



# AOAC QUALIFICATION AND SKILLS ASSESSMENT CANDIDATE GUIDE FOR THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY PATHWAY (CAP)

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# Abbreviations

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**AQF:** Australian Qualifications Framework

**AHPRA:** Australian Health Professional Regulation Agency

**AOAC:** Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council

**ANZSCO:** Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations

**CAP:** Competent Authority Pathway

**DOPS:** Direct observed procedural skills

**GOsC:** General Osteopathic Council

**GSM:** General Skilled Migration

**IELTS:** International English Language Testing System

**NRAS:** National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

**OsteoBA:** Osteopathy Board of Australia

**OBE:** Open book examination

**OCNZ:** Osteopathic Council of New Zealand

**OET:** Occupational English Test

**PTE:** Pearson Test of English Academic

**QSAC:** Qualification Skills and Assessment Committee

**SPA:** Standard Pathway Assessment

**TOEFL iBT:** Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based Test

**TTMRA:** Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement

# Glossary of Terms

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**ANZSCO Code:** Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) are codes applied to occupations for statistical purposes. These codes are used by the Department of

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Home Affairs in the skilled visa program, where it is a requirement for visa eligibility, as the standard by which a visa applicant's skills to undertake a specific occupation in Australia are assessed.

**Appeal of assessment outcome:** A process available to candidates who wish to appeal a result of one of their assessments. This policy can be located on the AOAC website.

**Applicant:** A registered osteopath who has completed their osteopathy training overseas and wishes to obtain registration in Australia. An applicant is someone who has submitted their desktop assessment to AOAC for consideration to undertake either the SPA or the CAP and is awaiting the outcome of this assessment.

**Assessment:** Component of the SPA or CAP requiring successful completion by the candidate to proceed. CAP assessment procedures include the following; desktop assessment (stage 1), open book examination (Stage 2), and supervised practice under provisional registration (Stage 3).

**Assessment outcome:** The result obtained by the candidate after completion of one (or more) of the written examination, online practical assessment, practical examination or open book examination.

**Assessor:** The person appointed to grade the candidates completed assessment.

**Australian Health Professional Regulation Agency:** The organisation responsible for the implementation of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme in Australia. Each health profession part of the national scheme is represented by a national board.  
<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>

**Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council:** The body that has the delegated responsibility (from the OsteoBA) to accredit osteopathy education programs, and to assess registered osteopaths who have completed their osteopathy training overseas wishing to obtain general registration in Australia. <http://www.osteopathiccouncil.org.au/>

**Candidate:** A registered osteopath who has completed their osteopathy training overseas and has passed their desktop assessment (and paid relevant fee) and is now officially undertaking either the SPA or the CAP.

**Capabilities for osteopathic practice:** The standards Australian osteopaths are expected to practice.

**Competent Authority Pathway:** A streamlined version of the SPA available to registered osteopaths who meet eligibility requirements. The CAP requires candidates to successfully complete the desktop assessment and open book examination and undertake a period of supervised practice.

**Department of Home Affairs:** The Department of Home Affairs is responsible for immigration policy, and the assessment and processing of visas for migration to Australia.

**Desktop assessment:** The initial assessment an applicant completes in either the SPA or the CAP processes. Desktop assessment involves applicants completing and submitting forms and documentation related to their osteopathy studies, registration and work history.

**Fee schedule:** List of fees related to each assessment of the SPA or CAP. Payment of fees is required for the assessment to be undertaken.

**General Skilled Migration:** is the process and program for skilled migrant workers who are seeking to live and work in Australia on a permanent basis.

**National Boards:** The body responsible for protecting the public in relation to health professions under the National Law. National Boards also have the responsibility of registering practitioners and students. <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/National-Boards.aspx>

**Osteopath:** A protected title under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (2009). A person can only use this title if they are registered under the National Law.

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/What-We-Do/Legislation.aspx>

**Osteopathy Australia:** The peak body representing the interests of osteopaths, the profession and consumer's rights to access osteopathy services. <http://www.osteopathy.org.au/>

**Osteopathy Board of Australia:** The national board for osteopathy responsible for public interest and registration of osteopaths. <http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au/>

**Qualifications Skills and Assessment Committee:** Sub-committee of AOAC responsible for overseeing the assessment of the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified osteopaths and other individuals referred to AOAC who are seeking registration as osteopaths in Australia.

**Reading list:** Resource provided to candidates to support them in their preparation for assessments in the SPA and CAP.

