

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue blazer, speaking and gesturing with her hands. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue circular graphic in the top right corner and a large white text overlay.

ACHSM Professional Certification Policy

Introduction

In 2019 the Australasian College of Health Service Management (the College) Board and executive reviewed the strategic future of the organisation. Part of this review was to consider the benefits of a credentialing approach for health leaders and managers. A briefing paper and membership consultation survey showed overwhelming support for the introduction of Certification to be administered and supported by the College.

The College has a mission to develop, equip and support high-performing health, community and aged care leaders to deliver quality services and improve community health and wellbeing. Certification is a key initiative to ensure that our members are recognised for their professional capabilities across the health and community care sectors, and that there is a clear community and health sector understanding that a health management career requires significant experience, knowledge and skills.

The College is adamant that great health leadership means better health outcomes for all, and great health leadership requires a commitment to building, maintaining, enhancing and contributing to the professional body of knowledge that is the hallmark of a profession.

Case for a Certification Program

There are many compelling reasons the College has introduced a Certification Program and here are but a few.

- More health and other *professions* are acknowledging that maintaining current skills requires a *commitment to lifelong learning and development*.
- More employers are looking to *validate a job applicant's visible commitment to their own development* and a Certification that requires an individual to commit to learning and enhancing their skills is a great mechanism for easily validating and endorsing that currency.
- More health consumers expect a professional and independent recognition of the capability of the senior people who develop, lead, manage and have responsibility for their health facilities and services.

ACHSM is the professional association for health, community, aged and social care services management with a membership base that embraces a welcome diversity of backgrounds and pathways into leadership and management. Most importantly, though, the College, whilst supporting members from the diversity of clinical and other professional backgrounds, has as its sole focus the specific support and enhancement of health leadership and management skills.

The College has championed the articulation of a clear framework of domains and specific competencies for the guidance and use of health organisations and individuals in health management and leadership.

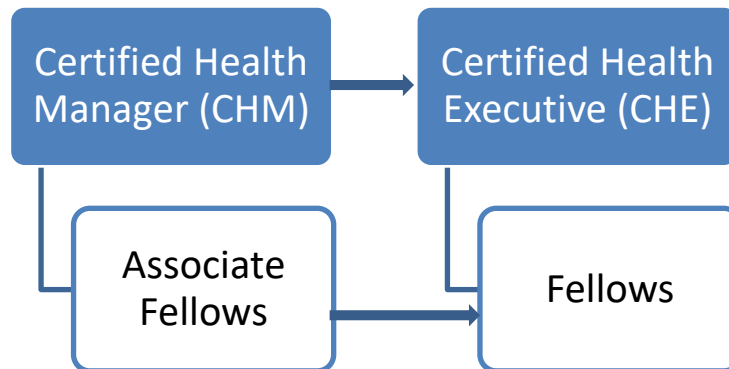
The ACHSM Master Health Services Management Competency Framework was developed through extensive and iterative consultations with thousands of health leaders and managers across the region and is reviewed every 4-5 years to ensure currency. The College supported the development of the International Hospital Federation guidelines on health leadership competencies and incorporated these as well as reviewed numerous existing frameworks in the development of the College's Competency Framework. We welcome the adoption and use of this framework in a variety of contexts and it remains the crucial platform by which we guide all College programs including Certification.

The profession of health management and leadership is a global profession. At its core, a Certification system inherently relies on the professionalism of the individuals who choose to differentiate their own personal career path with a commitment to Certification. It cannot replace experience, and actual performance, but it certainly and undeniably signals an individual's commitment to growth and maintenance of current competence, skills and knowledge.

The College is overwhelmingly overseen by College members from the Board to the Branch Councils and wide variety of Committees that exist to support the careers of other members. As such, the College focuses on supporting the profession itself and our members, wherever their career takes them.

