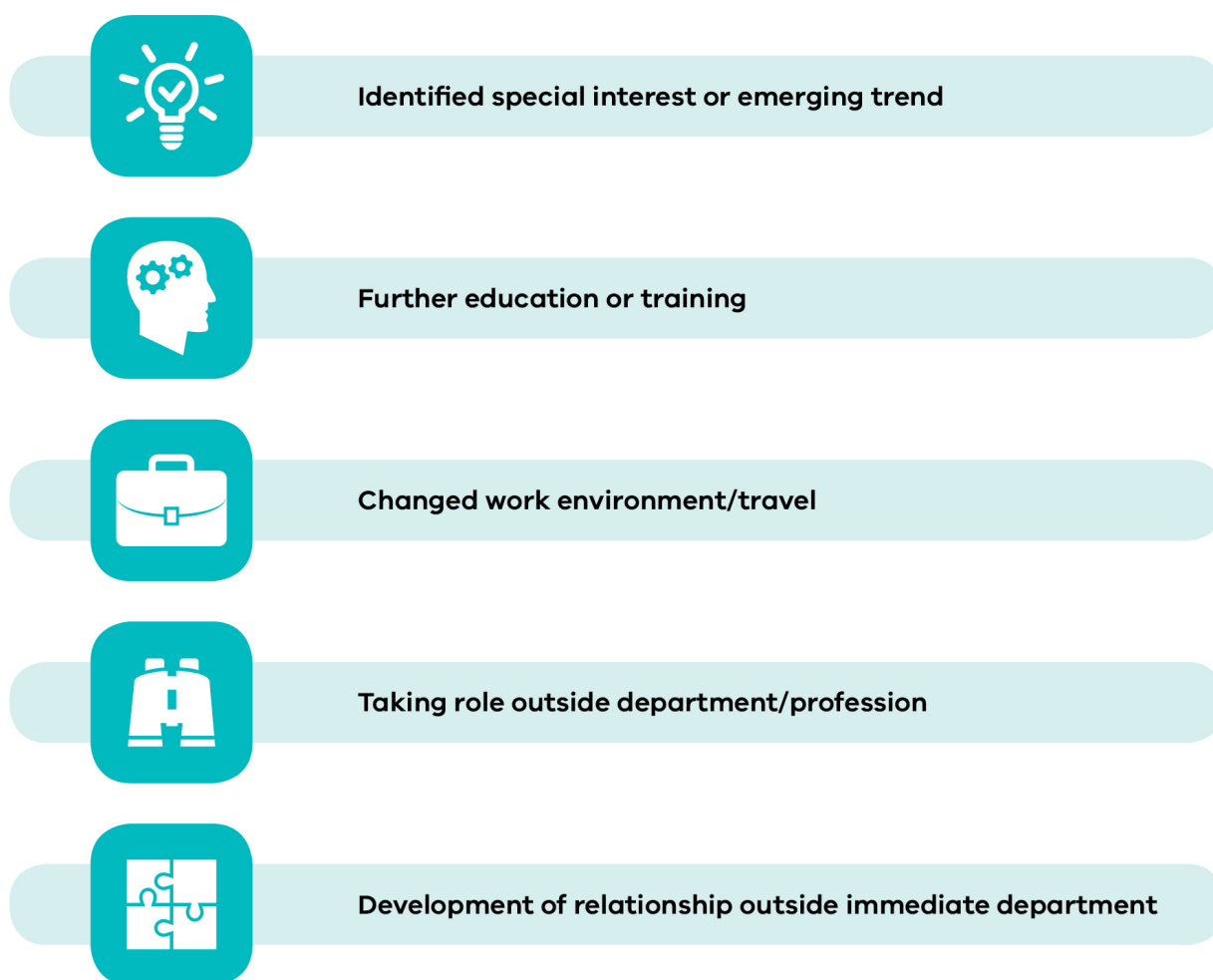
Individuals can use the blueprint to identify the work stream and growth ring for their current role, and which streams, and at which levels, they would like to work towards. This process can assist with identifying gaps in knowledge, skills, and experience and offer suggestions for how to bridge these gaps.

Developing a satisfying and engaging career will involve both actively seeking specific roles and responsibilities, as well as being aware of potential and possible directions to allow for accepting and embracing spontaneous career opportunities.

Career progression may range from actively growing in skills and experience, to maintaining knowledge of current best practice in a role, to trying different roles across multiple streams, to increasing skills across a range of environments.

These actions are often flexible in application, however the suggestions presented in Appendix 1 have been organised by work stream and growth ring to assist individuals and organisations to identify potential career development activities. Blueprint users may utilise the suggestions in Appendix 1 to inform discussions about options for career progression with peers, managers and mentors.

Figure 4: Career pathway inputs and actions that may influence career progression

Identified special interest or emerging trend

Further education or training

Changed work environment/travel

Taking role outside department/profession

Development of relationship outside immediate department

Identifying a special interest or emerging trend

Consider what aspects of your profession you find most interesting, or areas where you think technology and practice is beginning to change or could change in future. Look at how you can contribute to this change.

Undertaking further training or education

Sometimes skills are best developed or enhanced or recognised through gaining formal qualifications. Look at the types of skills that might be useful in developing your talents, or addressing your weaknesses – do you need further technical skills in your professional area, or should you be looking at more general qualifications in something like business or law? Perhaps your career would benefit from teaching and training skills, or quality improvement.

Changing your work environment or traveling for new experiences

Perhaps your career would benefit from a change of environment – a similar role at another organisation, or travelling interstate or overseas to see the differences in how your work is done in another setting? Varying your experiences can often help clarify why you work the way you do or provide insights for change or growth.

Considering roles outside of your department or profession

Are there roles that are a little outside your current experience, but that might benefit from your skills? Look at what aspects of your role you enjoy, and where further development or depth in those aspects might lead. Perhaps a role in project management, finance, data analysis, training, or technology development might stretch your capacities?

Developing relationships or networks outside of your immediate department

Building contacts beyond your immediate workgroup or profession will often yield interesting new conversations and insights, and can help identify potential synergies, crossovers, and new directions in personal or professional capacities.

> I completed my clinical training in a metropolitan public hospital before securing a graduate position in the same hospital **(practitioner)**. Over the next few years, I completed a range of clinical supervision short courses and began supervising and assessing students, interns and junior staff. I also took on the role of lecturer and assessor for two universities **(educator)**.
>
> I have worked at the same organisation throughout my career, progressing to a senior position. This has enabled me to establish significant relationships with other members of staff both within the department and externally within the hospital, which has provided me with the opportunity of guiding policies and procedures, as well as quality assurance activities **(researcher)**.

Transitioning across work streams

Transitioning across work streams can take many forms and occur at any career stage. An allied health professional may choose to shift their focus to a new work stream or incorporate additional work streams into their existing role. Working across streams is common when people initially transition from the practitioner work stream. Examples at this stage in a person's career pathway may include roles such as practitioner/researcher, practitioner/educator and practitioner/manager.