**Registration:** Under the National Law, National Boards of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency can grant registration to eligible practitioners who meet registration requirements. Please see <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration.aspx>

**Registration (General):** Registration granted to practitioners who meet the eligibility and qualifications requirements set out in the National Law (sections 52-53) and meet any registration standards issued by the National Board. SPA candidates are eligible to receive general registration after successful completion of all assessments in the pathway.

**Registration (Limited):** Registration granted to practitioners who do not qualify for general registration but who meet the eligibility and qualifications requirements set out in the National Law (sections 65-70) and any registration standards issued by the National Board.

**Registration (Provisional):** Registration granted to practitioners who meets the eligibility and qualification requirements set out in the National Law (sections 62-63) and any registration standards issued by the National Board. This is intended for practitioners who have completed an accredited qualification in the profession but are required to undertake a period of supervised practice to be eligible for general registration. CAP candidates are eligible for provisional registration once they have successfully completed the desktop assessment and open book examination.

**Registration standards:** The requirements that applicants, registrants and students need to meet to be registered. These requirements include continuing professional development, criminal history, English language skills, professional indemnity insurance and recency of practice standards. Please see <http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx>

**Registered migration agent:** Registered Migration Agents are registered with the Office of the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA). A registered migration agent can be used when applying for a visa with the Department of Home Affairs or an applicant may apply themselves. The agent gives an applicant protection as they are aware of current laws and procedures to give correct advice.

**Skills Assessment for General Skilled Migration:** is the assessment responsible for assessing the skills and qualifications for the occupation of osteopath (ANZSCO code 252112) under the Department of Home Affairs General Skilled Migration (GSM) and Employer Sponsored Migration (ESM) programs. The domestic assessment is available to osteopaths that hold a current and full (unconditional) registration with the Osteopathy Board of Australia. This is not an assessment for registration purposes.

**Special consideration:** A process available to candidates who experience exceptional circumstances while they are undertaking the SPA or the CAP. This policy can be located on the AOAC website.

**Supervised practice:** Requirement of candidates undertaking the CAP after they have successfully completed Stage 1 and Stage 5. Candidates are granted provisional registration and are required to undertake six months of supervised practice prior to being granted general registration. This part of the process is administered by the Osteopathy Board of Australia.

# Section 1: Introduction

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## Document Purpose

This document has been developed to support overseas-qualified osteopaths who want to undertake the assessment process that leads to registration as an osteopath in Australia with the Osteopathy Board of Australia (OsteoBA). Those seeking registration will be referred to as 'applicants' or 'candidates' for the remainder of this document. An applicant is defined as someone who is completing or waiting for notification of outcome for Stage 1 of the assessment process. Once an applicant has successfully completed Stage 1 of the assessment process, they are then referred to as a 'candidate' until all their assessment is completed, or they withdraw from the assessment process.

This document is also relevant for osteopaths with registration who are seeking a skills assessment for migration purposes.

## Background and Context

### Governance bodies involved in the assessment of overseas-qualified osteopaths

The Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council (AOAC) is the independent assessing authority for the Department of Home Affairs that undertakes the qualifications and skills assessment for migration to Australia. AOAC is also responsible for the assessment of knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified osteopaths seeking registration in Australia.

The Qualifications and Skills Assessment Committee (QSAC) is a standing committee of AOAC responsible for the oversight and administration of the assessment of qualifications and skills for migration to and registration in Australia. The QSAC is responsible for the appointment of assessors for each stage of the assessment process.

AOAC is responsible for performing assessments of the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas-qualified osteopaths seeking registration in Australia with the Osteopathy Board of Australia (OsteoBA), which is governed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulations Agency (AHPRA) under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*.

AOAC will assess and verify the applicant's qualifications, skills and competence against the requirements it has established. AOAC can provide information in relation to applying for a qualification and skills assessment and undertaking either the Competent Authority Pathway (CAP) or Standard Pathway Assessment (SPA). All other questions relating to registration should be directed to the OsteoBA ([www.osteopathyboard.gov.au](http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au)). Applicants are encouraged to contact the OsteoBA about the requirements for registration in Australia as the AOAC assessment is only one component of the registration application. Please note the OsteoBA is the final arbiter regarding registration as an osteopath in Australia. AOAC strongly advises that applicants do not make irreversible decisions such as leaving a job or moving to Australia until their application for registration is finalised.

### Legislation relating to Migration to Australia

In accordance with the *Migration Regulations 1994*, the Minister has specified AOAC as the assessing authority for the Department of Home Affairs General Skilled Migration (GSM) program for the occupation Osteopath (ANZSCO 252112).

If applicants wish to apply to migrate to Australia as an osteopath under the GSM program, they must nominate “osteopath” as their occupations from the “Skilled Occupation List” and have their qualifications and skills assessed by AOAC using *Form 1A Application for Skills Assessment*.