A two-tiered system that values College Fellowship

In December 2020, the College introduced a professional Certification scheme to acknowledge and recognise the competence and professionalism of ACHSM members and future members. There are two separate levels of Certification linked to the 2 most senior ACHSM membership categories, Associate Fellow and Fellow.



Certified Health Manager (CHM)

To join the College as an Associate Fellow, health leaders and managers need to demonstrate 12 points on the ACHSM Membership Application Form.

On December 1, 2020, existing Associate Fellows were deemed to be Certified Health Managers and able to use the CHM postnominal in addition to their existing AFCHSM postnominals. They are required to demonstrate that they have:

1. Completed and lodged by end May 2021 a confidential self-assessment against the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework (noting that the aggregated data from these self-assessments will be utilised by the College for the purposes of developing or identifying programs of most need for College members – individual data will be held in the strictest confidence according to the College's data privacy policy).
2. Completed a minimum of 25 hours of Continuing Professional Development by June 1st, 2022– activities that meet these requirements are outlined in the separate Maintenance of Certification document.

Health leaders and managers who are not Associate Fellows, or cannot meet the requirements for Associate Fellowship, of the College by June 1, 2021, will need to undertake a formal Certification Program of study once they do become Associate Fellows in order to be certified as a Certified Health Manager.

An Associate Fellow who has Certified Health Manager status will automatically advance to Certified Health Executive on successful completion of the ACHSM Fellowship Program.

Certified Health Executive (CHE)

Associate Fellows of the College who can demonstrate 20 points on the ACHSM Membership Application and Advancement Form, inclusive of 1 point in the Education section, are eligible to undertake the Fellowship Program by Examination offered every year by the College.

Associate Fellows who can demonstrate more than 45 points with several years of senior executive experience may be eligible for the direct entry to Fellowship.

An Associate Fellow who has not completed the Certification Program of study may advance to Fellowship but will not be permitted to use the CHE postnominals until the Certification Program is also completed.

On December 1, 2020, existing Fellows were deemed to be Certified Health Executives and to use the CHE postnominal in addition to their existing FCHSM postnominals. They are required to demonstrate that they have:

1. Completed and lodged a confidential self-assessment by end May 2021 against the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework (noting that the aggregated data from these self-assessments will be utilised by the College for the purposes of developing or identifying programs of most need for College members – individual data will be held in the strictest confidence according to the College's data privacy policy).
2. Completed a minimum of 25 hours of Continuing Professional Development by June 1, 2022– activities that meet these requirements are outlined in the separate Maintenance of Certification document.

Certification is not compulsory

It is important to note that existing Fellows and Associate Fellows on December 1, 2020, or those who join as Associate Fellow before June 1, 2021 may choose to not use the CHE or CHM endorsement and hence will not be required to commit to maintaining a mandatory level of professional development. Choosing to opt out of Certification does not affect your level of membership. **However, should you wish to opt-in at a later date, you will be required to undertake the Certification Program before being recognised as a CHM or CHE.**

Ongoing requirements

After June 1, 2022, ongoing requirements for existing Associate Fellows and Fellows who were recognised in December 2020 and those who joined as an Associate Fellow before June 1, 2021 and met their minimum requirements in Year 1, will be the expectation that they complete a minimum of 75 Maintenance of Certification Points every triennium (three years). A further expectation is that every 6 years a CHM or CHE will participate in the College Mentoring program in some form, either as a Mentor or Mentee. Participation in the mentoring program will attract MOC (Maintenance of Certification) points.

Elements of Establishing Health Management as a recognised Profession

The key elements in establishing a 'profession' to underpin Certification include:

1. **EDUCATION** – setting the boundaries of what education content and level is required of a professional health manager.
2. **EXPERIENCE** – providing a framework of what a competent, certified professional is expected to achieve and maintain.
3. **EXAMINATION** – evidence of a process that is consistently applied to assess an individual has met, and continues to maintain a certain level of competency and this is regularly monitored.
4. **ETHICS** – the underpinning for the practice of skills achieved, knowledge gained, and judgement utilised.
5. **ENTITY** – the College which acts as the caretaker, auditing body and recordkeeper responsible for the promulgation of the program for the profession.