The transition to a new work stream may require professional development, short courses or postgraduate study relevant to the new stream. Depending on the role and transition, support for change may come from mentoring relationships.
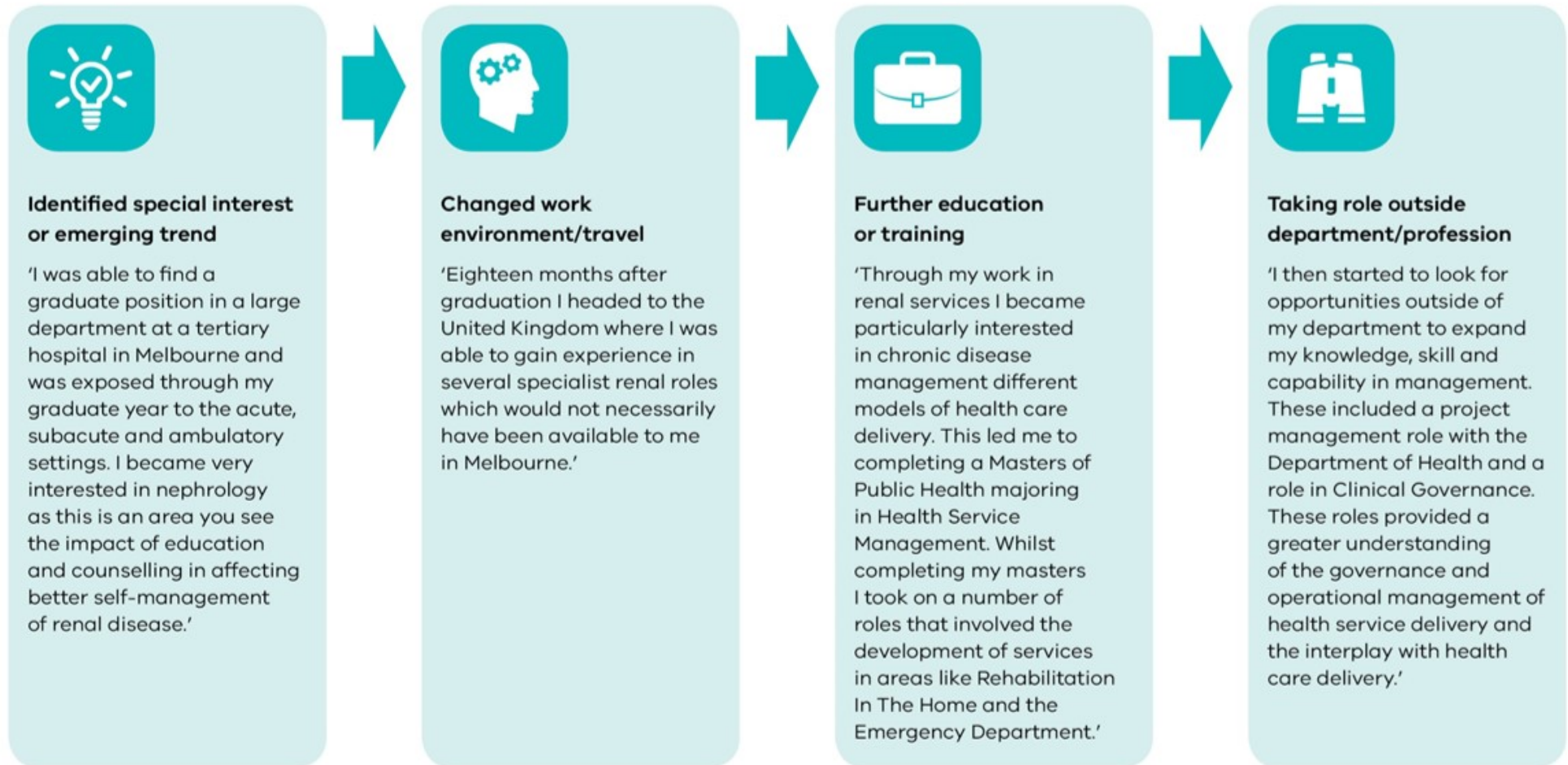
It is important to note that although movement between work streams may initially involve a sideways shift, or moving to a less-mature growth ring, progress in the new stream may be more rapid due to earlier experiences.

When allied health professionals return to the practitioner work stream from another stream, they may need to demonstrate recency of practice to re-obtain professional accreditation or registration.
If an individual chooses to transition out of the practitioner work stream but plans to return to this stream in the future, they should investigate the requirements for their profession and if necessary, consider how to retain their clinical skills as part of their career pathway planning process.

> On completing my Masters degree I was successfully appointed to a senior leadership position managing a multi campus department **(people leader)**. I left this role to take on the full-time role of Mum for a couple of years and returned to work in a senior leadership role focused on strategy, quality and safety **(researcher)**. Various roles I have held have provided a greater understanding of the governance and operational management of health service delivery and the interplay with health care delivery and led to my current role as manager of a department in a large metropolitan hospital **(people leader).**

Figure 5: Key career decision points

Identified special interest or emerging trend

'I was able to find a graduate position in a large department at a tertiary hospital in Melbourne and was exposed through my graduate year to the acute, subacute and ambulatory settings. I became very interested in nephrology as this is an area you see the impact of education and counselling in affecting better self-management of renal disease.'

Changed work environment/travel

'Eighteen months after graduation I headed to the United Kingdom where I was able to gain experience in several specialist renal roles which would not necessarily have been available to me in Melbourne.'

Further education or training

'Through my work in renal services I became particularly interested in chronic disease management different models of health care delivery. This led me to completing a Masters of Public Health majoring in Health Service Management. Whilst completing my masters I took on a number of roles that involved the development of services in areas like Rehabilitation In The Home and the Emergency Department.'

Taking role outside department/profession

'I then started to look for opportunities outside of my department to expand my knowledge, skill and capability in management. These included a project management role with the Department of Health and a role in Clinical Governance. These roles provided a greater understanding of the governance and operational management of health service delivery and the interplay with health care delivery.'

Part 4: Practical application of the blueprint

Practical application of the blueprint will vary between individuals and organisations.

Individuals should use the blueprint to consider which pathway (or combination of pathways) appeals to you, and then analyse your current skills and roles, and the areas you can further develop to take your next step. The blueprint will prompt you to think about the opportunities that may arise, or could be created, to help you progress along your desired pathway.

Organisations can consider what processes, procedures, supports and structures are in place to enable individuals to develop the skills and capabilities to have diverse careers within your organisation, or how you could effectively partner with other organisations to develop joint roles that meet both individual and organisational goals.

Using the practical tools

The blueprint provides two key tools (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) to help you consider where individuals or teams are in terms of their career development and pathways.

Spider diagram

Spider diagrams (also called radial graphs) help you visually interpret what stage of your career you are at within the various career streams, and to consider gaps or areas you wish to develop.

You can use spider diagrams to chart an individual's current role or career pathway to another role within their organisation, a role that has been advertised, or the career they aspire to. You can also overlay different people's spider diagrams to demonstrate the existing roles or knowledge, skills, capabilities and experience of a team or work area. This also allows you to compare the aggregate data for a team or work area against a desired outcome. The resulting images can be used to identify areas for career development.

A blank template for use in the creation of spider diagrams is available in Appendix 1.

Career development activities

The second tool provides a list of potential career development actions for each of the career paths, and at each stage of development. These lists may assist individuals to determine their next steps, or organisations to tailor development opportunities or programs.

The lists do not include all possible career development opportunities, but instead aim to provide suggestions of the types of activities likely to aid development of the skills, competencies and attributes for various career pathways and stages. The overall and work-stream specific lists are provided in Appendix 2.

Example careers

The following pages outline five example allied health careers, showing progression through the various growth rings, and moving between and across career streams, as well as some of the decisions around further training, experience, and roles that have been made across the years.

These examples are all real-life examples, from allied health professionals working in Victoria. It is hoped that these examples will inspire individuals and organisations to consider their own stories and pathways, and identify how diverse pathways can create, sustain, and develop interesting, engaging and satisfying careers.

Figure 6: Education example

EDUCATION

Chris is a Speech Pathologist whose pathway began in a metropolitan public hospital. Chris' experience has included public and private clinical work, university teaching, research, and clinical education.

'After graduating from university I commenced working as a new graduate speech pathologist in a metropolitan public hospital. However, I had developed an interest in clinical research while completing my honours research project, and I decided to apply to undertake a PhD.'

FOCUS:

Research: Further skills and knowledge

Practice: Gaining experience

'After completing my PhD, I moved into research project management and some further clinical employment, and also started to deliver some university lectures in my area of speciality. Ultimately, completing a doctoral degree opened up the doorway for me to work in the university setting in a full-time lecturer role, while continuing to be involved in research and developing a passion for clinical education.'