AOAC can only provide information in relation to applying for a qualifications and skills assessment. All other questions relating to migration should be directed to the Department of Home Affairs (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>) or a registered migration agent ([www.mara.gov.au](http://www.mara.gov.au)).

### **Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement**

The Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement, under the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997*, states that “a person registered to practise an occupation in Australia is entitled to practise an equivalent occupation in New Zealand, and vice-versa, and without the need for further testing or examination.”

Applicants registered with the Osteopathic Council of New Zealand (OCNZ), who are not intending to migrate to Australia, may apply directly to the OsteoBA for registration. Those seeking a skills assessment for migration purposes will need to apply to AOAC using *Form 1A Application for Skills Assessment*.

### **Privacy Notice**

AOAC and its committees liaise with relevant bodies such as registration/licensing authorities, immigration and employment authorities, and osteopathy teaching institutions as required. AOAC is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality and security of personal information held in its records. A copy of the *AOAC Privacy Policy* can be found on our website <http://www.osteopathiccouncil.org.au/publications.html>.



## Overview of the Assessment Pathways Available to Overseas-Qualified Osteopaths

There are two assessment pathways available to overseas-qualified osteopaths seeking registration in Australia with the OsteoBA. Both pathways require candidates to undertake various activities before registration is granted. The requirements of the two pathways are outlined below. The first step for an applicant is to determine their eligibility for either pathway. In summary, the Standard Pathway Assessment (SPA) is the traditional pathway for overseas-qualified osteopaths. Candidates must successfully complete five stages of assessment to be eligible to apply for registration. The Competent Authority Pathway (CAP) is a streamlined process where candidates are only required to undertake two of the five stages of the SPA before being eligible to apply for registration. The eligibility requirements for the competent authority pathway (CAP) is outlined below. To read the eligibility requirements for the Standard Pathway Assessment (SPA) please refer to the *Candidate Guide for the Standard Pathway Assessment (SPA)*. It is essential applicants read the eligibility information carefully.

## Eligibility to Undertake the Assessment Process with AOAC

### Competent Authority Pathway

The Competent Authority Pathway (CAP) is available to overseas-qualified osteopaths who have successfully completed an eligible program of study and hold current registration with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC).

To be eligible to undertake the CAP, applicants must hold a primary osteopathy qualification from one of the approved education providers listed on the General Osteopathic Council (UK) website. Applicants should also note that successful completion of CAP does not grant automatic registration with Osteopathy Board of Australia and candidates will need to undertake a period of supervised practice as an additional requirement for this pathway. Candidates may be granted provisional registration to complete their period of supervised practice.

There are three components of eligibility CAP applicants must consider before undertaking Stage 1 of this process: nature of their osteopathic qualification, registration status and English language skills. These three components are outlined below:

#### *Osteopathic qualification*

Applicants will have their osteopathy qualification from one of the providers and meet the requirements regarding date of completion as listed on the General Osteopathic Council of the United Kingdom [Training and registering - General Osteopathic Council \(osteopathy.org.uk\)](https://osteopathy.org.uk)

### *Osteopathic registration*

Applicants must be currently registered and in good standing with the GOsC to be eligible to undertake this pathway.

### *English language skills (if applicable)*

AOAC's English language skills standard is aligned with the OsteoBA's Osteopathy Board of Australia's Registration Standard: English Language Skills. Applicants must have either completed both their secondary education and osteopathic qualification in English or achieved the required minimum scores in one of the following English language tests:

- The **IELTS** (academic module) with a minimum overall score of 7 and a minimum score of 7 in each of the four components (listening, reading, writing and speaking)
- The **PTE Academic** with a minimum overall score of 65 and a minimum score of 65 in each of the four communicative skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking)
- The **TOEFL iBT** with a minimum total score of 94 and the following minimum score in each section of the test:
  - 24 for listening
  - 24 for reading
  - 27 for writing
  - 23 for speaking

Please note the OET is not applicable for osteopathy because OET has not yet developed a specific test for this profession. The English language tests may be taken overseas or in Australia. IELTS test results are valid for two years from the test date.

More information regarding the OsteoBA's Osteopathic English Language Registration Standard can be found on the OsteoBA website: <http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx>.

## Stages Involved in the Assessment Pathways

The assessment procedures for the two assessment pathways is different. Both SPA and CAP applicants undertake Stage 1 – desktop assessment and the requirements of this stage are outlined in detail in section 2 of this guide. After Stage 1 – the requirements for completion of the pathway are different and are displayed in Table 2.

