

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	1 of 10	

# Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong

Version	Effective Date
1.0	

Document Number	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
Author	<<Post and Name>>
Custodian	<<Post and Name>>
Approved / Endorsed By	<<Respective Committees>>
Approval Date	DD/MM/YYYY

This document is only current as at the date of printing. Please refer to HKICP website for current version.



[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Review Date	
		Approved by	
		Page	3 of 10

**(Distribution list: This Policy shall be read by all staff and members of HKICP, Professional Council and its committees, and the general public.)**

## 1. Objective

- 1.1 This document puts forth a general description of the scope of clinical psychology practice that applies to the registrants of Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists (HKICP).
- 1.2 It supports accredited clinical psychologists on the Register of HKICP to maintain a high quality in services and practice.
- 1.3 In addition, it informs regulators, government, service providers, educators and the public about the professional services provided by accredited clinical psychologists.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 A Clinical Psychologist (CP) is a professional practicing an area of applied psychology. CP adopts an evidence-based approach to promote psychological well-being and address psychological problems, which include a wide range of developmental, emotional, behavioral and mental disorders with varied severity and complexity.
- 2.2 A service recipient is any person receiving service from a CP. Service recipients typically include, but are not limited to, individuals suffering from psychological problems, healthcare professionals seeking relevant support, clinical psychology trainees and the general public.

## 3. Body of Knowledge

CP should possess professional knowledge and skills in areas including, but not limited to:

- 3.1 **Professional ethics and standards of competency**
- 3.2 **Broad base of foundational knowledge in psychology, including:**
  - 3.2.1 Biopsychology/ physiological psychology (Biological aspects of human behaviour),
  - 3.2.2 Developmental psychology (Human development across lifespan),

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	4 of 10	

3.2.3 Cognitive psychology (Cognitive aspects of human behaviour),

3.2.4 Personality and individual differences,

3.2.5 Social psychology (Social aspects of human behaviour),

3.2.6 History of psychology/ contemporary issues in psychology.

### 3.3 **Knowledge in clinical psychological assessment, including:**

3.3.1 Establishment of therapeutic alliance with service recipients,

3.3.2 Understanding of the theories and clinical presentations of dysfunctional behaviours and psychological problems, including, but not limited to, neurodevelopmental disorders, psychotic disorders, depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, trauma-related disorders, feeding and eating disorders, as well as personality disorders,

3.3.3 Collection of appropriate clinical information,

3.3.4 Generation of diagnostic formulation based on clinical information obtained,

3.3.5 Communication of assessment results professionally and ethically through various means.

### 3.4 **Knowledge in psychological interventions, including:**

3.4.1 Acquisition of theoretical, empirical, and practical understanding of evidence-based psychological interventions,

3.4.2 Implementation of evidence-based psychological interventions.

### 3.5 **Knowledge in research**

3.5.1 Engagement in research using appropriate methods and statistical procedures,

3.5.2 Precise and concise communication of research findings.

### 3.6 **Knowledge in teaching and supervision**

3.6.1 Integration of current research and literature in education,

3.6.2 Establishment and maintenance of ethical supervisory relationships,

3.6.3 Provision of supervision that takes into account the level of professional development of the supervisee,

3.6.4 Demonstration of an awareness of relevant legal policies as well as professional standards and guidelines relevant to supervision.

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	5 of 10	

## 4. Education Requirement

An accredited clinical psychologist must possess a Master's or Doctoral degree in clinical psychology from a recognized tertiary education institution in order to practice in Hong Kong. The training in clinical psychology must include all of the following requirements:

### 4.1 Academic training covering 6 core areas:

- 4.1.1 Psychological assessment (such as intelligence, personality and psychopathology), interpretation of findings, formulation of problems and implications for future management;
- 4.1.2 Theories of psychological problems of major client groups, i.e. children, adolescents, adults and the elderly;
- 4.1.3 Psychological therapies of more than one orientation and approach, including the philosophical, theoretical, practical and empirical aspects;
- 4.1.4 Professional and ethical issues;
- 4.1.5 Research methodology;
- 4.1.6 Neuropsychology, or Health Psychology or Community Psychology or Community and Health Psychology.