FOCUS:

Practice: Further skills and knowledge

Research and Education: Becoming an expert

'The knowledge and skills I developed in the tertiary education sector as a university lecturer, along with completion of a Graduate Certificate in University Teaching enabled me to move across to my current leadership role in allied health clinical education within a metropolitan public hospital. In my current role, my professional development has focused on developing my skills in leadership and management, strategy, advocacy, communication and education for health professionals.'

FOCUS:

Management and Strategy:
Furthering skills and knowledge

Education: Acknowledged leader
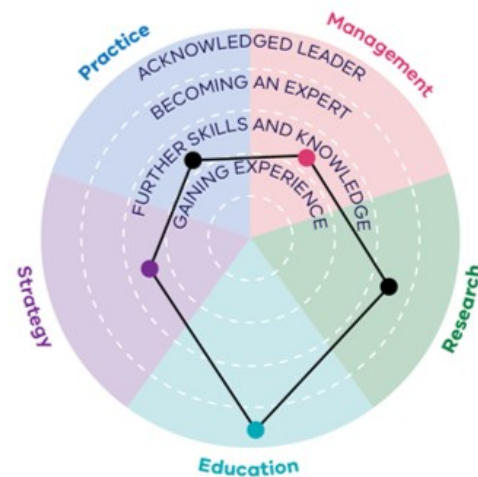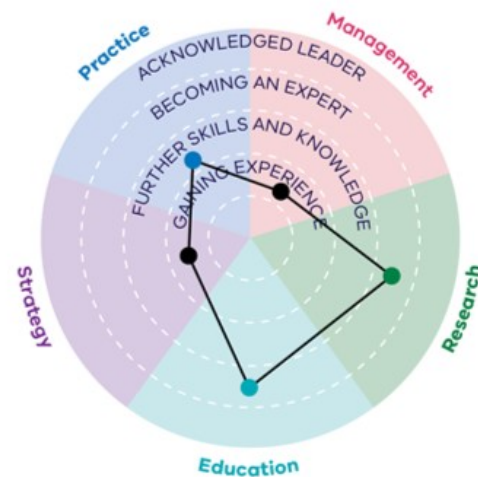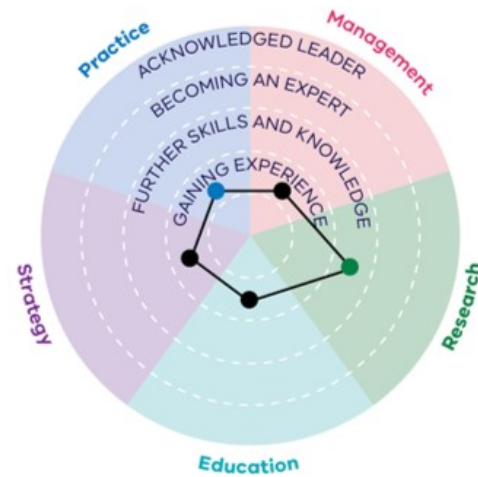
Figure 7: Research example

RESEARCH

Sam is a Podiatrist whose pathway began in private practice. Sam's experience included clinical work and management before transitioning to a research role.

'After graduation I worked in private practice for two years before moving into community health in a metropolitan public health service. I developed an interest in how health policy affects patient outcomes and chose to go on to complete a Master of Health Promotion while continuing to work full time in my clinical role. After completing my masters, I moved into a team leader role which involved both clinical and managerial responsibilities. I also had the opportunity to work part time for 12 months on a local government project while in this role.'

FOCUS:

Practice and Management: Further skills and knowledge
Strategy: Gaining experience
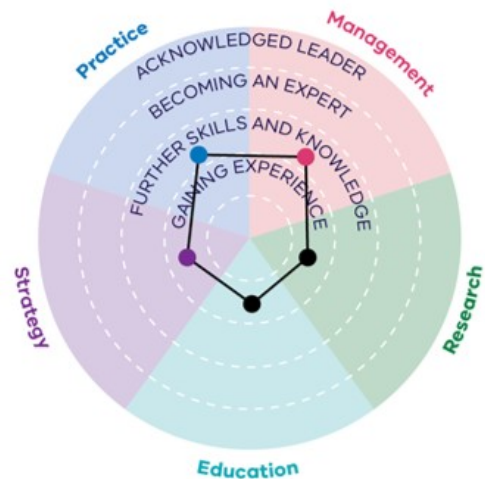
'After returning from maternity leave I felt ready for my next challenge and decided to undertake a PhD. I moved into a part-time management role as the Head of Profession in my work area and a second role at another health service one day a week that complimented my PhD research. Completing my PhD then enabled me to move from my management role in the clinical setting to management in the allied health research unit at my organisation.'

FOCUS:

Practice: Becoming an expert
Research and Management: Further skills and knowledge
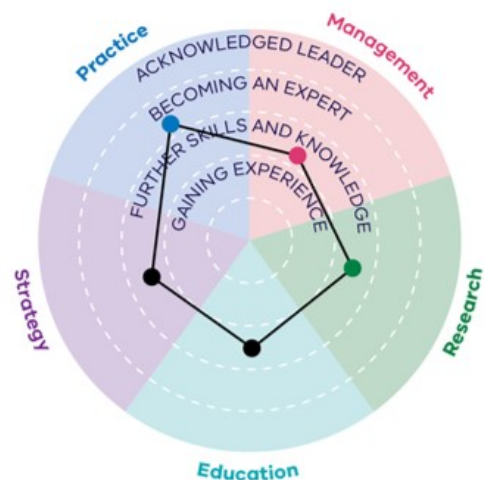
'After developing my research skills over the next 12 months I applied for a senior research position at the health service where I had completed my PhD. I was then able to move up to a research lead role, which was created by my organisation in response to the recognition of the importance of translational research and the benefits associated with the development of research initiatives within the health service.'

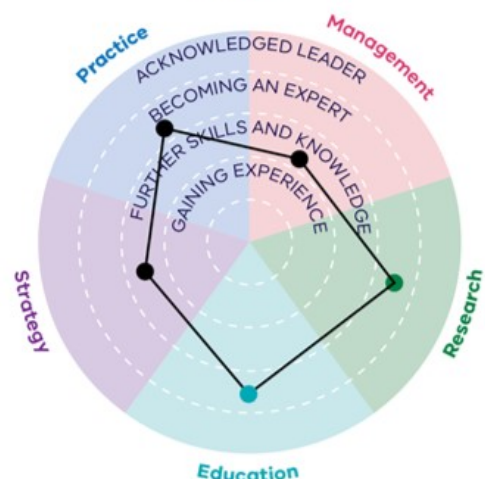**FOCUS:**

Research and Education: Becoming an expert

**Figure 8: Management example**

MANAGEMENT

Cameron is a Medical Scientist whose pathway began in a private laboratory. Cameron's experience includes people management at metropolitan and regional health services culminating in a position on the executive team.

'After finishing university, I briefly worked in a private laboratory before moving to a public metropolitan hospital. I had already enrolled in a Master of Applied Science to further my clinical knowledge and skills, and then went on to complete a Minor Thesis/Research project. I had wonderful mentors and thrived on learning opportunities such as grand rounds, journal clubs, conferences and being seconded to a one-year project conducted by a research unit within my organisation.'