Certification Support Initiatives

The College has worked to ensure that a number of important facets of a professional Certification are developed, including the:

- capacity for our members to record their College and other organisations' continuing professional development activities online in the membership portal. Information on how to log Maintenance of Certification points (MOC) on this portal form part of the CHM/CHE Maintenance of Certification Policy document.
- development of *thoroughly researched and internationally benchmarked ACHSM Health Service Management Competency Framework* to effectively capture and articulate the skills and knowledge required of a health leader.
- introduction of a *fair and balanced points-based system for assessing membership levels* that attributes points to management experience, board experience, educational achievements and contributions to the profession itself. This points system underpins being able to join the College at Associate Fellow level, advance to undertake Fellowship by examination and in very rare circumstances, to be recognized as a Fellow without examination.
- introduction of *free or low-cost professional development* in the form of national webcasts available to everyone with an internet connection.

What about those who join the College after June 2021?

For those who join ACHSM after June 2021 there will be a comprehensive Certification Program to complete in order to attain the CHM (Certified Health Manager) or CHE (Certified Health Executive) professional endorsement.

For those who join or become an Associate Fellow of the College after June 2021, the following three categories outline what experience and education they will need to enter the Certification Program. The components of the Certification Program they will need to complete will depend on which of these 3 categories they meet to enter the program.

(1) Requirements for Entry - Certification Program (1)

Be an Associate Fellow with :

- A minimum of three (3) years health, aged, or community/social care leadership or management experience
- At least one point from the Education section on the points-based membership form – for example, this could be a Diploma of Management.

(2) Requirements for Entry via Recognition of Prior Learning - Certification Program (2)

Be an Associate Fellow with :

- A minimum of five (5) years health, aged, or community/social care leadership or management experience and no education point

(3) Requirements for Entry via Advanced Standing - Certification Program (3)

Be an Associate Fellow with :

- A minimum of ten (10) or more years health, aged, or community/social care leadership or management experience

Components of the Certification Program Category (1) entrants

- Completion and submission of a self-assessment against the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework.
- Interview with appointed ACHSM Mentor to discuss self-assessment and develop a proposed Career Development Plan. The Mentor must sign off on application before the program proceeds further.
- Completion of an education module and online assessment in the domain area of “professional and social responsibility” – see the table below.
- Submission of a paper (scope and boundaries of this to be agreed prior to commencement) based on a workplace project. Subject to approval, this paper may be based on a project undertaken in the previous 12-18 months, provided the applicant was the project lead.
- Individual has 18 months to satisfactorily complete all the above requirements

Components of the Certification Program Category (2) entrants – entry via Recognition of Prior Experience

- Pre-approval - provision of portfolio of evidence of prior experience including outlines of work leadership projects.
- Completion and submission of a self-assessment against the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework
- Completion of an education module and online assessment in the domain area of “professional and social responsibility”.
- Interview with appointed ACHSM Mentor to discuss self-assessment and develop a proposed Career Development Plan.
- Submission of a paper (scope and boundaries of this to be agreed prior to commencement) based on a workplace project. Subject to approval, this paper may be based on a project undertaken in the previous 12-18 months, provided the applicant was the project lead.
- Individual has 18 months to satisfactorily complete all the above requirements.

Components of the Certification Program Category (3) entrants – entry via Advanced Standing

- Pre-approval - provision of portfolio of evidence of prior experience including outlines of work leadership projects.
- Completion and submission of a self-assessment against the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework.
- Completion of an education module and online assessment in the domain area of “professional and social responsibility”.