### 4.2 Clinical placements working with the following 3 populations:

- 4.2.1 Adults with psychological problems,
- 4.2.2 Children or adolescents with psychological problems,
- 4.2.3 Individuals with medical conditions or physical/ intellectual/ learning disabilities.

### 4.3 A dissertation or thesis of empirical orientation comprising either data collection and manipulation or re-analysis of existing data sets.

## 5. Competence

- 5.1 The Core Competences in Professional Psychology as stated in the International Declaration on Core Competences in Professional Psychology (2016) also apply to the requirements for Clinical Psychologists (Appendix). CPs are expected to build up these Competences through training and continuing education.

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	6 of 10	

5.2 The profession of clinical psychology also emphasizes continued development. Psychological theories and intervention techniques are subject to review and refinement with the ever-emerging scientific evidence. Evolvement of mental health service model and delivery would also bring about changes in the service settings where clinical psychologists practice. Accredited CPs are required to keep up on their knowledge and skills in both professional practice and service delivery through continuing professional education (refer to HKICP Guideline on Continuing Professional Development in CP, HKICP-CPD-GL-008-R0).

## 6. Practice Settings

6.1 Clinical Psychologists work in a variety of settings which include, but not limited to:

6.1.1 Hospitals,

6.1.2 Government agencies, including but not limited to Correctional Services Department, Department of Health, Social Welfare Department, Police Force and Fire Services Department,

6.1.3 Non-governmental Organizations,

6.1.4 Tertiary education institutions,

6.1.5 Private practice.

6.2 The diversity of work settings for CPs would change with the development of psychological services in the community.

## 7. Service Recipients

Clinical Psychologists work for the benefit of service recipients across the lifespan and with diverse backgrounds, both directly and indirectly.

### 7.1 Direct clinical psychology services

7.1.1 Direct clinical psychology services, usually in the form of assessment and intervention, are rendered to people suffering from psychological problems that impaired their functioning in different aspects of life.

7.1.2 The general public would benefit directly from public talks and workshops conducted by CPs, and indirectly from policies and programmes developed to raise mental health awareness.

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	7 of 10	

## 7.2 Indirect clinical psychology services

Indirect clinical psychology services, usually in the form of skill and knowledge transfer, are provided through collaboration with other healthcare professionals and service providers.

### 7.2.1 Consultation

CPs offer advice on treatment to other healthcare professionals that meet the needs of service recipients based on psychological theories and research findings.

### 7.2.2 Clinical supervision

CPs provide on-site supervision to clinical psychology trainees in order to enable them to acquire the clinical skills necessary for attaining a satisfactory level of professional competence.

## 8. Professional Roles and Responsibilities

The primary goal of clinical psychology practice is to promote psychological well-being and address psychological problems of the public. The goal will be pursued through the following means, and in collaboration with other healthcare professionals where applicable:

### 8.1 Clinical Services

- 8.1.1 Utilization of psychological models to guide professional practice;
- 8.1.2 Assessment and diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders, adjustment to changes, risk of self-injurious behaviours, neurocognitive functioning, psychopathologies and other relevant psychological problems;
- 8.1.3 Generation of diagnostic formulation based on outcomes of assessment, psychological theory, research and explanatory models;
- 8.1.4 Evidence-based Intervention and rehabilitation services targeting the psychological problems;
- 8.1.5 Assessment of prognosis and relapse prevention;
- 8.1.6 Consultation to other healthcare professionals;
- 8.1.7 Coordination of care in an interdisciplinary context;
- 8.1.8 Documentation of progress.