FOCUS:

Practice and Research: Further skills and knowledge
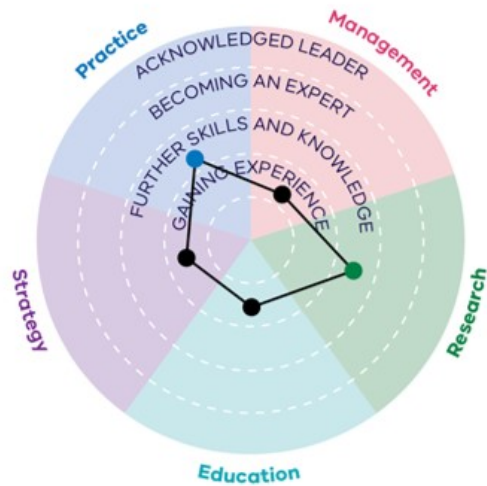
'After seven years I applied for a senior position at a large regional health service, which was a great but challenging opportunity. This role incorporated people management, budget management and leading accreditations. After spending four years learning the ropes of management and leadership, I was approached to apply for the role of Manager at another large regional health service.'

FOCUS:

Practice: Becoming an expert
Management: Further skills and knowledge
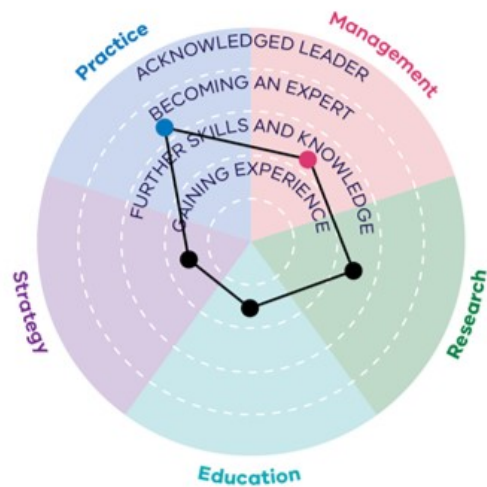
'After seven years in this role, during which I had completed a Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Management, I started feeling the need to learn more and be challenged. My manager was very supportive and assisted me to move into the role of a clinical business manager, overseeing clinical business areas with an organisational view. During this time, I mentored several department heads, which eventually led to an organisational structure change through the creation of a divisional director role. Following this, I was invited to be part of the executive management team at my organisation.'

FOCUS:

Management: Becoming an expert
Strategy: Further skills and knowledge

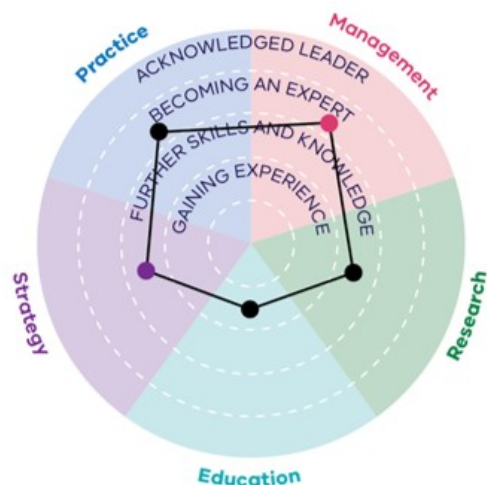Allied health career pathways blueprint

Figure 9: Practice example

PRACTICE

Jim is a pharmacist, whose pathway commenced in a public hospital, and has developed into an Advanced Practice Pharmacist, with international recognition as an expert in cancer pharmacy practice.

'After finishing university I commenced working as a staff pharmacist, before moving into the field of cancer pharmacy three years later. To further my knowledge in this area I undertook self-directed learning, was supported by my workplace to attend educational activities that focused on this area of practice, and presented at local and national pharmacy conferences. I also began my career-long participation in research.'

FOCUS:

Practice and Research: Further skills and knowledge

'To consolidate my advanced practice I successfully completed the inaugural US Board of Pharmaceutical Specialities Certification in Oncology Pharmacy, and was awarded Fellowship of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia. I was recognised as an Advanced Practice Pharmacist by the Australian Pharmacy Council.

I have remained working at the same organisation throughout my career, progressing to the position of Senior Pharmacist. This longevity has allowed me to establish, implement, monitor, influence and improve department policies and procedures over time, and contribute to the education of pharmacy students, interns and peers in my workplace. I have also lectured to a number of undergraduate and postgraduate university programs, and have organised and facilitated education programs for professional societies.'

FOCUS:

Practice and Education: Becoming an expert
Research and Management: Further skills and knowledge

'I have been involved in the preparation of cancer pharmacy practice guidelines at a professional and government level, and have further contributed to shaping cancer pharmacy practice through my involvement as an ongoing active member of both national and international professional organisations. I have published widely in peer-reviewed journals, presented at local, national and international conferences, and am considered an expert in cancer pharmacy practice.'

FOCUS:

Practice: Acknowledged leader
Research, Education and Strategy: Becoming an expert
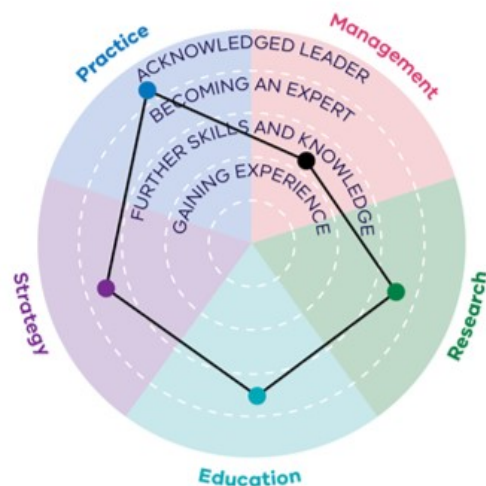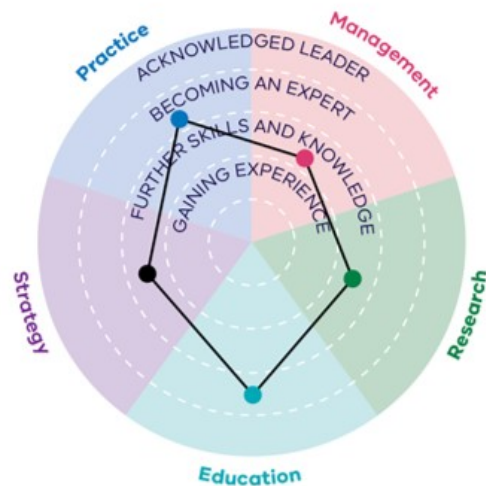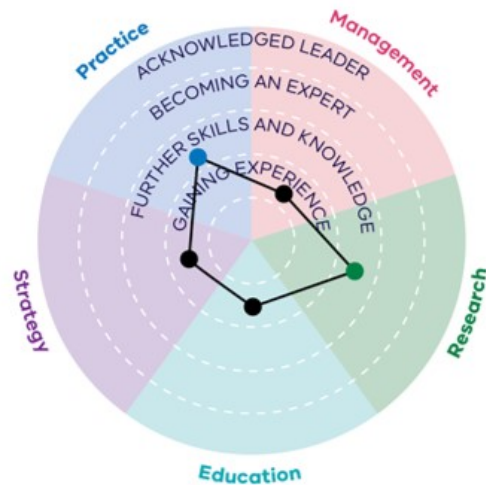
Figure 10: Strategy example

STRATEGY

Lindsey is a Physiotherapist whose pathway began public health. By identifying an emerging trend in Information Technology and its application to health care and leveraging off networks and partnerships, Lindsey became an industry leader in a company that implements electronic health records globally.

'After graduating with honours, I gained experience as a junior clinician in outpatients at metropolitan hospital, followed by roles with Local Government and Community Health. As the department grew, I took on a role managing a small team. Through that role I initiated and implemented numerous process and service redesign projects. One of these projects significantly improved patient access and was adopted by other departments and other health services. From there I moved into managing a larger multi professional team and took on an additional role planning for the next accreditation cycle for the whole health service.'