**ACHSM Master Health Service Management
COMPETENCY DOMAIN: 5. PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

COMPETENCY STATEMENT

Professionalism

Demonstrates commitment to policy advocacy and capacity

Practices fiduciary responsibility

Demonstrates commitment to competency, integrity and altruism

Demonstrates commitment to quality and safety

Profession and Professional Development

Demonstrates commitment to personal development

Demonstrates commitment to profession development

Demonstrates a commitment to developing others

Balances professional and personal accountability

Self-Awareness

Knows own attributes

Displays emotional intelligence

Social Responsibility

Understand social responsibility

Balances corporate and social responsibility

Demonstrates a commitment to ethical conduct

The Compulsory Online Education module will be based on the above competency Domain from the ACHSM Master Health Service Management Competency Framework

Requirements of Ongoing Maintenance of Certification (CHM and CHE)

All CHM and CHE College members will be required to maintain their Certification. For more detail on the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) and how many MOC points will be required each triennium and what activities are recognised for points, please see the ACHSM Maintenance of Certification Policy document.

Applications for Reduced Maintenance of Certification

In any given triennium, a CHM or CHE may apply for a reduction of up to one-third (twenty-five points) of the Maintenance of Certification points. Submissions for consideration should be emailed to certification@achsm.org.au, and if approved, a copy of the approval saved to your membership profile. Examples of matters that would be considered include significant ill-health, long period of unemployment, or long period of parental leave.

Complaints, Audits and Disciplinary Approach

The College will develop appropriate mechanisms for auditing, dealing with complaints, appeals and any disciplinary approaches. These will be key hallmarks of general public and sector expectations of health professionals of all kinds in the coming twelve (12) months.

If you have any other questions in regards to the proposed Certification Program please do not hesitate to contact me on:

catherine.chaffey@achsm.org.au

Catherine Chaffey
Chief Executive Officer
Australasian College of Health Service Management

Quick Status Check – which category below describes you today?

Member of the College – MEMBER

There is no Certification designation for this category of College Membership. If you have enough points on our Membership Advancement form (12 points required) to become an Associate Fellow before June 2021, please consider doing so and you will receive the Certified Health Manager designation.

If you do not have enough points now, please be assured that the Certification Program is designed to be an important and career enhancing program to support your continuing career in Health management and leadership.

Member of the College – ASSOCIATE FELLOW

Anyone who joins as an Associate Fellow prior to June 2021 is able to use either or both of your postnominals of CHM and AFCHSM. There are expectations of you to complete Maintenance of Certification activities by June 2022 to retain the CHM designation.

You can choose to opt out of Certification. This will not affect your Associate Fellow status but you will not be able to use the CHM designation and will be required to complete the full Certification Program if you change your mind at a later date.

Member of the College – FELLOW

Unless you opted out, you are now recognised as a Certified Health Executive and able to use either or both of your postnominals of CHE and FCHSM. There are expectations of you to complete Maintenance of Certification activities by June 2022 to retain the CHE designation.

You can choose to opt out of Certification. This will not affect your Fellow status but you will not be able to use the CHE designation and will be required to complete the full Certification Program if you change your mind at a later date.

Member of the College – STUDENT

There is no Certification designation for this category of College Membership. If you have enough points on our Membership Advancement form (12 points required) to become an Associate Fellow before June 2021, please consider doing so and you will receive the Certified Health Manager designation.

If you do not have enough points now, please be assured that the Certification Program is designed to be an important and career enhancing development program, undertaken at a time that suits you, to support your continuing career in Health management and leadership.

Member of the College - RETIRED

There is no Certification designation for Retired Members of any level.

NOT a member of the College

To be recognised as a Certified Health Manager or Certified Health Executive you will need to be an Associate Fellow of the College prior to June 1, 2021.

Membership of the College is determined on a points-based system. Please check the membership page of our website – www.achsm.org.au.

Check your current points status by downloading our Membership Advancement Scoring Form available for download at achsm.org.au/certification.

For our National Office and Branch contact details, please visit:
www.achsm.org.au