*Table 2. Requirements for completion of the assessment pathways*

Stage	Standard Pathway Assessment	Competent Authority Pathway
Stage 1: Desktop Assessment	✓	✓
Stage 2: Written Examination	✓	×
Stage 3: Online practical assessment	✓	×
Stage 4 Face to face practical assessment	✓	×
Stage 5: Open Book Examination (OBE)	✓	✓
Supervised practice under Provisional Registration (6 months)	×	✓

## **Requirements Regarding Completion of Assessment Pathways**

### **Available timeframe for completion of CAP**

Once the desktop assessment (Stage 1) has been completed and approved, applicants are considered candidates of the CAP pathway. The requirements of the open book examination are provided in section 6 of this guide. A candidate has a maximum of six months to complete the CAP and apply for provisional registration. The supervised practice component is not required in this six-month timeframe.

### **Responsibilities of the Candidate and AOAC in the Skills Assessment and Migration Process**

Once accepted into the CAP assessment pathway, candidates need to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities for each stage of assessment. These are outlined in each relevant assessment stage in sections 2 and 3 of this guide.

# Section 2: Desktop Assessment

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## Overview

Overseas-qualified osteopaths who wish to apply for either the Standard Pathway Assessment or Competent Authority Pathway need to complete Stage 1: Desktop assessment. The eligibility requirements for both pathways has been outlined in Section 1 and this section outlines what applicants need to do to submit their relevant documentation so that AOAC can undertake the desktop assessment and make decisions on the applicant's eligibility to undertake the CAP.

## Requirements of Stage 1

### Competent Authority Pathway

CAP Applicants need to submit the following documentation as part of Stage 1 – desktop assessment:

- Completed *Form 1B* with the following attachments:
- Identification
  - Certified colour scan of valid passport photo page
  - Change of name documentation (if required)
- Qualification Certificate
  - Certified colour scan of osteopathic qualification certificate
- Official results transcript
  - Certified colour scan of the official transcripts for the initial osteopathy qualification
- Registration
  - Certified colour scan of current General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) practicing certificate
  - Certified colour scan of evidence of registration/licensure from all countries where the applicant has been registered
- English language
  - English language documentation

Further details about documentation requirements can be found in the relevant application forms.

## Fees for Stage 1

Applicants are required to pay AOAC the required fee when submitting their documentation for their desktop assessment. These fees are outlined in the table below:

Assessment Type	Desktop Fee
Competent Authority Pathway	\$1200

**Table 3: Fees for Stage 1 Desktop Assessment**

## Possible Outcomes of Stage 1

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their Stage 1- desktop assessment within four weeks of receipt of their completed application. Applicants will be informed of the following:

### CAP applicants

- Their application meets the appropriate requirements and they are now a successful CAP candidate who will undertake the accelerated assessment process. Candidates can begin preparing for Stage 5 – open book examination.
- Their application for the CAP has not been successful as they do not meet the eligibility requirements. Applicants may wish to consider applying for the SPA if this is the outcome.

## Appeals

If a candidate believes that they have valid grounds to appeal an outcome from the Stage 1 – Desktop assessment, they can read the [QSA Appeals Policy](#) and consider their next steps.

# Section 3: Open Book Examination

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## Overview

This stage consists of an online, open book examination (OBE) and is designed to test the candidate's knowledge of professional, cultural and legal issues within the Australian health care system.

The OBE is based on information contained in the [Information on the practice of osteopathy in Australia: A guide for graduates trained overseas](#) (the Guide).

This assessment is required by the OsteoBA under section 53 (c) of the National Law and is required for overseas-qualified osteopaths seeking registration in Australia under the CAP and SPA.

## Format of examination

The OBE is a two-hour open book examination utilising the Guide and is completed online via the Go1 Learning management System. The OBE consists of 60 multiple choice questions provided in two examination books in Go1.

## Sample questions

See *Sample Questions for Stage 5 – OBE* (Appendix 1) for examples of questions for the OBE.

## Responsibilities of the Candidate specifically for this stage

It is the candidate's responsibility to:

- Download and read the Guide prior to undertaking the OBE and ensure that they have access to the internet
- Refer to the relevant sections of the Guide to assist in answering the questions while undertaking the OBE
- Ensure they undertake the OBE in the required timeframe
- Applicants have 24 hours to complete the exam from the time the link to the OBE is sent. The OBE generally takes two hours to complete. If the applicant cannot complete the exam within 24 hours they will need to contact AOAC at [gsa@osteopathiccouncil.org.au](mailto:gsa@osteopathiccouncil.org.au) to request new login details.

## Fees and Logistics

### Fees

Candidates are required to pay \$550.00 AUD to undertake this stage. This payment is non-refundable.