FOCUS:

Practice, Management and Strategy:
Further skills and knowledge

'At that time the Department of Health and Human Services was starting to develop and provide software to manage patient administration systems, which led to involvement in software implementation within the health service and then at other health services. I commenced post-graduate studies, expanded the team by employing an external consultant and sat on an IT steering committee for a government led electronic health record project. I was recruited to a role as the IT manager for a larger health service who had external consultants involved in their electronic health record project and business plan. Through those consultants I was recruited into the project as information manager/IT manager for multiple sites and project manager for the vendor.'

FOCUS:

Management and Strategy: Becoming an expert

'When the electronic health record project finished I moved across to the software vendor as a project manager. The company designs software solutions for health services. Over time I noticed and discussed with executives some ways to improve knowledge management, resourcing, generation of collateral and project documentation which resulted in me transitioning to a role working on a global project designing and implementing an agreed methodology to manage the system and processes supporting the business worldwide.'

FOCUS:

Strategy: Acknowledged leader
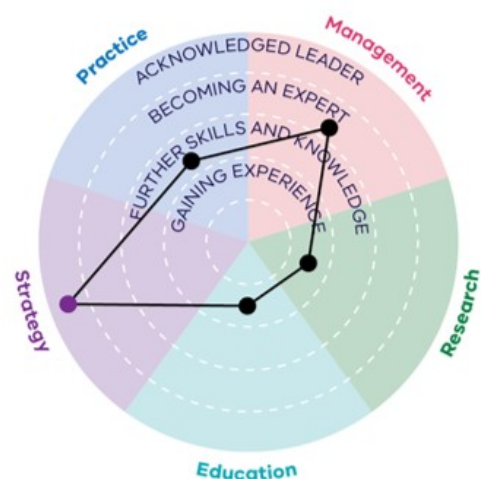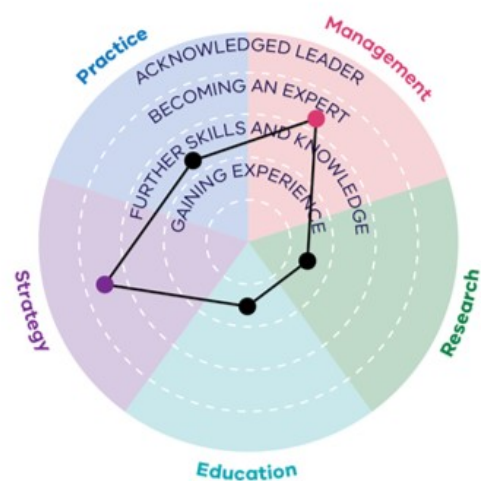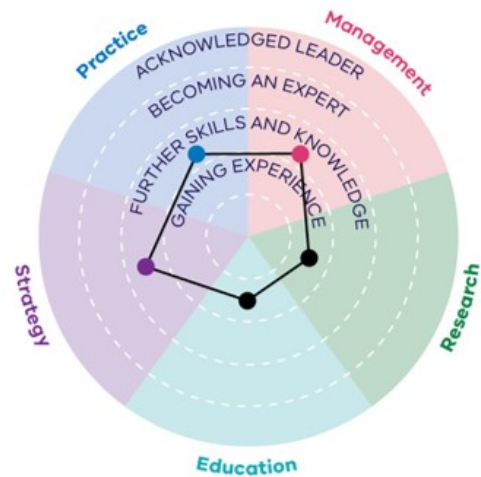
References and further resources

Allied health: credentialing, competency and capability framework <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/allied-health-ccc-framework>.

Allied Health Professions Association <https://ahpa.com.au/>.

Allied Health Practitioner Regulation Agency <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>.

Boyce R 2001, 'Organisational governance structures in allied health services: a decade of change' *Australian Health Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, p. 22.

Boyce R and Jackway P 2016, *Allied health leaders: Australian public-sector health boards and top management teams,* report to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.

Health Informatics Society of Australia <https://www.hisa.org.au/clinical-informatics/>.

Training and Development Grant funding streams for entry level, early graduate and post-graduate education activities <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and-midwifery-career/training-and-development-grant>.

Victorian allied health research framework <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/allied-health-workforce/allied-health-research>.

Appendix 1: Building a spider diagram

Diagram for an individual

Step 1: Locate the primary work stream of your current role (or the combination of your past roles if mapping your career pathway) in the blueprint.
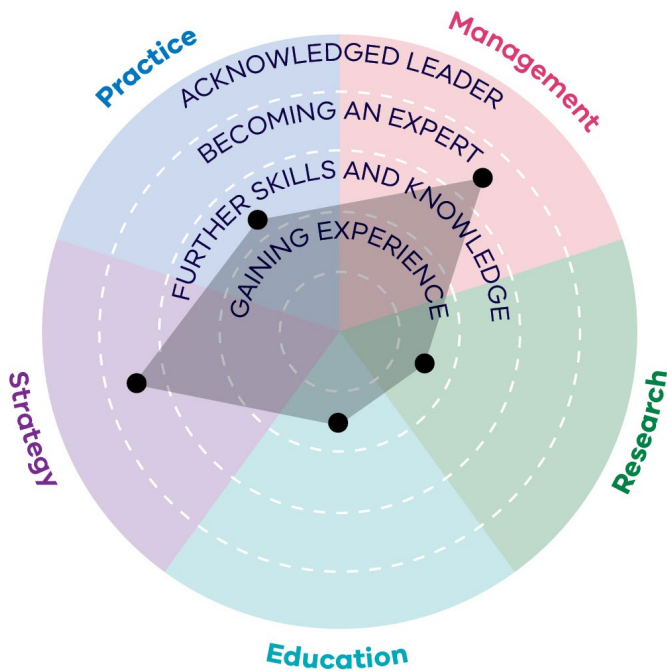
Step 2: Determine which growth ring you are working within for that work-stream and draw a dot in the corresponding section of the blueprint. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for other work streams where relevant.
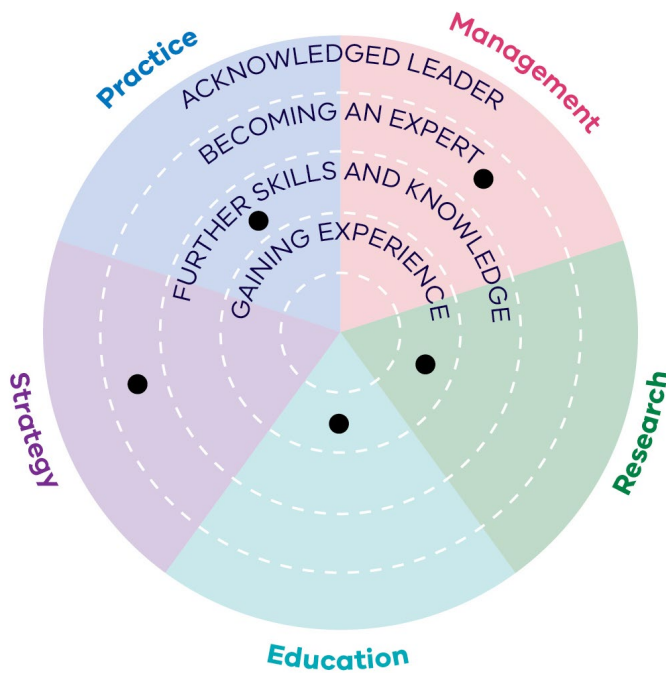
Step 3: Connect each dot to its neighbour by drawing a straight line between them.
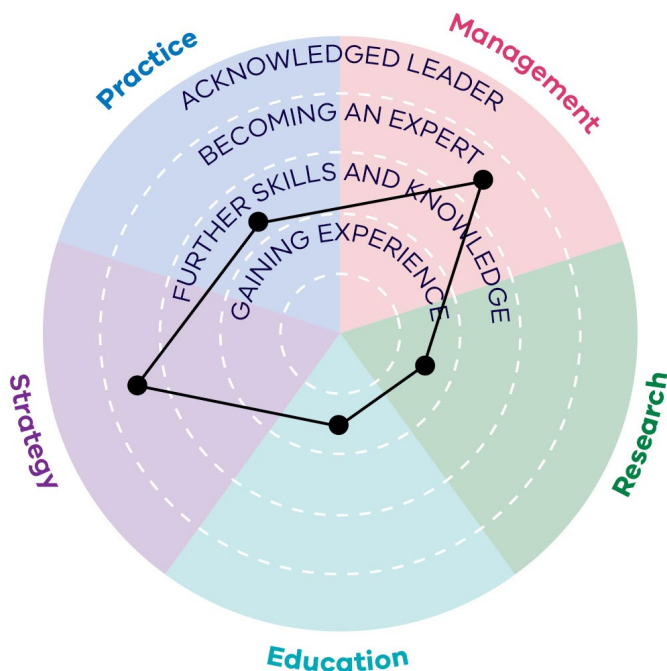
Step 4: Lightly shade the area between the lines.