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
		Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Review Date	
		Approved by	
		Page	8 of 10

## 8.2 Prevention, Promotion and Advocacy

- 8.2.1 Supply and dissemination of psychoeducational information regarding psychological well-being, identification and management of various psychological disorders;
- 8.2.2 Participation in the development of mental health policy to increase public awareness of the impact of different mental disorders and related social problems, including stigmatization;
- 8.2.3 Promotion of and advocacy for the clinical psychology profession.

## 8.3 Education and Research

- 8.3.1 Participation in professional training programmes, research activities, conventions and seminars for continuous professional development;
- 8.3.2 Provision of training and development of programmes for fellow clinical psychologists or other healthcare professionals;
- 8.3.3 Delivery of clinical psychology-related knowledge and training to students in academic institutions;
- 8.3.4 Provision of clinical placement opportunities and supervision to clinical psychology trainees;
- 8.3.5 Organization and delivery of educational talks and seminars targeting relevant service recipients;
- 8.3.6 Evaluation and synthesis of scientific evidence to improve practice;
- 8.3.7 Design, implementation and report of empirical studies in the field of clinical psychology;
- 8.3.8 Conducting of research to further the development of knowledge and practice in mental health-related issues.

## 8.4 Administration

- 8.4.1 Management and coordination of clinical psychology services provided;
- 8.4.2 Involvement in planning, development, implementation and review of programmes, placement settings, policies and guidelines pertaining to the profession of clinical psychology in Hong Kong;
- 8.4.3 Management of staff related to clinical psychology services.

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
Review Date			
Approved by			
		Page	9 of 10

## 9. Professional conduct

Clinical Psychologists always deliver services within relevant legal and professional boundaries. All accredited CPs are to abide by the Code of Ethics of HKICP (HKICP-ECI-PO-001-R0).

## 10. Reference Documents

- 10.1 American Psychological Association. (2018). Clinical Psychology. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/clinical.aspx>
- 10.2 International Association of Applied Psychology. (2016). International Declaration on Core Competences in Professional Psychology. Retrieved from [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.asppb.net/resource/resmgr/Guidelines/IPCP\\_-\\_THE\\_DECLARATION\\_Final.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.asppb.net/resource/resmgr/Guidelines/IPCP_-_THE_DECLARATION_Final.pdf)
- 10.3 The British Psychological Society. (2011). Guidelines for Clinical Psychology Services. Retrieved from <https://www1.bps.org.uk/system/files/Public%20files/DCP/cat-804.pdf>
- 10.4 The British Psychological Society. (2015). Standards of Proficiency – Practitioner Psychologists. Retrieved from [https://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002963SOP\\_Practitioner\\_psychologists.pdf](https://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002963SOP_Practitioner_psychologists.pdf)

## 11. Attachment

### Appendix:

The Core Competences in Professional Psychology as stated in the International Declaration on Core Competences in Professional Psychology (2016)

[LOGO]	Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists Limited 香港臨床心理學家公會有限公司	Document No.	HKICP- CPD-PO-009-R0
	Scope of Practice for Clinical Psychologists in Hong Kong	Issue Date	nn/nn/2018
		Review Date	
		Approved by	
	Page	10 of 10	

**Appendix: The Core Competences in Professional Psychology as stated in the International Declaration on Core Competences in Professional Psychology (2016)**

Psychological Knowledge & Skills underpinning the Core Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Possesses the necessary knowledge</li> <li>▪ Possesses the necessary skills</li> </ul>
Professional Behaviour Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Practices ethically</li> <li>▪ Acts professionally</li> <li>▪ Relates appropriately to clients and others</li> <li>▪ Works with diversity and demonstrates cultural competence</li> <li>▪ Operates as an evidence-based practitioner</li> <li>▪ Reflects on own work</li> </ul>
Professional Activities Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sets relevant goals</li> <li>▪ Conducts psychological assessments and evaluations</li> <li>▪ Conducts psychological interventions</li> <li>▪ Communicates effectively and appropriately</li> </ul>