

**AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS  
FOR  
WOUND  
PREVENTION AND  
MANAGEMENT**

**4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
2022**



## Suggested citation

To be confirmed

## Disclaimer

The *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) represent the best available evidence at the time of publication related to wound prevention and management. The *Australian Wound Standards* reflect best clinical practice, to be implemented by regulated health professionals and unregulated health care workers subject to their scope of practice and skills, clinical judgment, local policies and in consideration of the personal preferences of the person with or at risk of a wound. The *Australian Wound Standards* should be implemented in a culturally aware and respectful manner in accordance with the principles of protection, participation and partnership.

Printed copies of the *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) can be ordered from [\[organisation and/or website\]](#)



## Preface

This fourth edition of the *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* provides a framework for delivering best practice in wound prevention and management. The *Australian Wound Standards* are relevant to regulated health professionals, unregulated health care workers, educators, researchers and service providers across Australia.

The *Australian Wound Standards* reflect the best available evidence in wound prevention and management at the time of development and provide a valuable tool to underpin clinical practice and service delivery, policies and procedures, quality improvement initiatives, research initiatives and education programs.

The aim of the *Australian Wound Standards* is to facilitate high quality clinical practice that achieves good health outcomes for people with wounds or at risk of wounding. The document is intended for use by organisations delivering wound care services, wound care practitioners, people receiving wound care and their family carers.

## Acknowledgements

The fourth edition builds on the work completed for previous editions of the *Australian Wound Standards*. Appreciation and recognition are extended to previous development teams for their contributions to development of the *Australian Wound Standards*. The contributions of Australian individuals, peak bodies and organisations who responded to the invitation to review draft editions of the *Australian Wound Standards* are acknowledged with gratitude.

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## Introduction

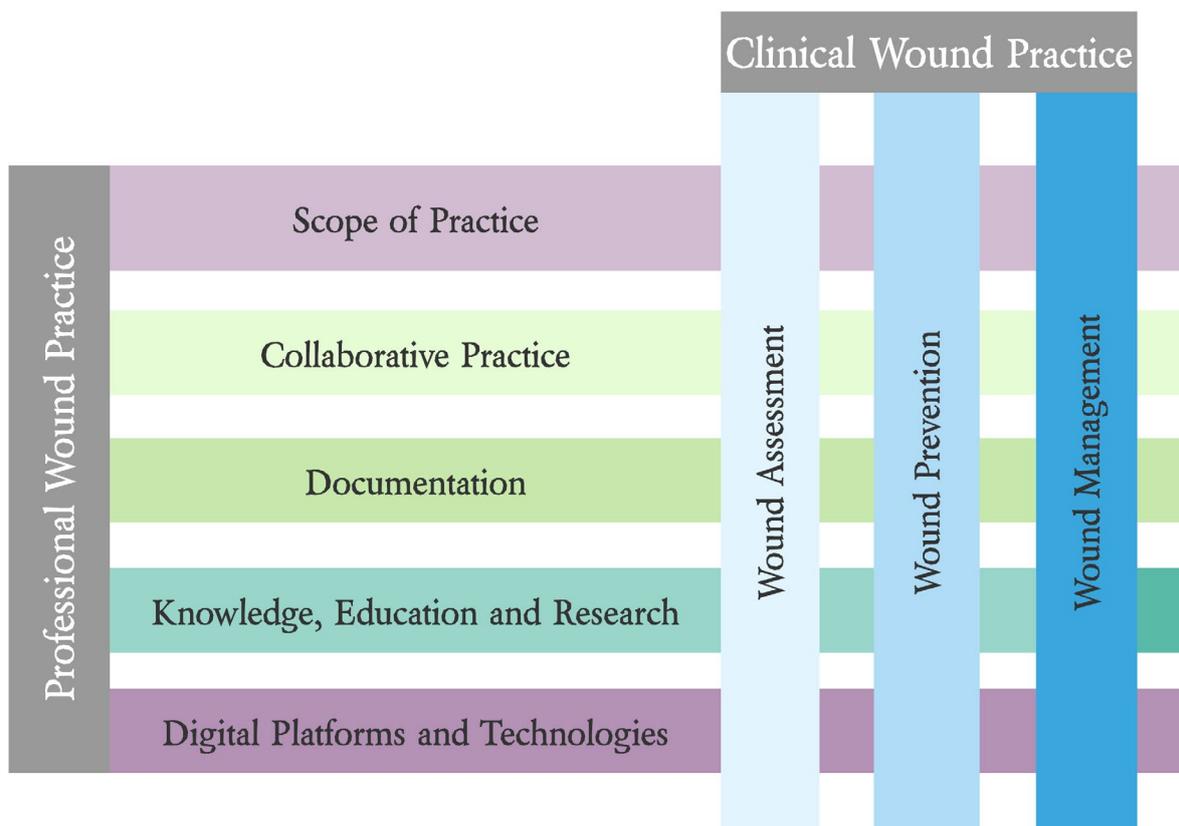
The *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* presented in this document outline quality care for people with wounds or at risk of wounding. Quality wound care is outlined across eight core standards that exemplify wound care delivery in the Australian context.

