

# Requirements for the assessment of body composition using DXA

Management licence condition M1758

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## Introduction

The Victorian Radiation Act 2005 (the Act) has the objective of protecting the health and safety of persons and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation. The Department of Health and Human Services administers this legislation. The Act seeks to fulfil this objective by establishing a licensing framework to regulate the conduct of radiation practices and the use of radiation sources. Any person who conducts a radiation practice must hold a management licence (unless exempted from that requirement). The management licence holder must comply with every condition of their licence.

## Scope

This document describes the obligations of management licence holders where condition M1758 has been imposed in respect of an authority to possess a bone densitometer (DXA unit). The requirements in this document apply to the use of DXA for the purpose of assessment of body composition.

## Mandatory requirements

1. The management licence holder must ensure that no radiation procedure is carried out for the purpose of assessing body composition unless:
  - 1.1 the procedure has been requested for the purpose of an approved health screening program or an approved research project or:
  - 1.2 there is a written referral for the procedure that:
    - a) has been issued by:
      - i. a Medical Practitioner; or
      - ii. a Physiotherapist; or
      - iii. an Accredited Exercise Physiologist; or
      - iv. an Accredited Practising Dietitian; or
      - v. an Accredited Sports Dietitian; or
      - vi. any other professional specified by the Department;
    - b) contains patient identification information;
    - c) states the clinical question to which an answer is being sought;
    - d) states the clinical indications for the procedure;
    - e) includes a statement from the referrer that confirms that the patient is being clinically managed by the referrer and that the diagnostic information is required for the management of the patient; and
    - f) provides the referrer's contact details for consultative purposes; and
    - g) the procedure is required to:
      - i. assess fat distribution in a patient undergoing anti-retroviral therapy associated with a risk of lipoatrophy; or

- ii. assess fat and lean mass changes in an obese patient who has undergone bariatric surgery; or
- iii. assess fat and lean mass changes in an obese patient who has undergone a medical diet or weight loss regimen resulting in weight loss exceeding approximately 10% and the impact on clinical outcomes is uncertain; or
- iv. clinically manage a patient with true muscle weakness or poor physical functioning due to injury or medical condition (e.g. sarcopenia) where the impact on clinical outcomes is uncertain; or
- v. assess body composition of a patient with clinical indications specified by the Department; or

1.3 there is a written referral for the procedure that:

- a) has been issued by a Medical Practitioner who holds specialist registration with AHPRA in one of the following specialities:
  - i. Obstetrics and gynaecology; or
  - ii. Paediatrics and child health; or
  - iii. Pathology; or
  - iv. Physician; or
  - v. Psychiatry; or
  - vi. Radiation Oncology; or
  - vii. Radiology; or
  - viii. Rehabilitation Medicine; or
  - ix. Sport and Exercise Medicine; or
  - x. Surgery; and
- b) contains patient identification information;
- c) states the clinical question to which an answer is being sought;
- d) states the clinical indications for the procedure;
- e) includes a statement from the referrer that confirms that the patient is being clinically managed by the referrer and that the diagnostic information is required for the management of the patient; and
- f) provides the referrer's contact details for consultative purposes.

2. The management licence holder must ensure that:

- 2.1 a person does not undergo more than four DXA procedures for the purpose of assessing body composition within any 12 month period; and
- 2.2 sufficient evidence is retained for each procedure conducted for the purpose of assessing body composition to be able to demonstrate, at any time, compliance with the requirements in this document. The evidence must include referrals with sufficiently detailed clinical notes.

## Definitions

“**AHPRA**” means Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

“**Department**” means Department of Health and Human Services.

“**DXA**” means Dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry.

“**an obese patient**” means a person with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater.

**“Medical Practitioner”** means a person who is registered under Health Practitioner Regulation National Law in the medical profession e.g. General Practitioner.

**“true muscle weakness”** (or neuromuscular weakness) describes a condition where the force exerted by the muscles is less than expected when using calibrated assessment instruments or relevant assessment standards.

**“poor physical functioning”** means a condition where the physical functioning is less than expected when using calibrated assessment instruments or relevant assessment standards.

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