



WE STAND UP!

FOR REWARDING CAREERS

HSUWA CLAIM 11

**MODERNISE CAREER PATHWAYS FOR
ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

INTRODUCTION

Over two decades ago, HSU Allied Health Professional Members stood together and won the Health Professionals Work Value Review in the WA Industrial Relations Commission. This led to the establishment of a separate pay structure for HSU Allied Health Professionals in 2004. Since then, there has been widespread change in the number and roles of Allied Health Professionals in public health.

In 2021, Members asked the State Government to address ongoing and widespread issues in attracting and retaining Allied Health Professionals in public health by providing clearer and more rewarding career pathways. An improved and modernised career framework structure was sought in the recognition that patients will experience safer and better healthcare and the government will benefit from cost savings in the longer term. Parallel supporting claims around increased access to professional development leave, a continuing education allowance, higher education incentives, access to research funding, protection of intellectual property rights, classification transparency, research into maximum caseloads were also made.

While the State Government did not accept these initiatives nor the link of career pathways to retention in public health, Members were successful in the 2022 Union Agreement negotiations in winning an Independent Review of Career Pathways for Health Professionals. Since then, HSU believes the vacancy rates across Allied Health Professionals in public health has worsened. Given the critical role of Allied Health Professionals, staffing shortages impact patient outcomes and impede important service reforms - for example, improving preventive and community-based health care as well as hospital flow.

The Log of Claims for the 2024 Union Agreement at Claim 11 asked for fully modernised career pathways and pay structures, building on the outcomes of the Review, to be implemented during the life of the Agreement.



INTRODUCTION

In January 2024, the Independent Reviewer provided an Interim Report to the State Government and in March, summarised findings and recommendations were discussed during the second round of consultation. The findings included:

- The current pay structure is too flat, too narrow and rigid.
- A lack of structured career pathways means there is no opportunity for progression other than a management pathway.
- Most Allied Health Professionals hit a ceiling after five years, with little to no prospect to progress.
- Few people ever progress past pay point 9 of the 20 pay points on the “P scale”.
- The classification descriptors arising from the Work Value Review are too generic and vague - which means that:
 - there is inconsistency in the recognition of skills, experience, qualifications, certificates and higher education between Allied Health Professions; and
 - employees are not incentivised to pursue further training or acquire specialist skills.
- The current structure is unfair because of actual and perceived inequity between the skills and experience required for progression on the “P scale” versus the “G scale” covering other roles and professions in public health, as well as versus other health professionals. Inconsistency and work arounds are prevalent.

HSU has not been provided with a copy of the Interim Report and there is no indication that a Final Report will be available in 2024.

The document enclosed is based the Reviewer's initial findings and recommendations as summarised and discussed during the second and final round of consultation. It includes an implementation plan.

Claim 11's modernised career pathways and pay structure broadly mirrors what has already been adopted in the other States, the UK and New Zealand public health.



CLAIM 11

11.1 Acknowledgement

HSU expects active cooperation from all parts of WA Health in acknowledging that the HSU Allied Health Professionals Career Framework (Framework) was won by union Members, for union Members. Passive acknowledgement does not satisfy this claim.

HSU expects all employers to explicitly detail that this is a HSU initiative. As part of any appointment to an Allied Health Professional (AHP) position, an employee will be provided with a document indicating that the Framework was a HSU initiative, won by union Members. Further, this document will encourage employees to join and maintain membership of the HSU as the organisation that has the right to represent their industrial interests.

11.2 Establishment Of Unit

Within three months of registration of the Union Agreement 2024 (Agreement), the System Manager will establish a dedicated unit within WA Health called the HSU Allied Health Professionals Career Framework Unit (Unit) of at least 10 FTE. The Unit is to be properly resourced with staff to enable it to effectively take the steps set out in this document in the timeframes agreed.

The Unit will be separate from System Wide Classifications and will report directly to the Director General. The Unit will be able to nominate members to participate in the Unit. To ensure transparency, the Unit will ensure clear and regular communication of its progress against each step/initiative and this will include a dedicated healthpoint page and contact information.

The Unit will be responsible for supporting the implementation of the Framework by the employers, including the following two initiatives:

- The development and implementation of a HSU Graduate Program responsible for the consistent and best practice on-boarding of all new graduates in positions under the Professional Division and other Specified Callings at clause 20.5 of the Agreement.
- Consulting with the employers to collectively employ 100 Clinical Educator positions that will be responsible for the running of the HSU Graduate Program and support Clinical Supervision and Professional Development for AHPs.

These two initiatives are to be completed within 12 months of establishing the Unit.