### What is a Standard?

A professional clinical standard is a statement that identifies an expectation regarding care that should be delivered to an individual. Standards set out practices, procedures and behaviours that reflect exemplary ways in which wound service providers, health professionals and health workers should deliver care. Standards define expectations of service delivery, knowledge, competency, and proficiency that promote safe, consistent, and reliable care. The information outlined in a standard provides criterion by which the quality of health care can be evaluated. Standards provide a valuable tool, not only for guiding clinical practice, but also for informing the development of policies, procedures, education, research initiatives and continuous quality improvement programs (including auditing and staff appraisal). Standards therefore play an important role in improving the safety of the individual and promoting positive care outcomes.

The *Australian Wound Standards* consist of eight core standards addressing the key concepts/domains of professional and clinical practice, as outlined in Figure One. These standards should be considered and used in conjunction with other clinical care standards, accreditation standards and professional standards.

### Figure One: The eight core Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management



The eight core *Australian Wound Standards* address the ways in which wound care practitioners deliver clinical wound practice, as well as expected standards for professional wound practice. These two areas of practice interact closely, as demonstrated in Figure One. In this edition of the *Australian Wound Standards*, three core domains of wound practice have been highlighted—wound assessment (including care planning and evaluation), wound prevention, and wound management. These three standards outline best practice in these domains based on current evidence. Exemplifying professional standards of care, which encompass practice within legal, moral and ethical frameworks as well as judiciously applying evidence, is core to delivering best wound practice.

Within the eight core domains, specific principles are outlined in 64 standards (41 for wound care practitioners and 23 for wound service providers), each of which details a level of care that reflects best practice and evidence criteria that demonstrate that the core standard has been reached. Because the concepts throughout core domains are all closely related, some evidence criteria have been included in more than one of standard. For example, documentation requirements are specified in the *Documentation Standard*, and specific requirements for documenting wound assessments are also included as evidence criteria in the *Wound Assessment Standard*.

Each core standard includes a rationale, criteria for achievement background and context as extended information, and a table of relevant resources that can be used to guide clinical performance that meets the core *Australian Wound Standards*. Resources were classified according to type and are coded throughout the document, as outlined in Table One.

The Standards express attributes that reflect quality of wound care applied across different contexts and clinical disciplines. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of qualities that reflect best practice, but rather they are intended as contemporaneous guidance to the way wound care is considered, reflected upon and delivered for people in Australia.

**Table One: Resource types and coding**

Type of document	Code
Standard or similar over-arching principle, including legislation	S
Evidence-based Clinical Practice Guideline	EBG
Consensus Document or Consensus-based Clinical Practice Guideline	C
Position Document	P
Primary Research	R

### Terminology in the *Australian Wound Standards*

The *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* are relevant at the wound service (organisational) level and for individual wound care practitioners.

This edition of the *Australian Wound Standards* includes standards that are specific to health organisations delivering services to people with or at risk of wounds. Throughout the document, the term *wound service provider* is used to refer to organisations, facilities and services that

provide care to individuals with or at risk of wounding. Unless specifically stated, the term refers to any service provider with admitted/registered care recipients (e.g., community health services, primary practice, residential aged care facilities, long term care facilities, day centres or hospitals).