Step 5: Now consider the knowledge, skills, capabilities and experience required for the comparison role or career and repeat steps 1–4.
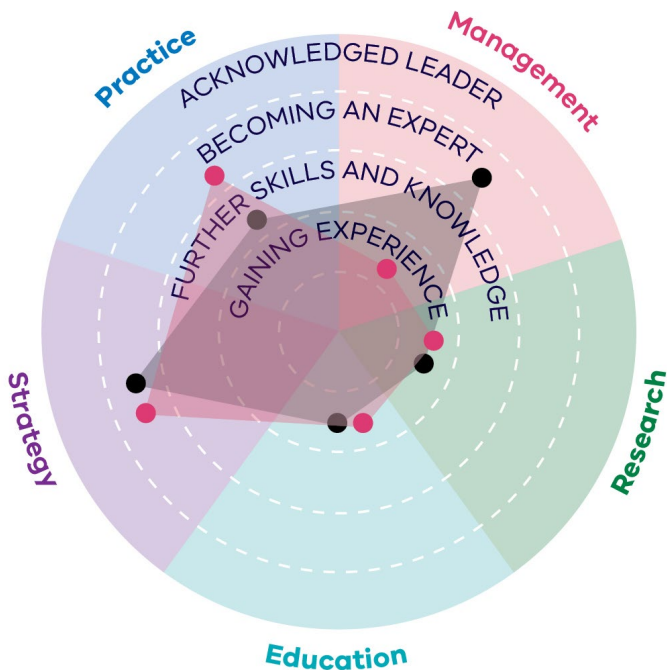
Step 6: Note the differences between the two roles or careers. Review the content in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the blueprint to determine how a transition between the two roles or to the desired career could be achieved.

Diagram for a team

If building a spider diagram for a team or work area, follow the same process as above to:

- generate individual profiles for each team member on the same blueprint image. The more heavily shaded regions of the spider diagram will represent greater combined strength in a work stream or growth ring. Lighter regions will represent areas for potential development.
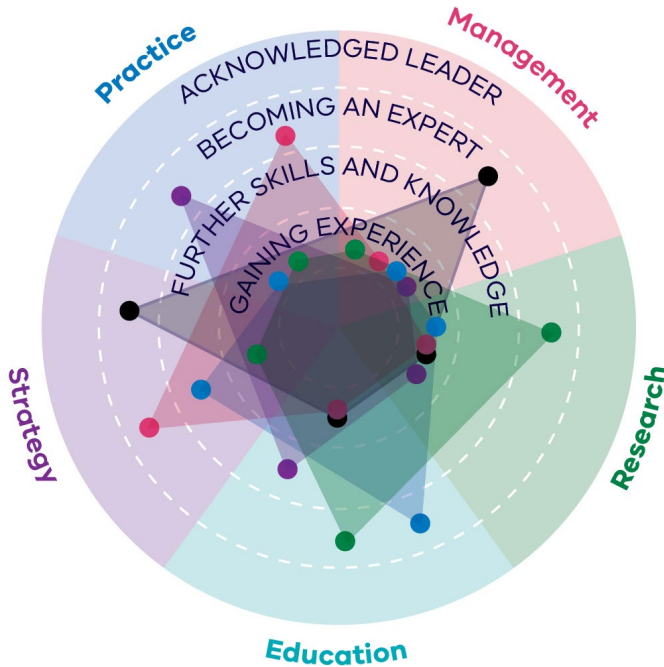

- generate an aggregate profile for a team or work area, and then repeat this process to show the desired profile for the same team or work area. Note the differences between the two profiles and review the blueprint content to identify career development and progression opportunities that will facilitate the desired outcome.
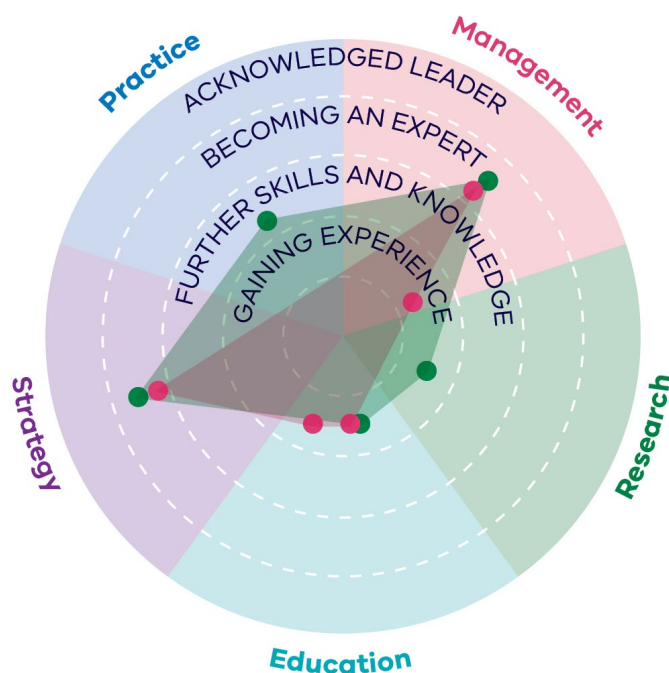
Spider diagram template