HSU ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAREER FRAMEWORK

11.3 Framework Applied

Within 12 months of registration of the Agreement, the Framework will apply to the existing AHP classification structure as follows:

HSU ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAREER FRAMEWORK		
AHP LEVELS	DESCRIPTION	EXISTING LEVELS THAT WILL APPLY
ONE	Graduate Program Entry	P1.1 - P1.2
TWO	Early to Mid Career Roles	P1.3 - P2.3
THREE	Advanced Career Roles	P3.1 - P4.2
FOUR	Expert and Leader Roles	P5.1 - P6.2
FIVE	Consultant Specialist and Senior Management/Leadership	P7 - P9
SIX	Senior Positions	Above P9

CAREER PATHWAYS

11.4 Career Pathways Applied

Within 18 months of registration of the Agreement, Career Pathways will be implemented that allow AHPs to move through and across the Framework. There are six different Career Pathways that an AHP may work in, throughout their career with WA Health. The description of these Career Pathways and how they interact with the Framework is as follows:

- 1. Professional Practice Specialist:** Direct and indirect high-quality practice that is safe, effective and person centred, including advanced or specialist skills.
- 2. Professional Practice Generalist:** Focused on the delivery of services to a large range of consumers or clients, for a wide breadth of clinical presentations or professional practice, across the age spectrum in a variety of healthcare delivery settings (such as inpatient, ambulatory care, community etc).
- 3. Research:** Systematic investigation to increase knowledge and establish an evidence base, and/or involved in translating research findings into practice, policy or further research.
- 4. Education:** Using pedagogical expertise to providing instruction and education to build capability of health practitioners, patients, communities and/or students in clinical and/or academic environments.
- 5. Leadership/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.
- 6. Strategy:** Enabling and driving improvements, leading and developing policy, leading change, implementing innovations, establishing principles or courses of action and/or transforming processes.

Not all Career Pathways will be available at every Level of the Framework. For example, AHPs in the Graduate Program will not be on a Career Pathway until they have finished the program, and Levels Five and Six of the Framework will be available only to the Professional Practice Specialist and Leadership/Management Pathways. Nothing in this structure is designed to limit the ability of AHPs to work across different Career Pathways at different Levels in their career or to advance through the Framework.

CAREER PATHWAYS

HSU ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAREER FRAMEWORK

AHP LEVELS	CAREER PATHWAYS						PROGRESSION
	Professional Practice Specialist	Professional Practice Generalist	Research	Education	Leadership/ Management	Strategy	
ONE							Time based
TWO	x	x	x				Time based
THREE	x	x	x	x	x	x	Competency based initially, then yearly progression up to P4.2 (AHP Level 3.4)
FOUR	x	x	x	x	x	x	By appointment, then by yearly increment
FIVE	x				x		By appointment, then by yearly increment
SIX	x				x		By appointment

PROGRESSION AND SPECIFICS

11.5 Progression

The Framework involves progression between and through levels using different methods. Graduate Program Entrants and Early to Mid Career Professions will ascend purely on a time based model.

Advanced Career Roles require agreed competencies to be reached to access Level Three and movement through Level Three by time based progression is possible thereafter.

Levels Four, Five and Six can be attained through appointment only, with progression through increments within Levels Four and Five on a time based model.

11.6 Specific Professions

Nothing in the Framework should render existing employees worse off, nor disadvantage future employees compared to the current salary structures in place. This means that professions which have special industrial arrangements should continue. We anticipate this affects two main groups, as follows:

a) Clinical Psychologists

Consistent with current clause 20.6 of the Union Agreement 2022, Clinical Psychologist Registrars (Grade 1) will commence at Level Two at an increment equivalent to current level P1.5 and progress through the Level Two increments on a time based model. Clinical Psychologists (Grade 2) will commence at Level Three. Clinical Psychologist Registrars (Grade 1) who have been registered by the Psychology Board of Australia will automatically progress to Level Three.

Clinical Psychologists above Grade 2 will then fall into line with the rest of the Framework, with Levels Four, Five or Six available by appointment.

b) Advanced Scope Physiotherapists

Pursuant to [2014] WAIRC 00371, Advanced Scope Physiotherapists are classified as level P4 under the current system. In this Framework, the advanced skills and experience of an Advanced Scope Physiotherapist would be considered a Level Four Expert position.



FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION

11.7 Further Implementation Steps

The Unit will carry out key implementation work for the Framework, including:

- developing “Work Level Statements” for each Level to replace the existing Classification Descriptors;
- assigning agreed “attributes” for each Level and Career Pathway, including for individual professions where appropriate;
- creation of template JDFs for each work Level, Career Pathway and individual professions where appropriate; and
- mapping every existing JDF to appropriate Work Level Statement and updating in consideration of template JDFs,

ensuring no existing employee will be worse off than under the existing structure.

11.8 Integration with other HSU Union Agreement 2024

Log of Claim Items

There are a range of conditions that are to be implemented to complement the **HSU Allied Health Professionals Career Framework**, including:

Claim 7 – Protection – Regulated Health Professionals

Claim 13 – Market Allowance

Claim 14 – Higher Qualification Allowance

Claim 15 – Professional Development Leave and Allowance



TIMEFRAME

Timeframe	Implementation step
Within 3 months of registration of the Agreement	Unit established and staffed
Within 12 months of registration of the Agreement	Framework applied to existing employees
Within 12 months of establishing the Unit 15 months of registration of the Agreement	Graduate Program implemented 100 Clinical Educators positions established
Within 6 months of establishing the Unit 18 months of registration of the Agreement	Career Pathways implemented Unit has prepared stepped out process with timeframes to complete the work under 11.6 during term of the Union Agreement Regular reporting mechanism of progress under the above implemented, including to the HSU
Within 18 months of registration of the Agreement	HSU and the System Manager will agree to the appropriate competency model to enable progression from AHP Level Two to AHP Level Three.
Next Agreement	The next Union Agreement will detail the Framework and Pathways, including Work Level Statements and all the information necessary to ensure there is a clear and transparent guide of AHP career progression in WA Health, set out in the Union Agreement.

STAND UP!

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