A range of wound care practitioners, from both regulated health professional groups and unregulated health care workers with different training levels are involved in wound prevention and management in different clinical settings. Throughout the document, the term *wound care practitioner* is used to refer to any person employed in the care of individuals with or at risk of wounding. The term *regulated health practitioner* is used to refer to a person involved in wound prevention and management who has completed professional education in a health discipline that is regulated in Australia (e.g., medical practitioner, nurse practitioner, registered and enrolled nurses, or allied health professional). The term *unregulated health care worker* is used to describe any person involved in wound prevention and management who is working in an unregulated field (e.g., Aboriginal health worker, assistant in nursing, support worker, aged care worker, etc.). When referring to the full team of wound care practitioners (across clinical disciplines and professions, and care workers) who deliver care to individuals, the term *interdisciplinary team* is used.

The term *individual/s* has been used to refer to people receiving wound care and the term *family carers* has been used to refer to family members, friends and/or other significant supports who are involved in an individual's care.

The term *wound care* is used has been used to refer to wound assessment, prevention and management.

### **Development of the *Australian Wound Standards***

The *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* and the supporting evidence sources presented in this fourth edition build on those in previous editions. For the fourth edition, a scoping review was undertaken to identify existing relevant standards, supporting clinical guidelines and other key evidence sources.

A search strategy was developed to identify free text terms associated with the key concepts/domains relevant to the *Australian Wound Standards*. Next, a search was undertaken in NLM MeSH Browser to identify MeSH and EBSCO terms associated with the free text terms. A limited search of Pubmed was conducted using the MeSH terms and relevant papers were reviewed for additional keywords used by evidence sources that could further add to the search. Next, the full development team reviewed the search strategy and offered additional relevant search terms. The final search strategy was undertaken using MeSH terms in Medline and Embase, EBSCO terms in CINAHL and JBI Database of Systematic Review and Implementation Reports and adapted for the Cochrane Library and Google to identify relevant references published since the previous edition in 2016. Additionally, a search was undertaken of websites of relevant professional bodies that publish standards, professional guidance and related regulatory documents, and any additional key documents known by the development team were also retrieved. Sources identified in the search were imported into Endnote, duplicates removed and full texts were retrieved.

Each source was reviewed for its relevance as a supportive document for the core wound care professional and practice domains. Additional prominent concepts/domains included in other standards and guidelines were also identified for potential inclusion in the next edition of the *Australian Wound Standards*. The development team reviewed the identified concepts and proposed domain structure to ensure their currency and reflection of practice. Next, sources were classified based on their level of relevance to the domains and goals of the *Australian Wound Standards*. The references included in the previous editions were also reviewed for their ongoing relevance to current practice. All evidence of the highest relevance has been included to support this edition of the *Australian Wound Standards*, with evidence of lower relevance used as a supporting citation when relevant.

The full development team reviewed the draft version and comments were addressed. The revised *Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* then underwent an extensive stakeholder review advertised on [website] in [dates] 2021. Over [number] key organisations (e.g., professional bodies, educational organisation and peak bodies) were also invited to review the draft. All feedback was reviewed by the development team and where appropriate incorporated into the final fourth edition of the *Australian Wound Standards*.

### **Companion audit tools to support the *Australian Wound Standards***

Regular review of performance against the eight core standards can be conducted by wound care practitioners seeking to evaluate their practice. At the organisation level, the *Australian Wound Standards* can be used within quality improvement and research activities to monitor the safety and quality of care being delivered. The *Australian Wound Standards* are also relevant for use in the health education sector for advancing knowledge and skills amongst the interdisciplinary team, as a component of accreditation and to inform local policy and procedure development. People receiving wound care and their family carers (i.e., family members, friends and/or other significant supports) may also use the standards to further understand and/or evaluate the context and quality of wound care delivery.

To help evaluate whether a wound care practitioner or a wound service provider has met the criteria that demonstrate a core wound standard has been reached, *The Australian Wound Standards* are accompanied by a companion set of audit tools.

The *Audit Tools for the Australian Standards for Wound Prevention and Management* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) can be accessed at: [organisation and/or website]