Practice

Management

Research

Education

Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGED LEADER

BECOMING AN EXPERT

FURTHER SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

GAINING EXPERIENCE
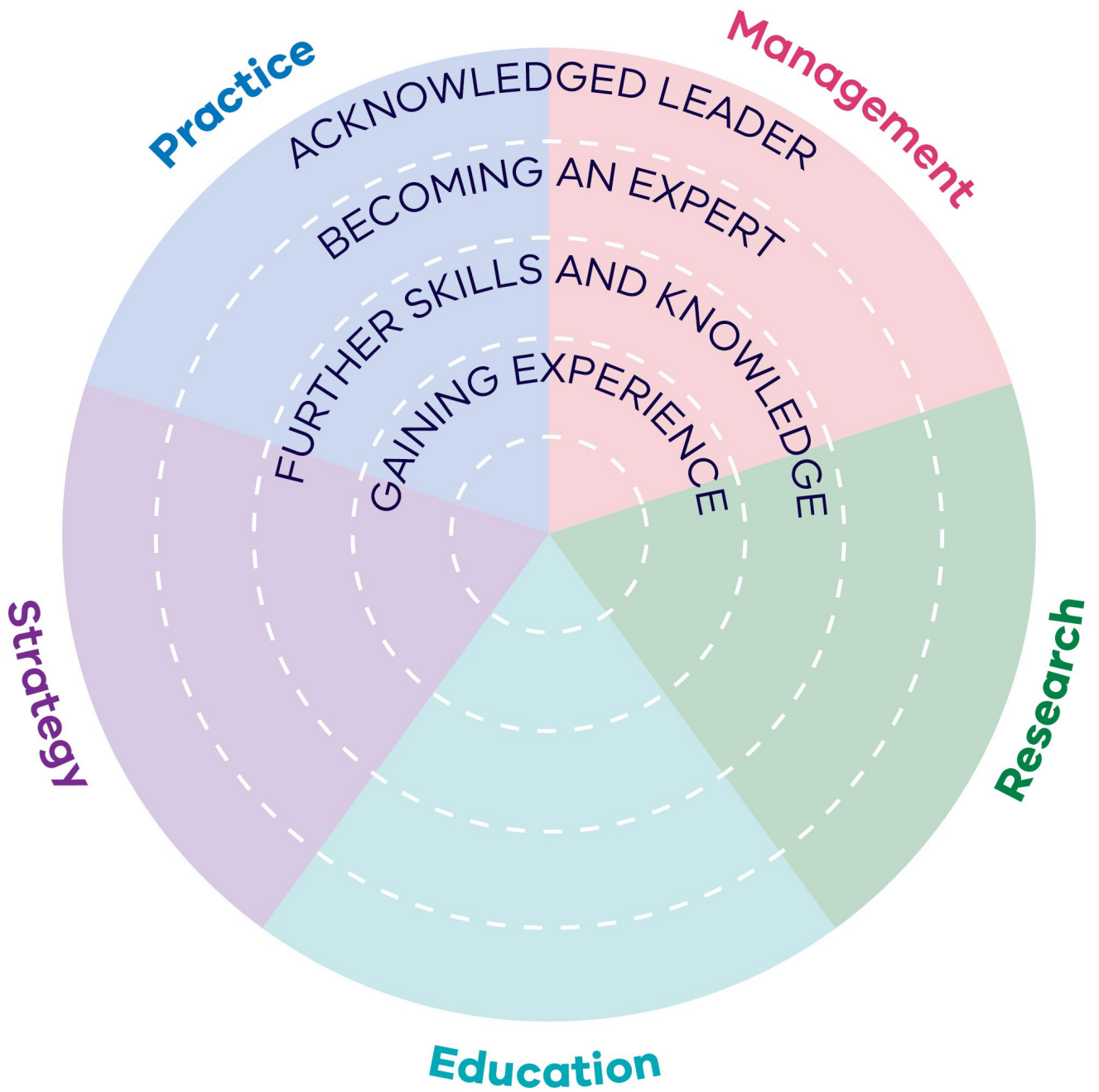
Appendix 2: Career development activities for work streams

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
All streams	• Seek new opportunities to work on or in diverse cases, projects and environments to explore own interest and emerging trends • Consider secondment opportunities that allow you to explore a new area of the sector or develop new skills • Be aware of digital information and technology applications in health care to inform clinical decision making • Engage consumers in healthcare decision making to develop communication skills • Seek feedback and reflect on performance to develop skills and build self-awareness	• Take advantage of informal and formal learning opportunities to build on core skills • Consider postgraduate studies in relevant stream/s, e.g. coursework or research higher degree to develop expertise • Actively seek mentorship to guide career progression • Access, interpret and analyse the use of information and technology to deliver safe and effective health care • Employ health coaching/motivation to influence consumer engagement in healthcare • Identify strengths, personal attributes and preferred approaches to target development activities	• Create opportunities to share your knowledge and skills, e.g. delivery of education or authoring peer reviewed publications to demonstrate expertise • Seek out adjunct roles that complement your primary role, e.g. at a university, health service or government department to enhance partnerships • Use technology and informatics to identify emerging trends and drive innovation in service delivery • Consult with local communities to determine if health services match local needs • Create and leverage off networks to share knowledge, generate opportunities and expand impact • Seek opportunities to work within constraints and uncertainties to develop resilience	• Present at national and/or international conferences to share expertise and network with other leaders in field • Provide mentorship to emerging leaders/experts in your field to contribute to their growth • Provide expert consultation to inform decision making in the sector to meet current and emerging needs • Leverage off digital platforms and data analysis tools to inform data driven healthcare decision making • Involve consumers and communities across the sector in service development initiatives to drive innovation in health care • Create networking and development opportunities for others to connect and progress • Use networks to influence and inspire others

Allied health career pathways blueprint

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
Practice	• Explore working with diverse clinical groups and/or different environments and settings across the sector to identify areas of interest • Seek opportunities to work with other health professionals and teams to explore diversity in practice and approaches to clinical care • Engage in regular continual professional development to consolidate and develop skills • Attend conferences to explore new and emerging trends • Participate in non-clinical activities such as quality improvement projects and research to build networks and skills • Volunteer to join committees in the workplace or externally, e.g. professional association, to form new relationships	• Participate in service delivery to develop further knowledge and skills in clinical or technical area of focus • Attend continual professional development targeted to further advance clinical and technical skills • Engage in formal education such as short courses, certifications or postgraduate coursework to develop further knowledge or skills in clinical or technical area of focus • Participate in clinical research to increase knowledge of evidence informed practice and awareness of emerging trends • Seek opportunities to provide clinical supervision to developing practitioners to support emerging experts and develop education, coaching and people management skills	• Seek opportunities to contribute to specialist services in area of expertise to establish reputation as an emerging leader in the area • Undertake professional development and research opportunities to increase knowledge in area of specialisation • Engage in education or research opportunities that provide opportunities to teach or present in relevant forums, e.g. workshops, conferences or publication of peer reviewed papers • Seek leadership roles on relevant committees and boards that demonstrate emerging clinical expertise, e.g. professional associations, health regulatory bodies, operational health service	• Lead service delivery to support, supervise and coach others to manage caseloads at the most complex or chronic end of the spectrum • Network to develop opportunities to deliver clinical or technical interventions that are at the cutting edge • Pursue a research higher degree to contribute to the evidence base in the area of clinical/technical expertise • Contribute to the education and teaching of students and emerging experts to consolidate status as a practice leader • Provide consultation into organisational or system level decision making to influence development of effective clinical service models • Attain community recognition as a leader, e.g. specialisation or fellowship through accrediting bodies to confirm standing as a practice leader

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
Education	• Engage in patient and community education activities to develop instructional and communication skills • Participate in tutorials and other education activities facilitated by experienced educators to observe expert practice • Contribute to the organisation of continuing professional development programs, either workplace or external such as through a professional association or university to develop skills in planning education to meet learning needs • Attend introductory educator skills training to increase knowledge of instructional, feedback and assessment skills • Seek opportunities to assist with student supervision, preceptorship or clinical training	• Practice patient and health professional education to develop further knowledge and skills in effective instruction • Act as lead supervisor for health professional students to support and coach staff less experienced in student supervision • Attend continual professional development targeted to further advance instruction and education skills • Engage in formal education training such as short courses, certifications or postgraduate coursework in health and/or health professional education to develop advanced skills in instructional, feedback and assessment skills • Seek opportunities to coordinate education activities across a health service sector to consolidate skills in planning education to meet learning needs	• Seek opportunities to lead knowledge management at an organisational level to support sustainable workforce education solutions • Contribute to educational policy within organisation or at a broader sector level to increase profile as an emerging leader in education • Undertake professional development and research opportunities health professional education to contribute to the evidence base for health sector education • Engage in education by teaching or presenting in relevant forums e.g. workshops, conferences or university courses to demonstrate education expertise • Pursue a research higher degree to contribute to the evidence base in health or health professional education • Look for academic appointment opportunities, either direct or adjunct to establish and further develop education networks and partnerships	• Support, supervise and coach others to effectively educate others • Provide consultation at an organisational or system level to support decision making about knowledge management and education frameworks appropriate to support the workforce in the sector • Lead education, training and courses either nationally or internationally to confirm education expertise • Contribute to the establishment or redesign of clinical schools, departments or courses to influence the education and practice of the future workforce • Attain community recognition as a leader, e.g. specialisation or fellowship through accrediting bodies to confirm standing as leading educator

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
Research	• Be a research-active clinician by consuming and participating in research activities • Attend introductory research skills training to build on skills developed in entry level course • Design and lead service improvement projects to practice application of research skills on a small scale • Participate in larger scale research projects led by research experts in the sector to build skills and networks • Seek opportunities for secondments into project management or project officer roles in research to build applied research skills • Consider taking a role as a research assistant to consolidate applied research skills	• Engage in formal research training such as short courses, certifications or postgraduate coursework in research methods to increase research skills and capabilities • Contribute to grant writing teams to gain experience in writing for competitive grants to improve research literacy • Design and lead clinical research projects to examine clinical questions and develop applied research skills • Collaborate with university-based researchers to conduct health service-based research to gain experience in research translation • Pursue a research higher degree to develop the skills required to research independently	• Complete a research higher degree and pursue further research opportunities at postdoctoral level to confirm emerging expertise in research • Seek opportunities to contribute to collaborative research to build networks and foster new relationships • Seek adjunct or secondment roles within health services, universities or government to develop collaborative research links and relationships • Generate peer reviewed publications, conference presentations and industry engagement to contribute to an emerging evidence base • Supervise emerging researchers and make academic contributions such as peer reviewing of research publications or, grant applications to further consolidate research expertise • Participate in research translation activities to lead evidence informed practice	• Lead, design and implement large clinical trials and sector level research projects to demonstrate performance at a leadership level • Collaborate in cross-sector research initiatives to build research networks • Lead research projects that test emerging theories or challenge established practices to inform organisational and sector decision making around resource allocation • Supervise research trainees to contribute to the development of emerging researchers • Communicate research outputs internationally via conferences and publications in relevant journals with high impact to lead research translation • Sit on grant review panels or ethics committees for research institutions or government bodies to contribute to research and evidence generation • Establish revenue streams to support research through competitive grant funding or industry partnerships

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
Management	• Observe the demonstration of skills in leadership of people in different contexts to define own leadership values • Attend continual professional development targeted to further advance people management and leadership skills • Seek opportunities to lead teams or groups, e.g. portfolio groups, committees or clinical teams to develop leadership and communication skills • Seek coaching and mentorship from an established people leader to guide career development • Develop understanding of governance and health system management to inform leadership of others • Participate in change management initiatives to improve communication and negotiation skills	• Use practice opportunities to develop further knowledge and skills in effective people leaderships • Supervise health professionals that may practice either in or out of your area of clinical expertise to develop coaching and leadership skills • Attend continual professional development targeted to further advance your communication, leadership and health management skills • Engage in formal education training such as short courses, certifications or postgraduate coursework in health system management or business administration, i.e. MBA to develop knowledge and skills in leadership • Use organisational data and performance reports to lead and influence service reviews and practice change initiatives	• Complete postgraduate qualifications in health system management and/or business administration to consolidate skills and capabilities in leadership and management • Participate in leadership programs or fellowships to build on leadership skills and increase professional networks within and across sectors • Seek secondment opportunities to gain experience in different parts organisations to inform leadership skills • Seek formal mentorship and/or coaching from an industry leader to guide career decision points • Attend symposia, conferences and networking forums to identify emerging trends and opportunities for collaboration within and outside the sector • Engage with research partners to interpret and utilise service level data and performance indicators	• Support, supervise and coach individuals and teams to achieve strategic objectives and outcome targets • Lead versatile and high performing teams to achieve strategic objectives and support retention of staff • Represent relevant sectors of organisation in operational to influence decision making that impacts on service delivery • Use available evidence and interpretation of performance data to advocate for appropriate resource allocation or disinvestment • Use effective networking to establish and develop partnerships with organisational and sector leaders • Support health sector leadership that contributes to research and education • Attain community recognition as a leader, e.g. specialisation or fellowship through accrediting bodies to confirm standing as a people leader

Work stream	Growth ring 1: Gaining experience	Growth ring 2: Further skills and knowledge	Growth ring 3: Becoming an expert	Growth ring 4: Acknowledged leader
Policy and planning	• Contribute to identification of service models and policy development to meet emerging trends within an organisation • Seek opportunities such as project roles focused on policy, emerging technologies or service models reviews to expand knowledge of sector wide developments • Participate in governance groups charged with policy development, engagement with technology and health data or scope of practice, e.g. reference groups or advisory committees to inform values-based decision making in healthcare • Participate in the development or review of organisational level policies and procedures to develop skills in operational management • Participate in the exploration and approval of new and emerging sources of health information, health care models or consumer engagement • Identify and establish mentoring relationship with industry leaders to guide career development	• Commence or consider relevant postgraduate qualifications, such as but not limited to business administration, public health, information technology or law to increase knowledge relevant to policy development, data analysis, values-based care and decision making • Seek secondment opportunities to gain experience working with professional associations, industry partners or governmental departments • Participate in delivery of education or development of research related to decision making, data driven service models or impact of new technology to address current and emerging needs in the sector	• Seek opportunities to work in relevant government departments, industry partners, professional associations or governing bodies to influence sector wide developments • Identify ongoing professional development activities to build more advanced communication, stakeholder management, influence and negotiation skills • Attend symposia, conferences and networking forums to identify emerging trends and opportunities for collaboration within and outside the sector • Represent the sector in negotiations with key stakeholders in health services, industry and government departments to drive key decision making to achieve strategic objectives in the sector • Engage community stakeholders and consumers in consultation about key developments in the sector to inform decision making	• Guide others in the development of policy and practice guidelines, in particular especially difficult or complex policy, decisions about adoption of emerging technologies or use of 'big-data' in health • Fill senior roles in relevant government or organisation departments to inform sector wide governance, decision making and resource allocation • Lead complex programs and develop state-wide or national policy to address vexed or wicked policy issues • Lead the development of new and emerging practices or technologies to meet needs across the sector • Participate in the shaping of regulations and legislation informing scope of practice of practitioners to facilitate flexible and adaptive practice that meets the needs of the sector

Appendix 3: Self-assessment for organisations

Value

Our organisation demonstrates the following qualities for our allied health professionals:	Fully	Partly	No	Unsure	Status/areas for development
We employ allied health professionals at all levels of seniority					
We have allied health professionals involved in all levels of decision making					
We have allied health professionals holding roles in clinical, non-clinical and traditionally non-allied health areas across the organisation					
We actively promote the skills and capabilities of allied health professionals to the wider organisation					
We support access to developmental opportunities and experiences that build clinical/technical, education, research and leadership skills and capabilities					
We have inclusive communication strategies that give allied health professionals access to information and opportunities as other professional workforces					

Allied health career pathways blueprint

Build

Our organisation demonstrates the following qualities for our allied health professionals:	Fully	Partly	No	Unsure	Status/areas for development
We provide opportunities for clinical and non-clinical development for allied health employees					
We have robust and targeted performance and development processes					
We utilise the *Allied health: credentialing, competency and capability framework* and other allied health policy frameworks to help realise the full potential of their allied health workforce					
We provide opportunities for shared roles across organisations					
We enable short term secondments to enable development and consolidation of new skills					
We support flexible work arrangements that enable creative combinations of roles					

Progress

Our organisation demonstrates the following qualities for our allied health professionals:	Fully	Partly	No	Unsure	Status/areas for development
We have programs/processes that support the development of allied health career pathways internally					
We have programs/processes that enable development opportunities for allied health professionals in collaboration with other organisations					
We communicate career options to allied health employees					
We use annual performance and development processes to understand the career goals of allied health staff members and track progress towards stated career goals					

Allied health career pathways blueprint

Impact

Our organisation demonstrates the following qualities for our allied health professionals:	Fully	Partly	No	Unsure	Status/areas for development
We recognise how organisational structures can contribute to career growth opportunities					
We create and support opportunities for allied health professionals to progress their career across the range of potential work streams					
We involve allied health professionals in all levels of governance and decision making					