### Location for sitting the examination

Candidates complete the OBE online and are not required to report to a specific location.

### Submitting the completed examination

Candidates will liaise with AOAC to determine a mutually convenient time to undertake the examination. Candidates will receive a link to their examination and have 24 hours to complete the exam from the time the link to the OBE is sent. If the candidate does not complete the OBE in the allocated timeframe, they need to submit a special consideration application to AOAC.

**Pass mark for examination**

To successfully complete this stage, candidates must obtain an overall 80% pass mark.

**Possible Outcomes**

Candidates will be notified of the outcome of the open book examination within three weeks of completing the examination.

**Successful candidates**

Candidates will be notified of their successful outcome and sent a Certificate of Assessment of Osteopathy Qualifications and Skills letter that must be included with the application to the OsteoBA for Provisional Registration.

**Unsuccessful candidates (first attempt)**

Candidates that do not meet the requirements to successfully complete stage 5 – OBE (first attempt) will be provided:

- Details of criteria (with justification) of why they did not meet the pass requirements
- Opportunity for re-sitting the OBE (this does not incur an additional cost)
- Details of the relevant appeals process

**Unsuccessful candidates (second attempt)**

CAP candidates not meeting the requirements to successfully complete Stage 5 after their second attempt will be required to undertake the Standard Pathway Assessment (SPA) entering at Stage 2 - written examination.



# List of Forms and relevant policies

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[Form 1A for domestic assessment candidates](#)

[Form 1B for CAP candidates](#)

[Sample questions for Open book examination](#)

[Qualification and Skills Assessment Appeals policy](#)

[Qualification and Skills Assessment Committee Assessment policy](#)

[Qualification and Skills Assessment Special consideration policy](#)

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Sample Questions for OBE



### Sample Questions for Open Book Exam (OBE)

#### Question 1

As a requirement for registration as an osteopath in Australia, you are required to have?

- a) Business expenses insurance
- b) Income protection insurance
- c) Professional indemnity insurance
- d) Home and contents insurance

#### Question 2

A patient must be given access to their health record except when:

- A. The health record could be considered defamatory
- B. Access to the record could pose a serious risk to a person's health
- C. The health record is not complete
- D. The patient wants the health record corrected

#### Question 3

Dr Brown, a local general practitioner (GP) phones your osteopathic clinic and requests copies of one of your patients' medical records. Which of the following is the most appropriate?

- a) I would not provide the requested medical record even though the patient has verbally asked you to provide Dr Brown with their file
- b) *I would not provide the requested medical record because I have not obtained written consent from the patients to share their medical records*
- c) I would provide the requested medical record because Dr Brown is the listed GP of the patient
- d) I would provide the requested medical record because all medical records are able to be viewed by any health professional who requests them

#### Question 4

*Which of the following is correct?*

- a) A written consent form signed by a patient is seen as adequate informed consent
- b) A written consent form signed by a patient who has a limited capacity has provided valid consent.
- c) Initial written consent form signed by a patient implies consent every time you see the patient
- d) Written consent by a patient is not essential

#### Question 5

Osteopaths are permitted to charge a gap payment for patients under the Department of Veterans Affairs scheme? True or false?

#### Question 6

You would like to perform a manipulation / high velocity manipulation on your patients cervical spine. You performed the same technique on the patient last week. Do you need to gain informed consent before performing the same technique today?

- a) Yes, ongoing informed consent should be obtained at each treatment
- b) Yes, you must gain written informed consent for a cervical spine manipulation each time
- c) No, they gave consent previously
- d) No, they signed a consent form at their first visit 3 years ago

#### Question 7

Which of the following outcome measures would be appropriate to monitor your treatment of a patient who presents with acute right sided cervical spine and wrist pain, and reports numbness and tingling in her right thumb, 2<sup>nd</sup> finger and 3<sup>rd</sup> finger?

1. Neck Disability Index
2. Oswestry Disability Questionnaire
3. Patient Specific Functional Scale
4. Upper Extremity Functional Index

- a) 1,2,3
- b) 1,3,4
- c) 1 & 3
- d) 1 & 4

### Question 8

You have a patient you have seen a number of times but you now feel that patient/practitioner relationship is compromised. What would be good practice in regards to this situation?

- a. Tell the patient they would be best finding another practitioner
- b. Give them copies of their medical records and say they need to find someone else
- c. Discuss the decision to cease treatment with the patient and facilitate arrangements for continued care with another practitioner
- d. Tell the receptionist not to book the patient back in with you

### Question 9

A 77 year old male comes in with epigastric pain. On examination you have found a possible hiatus hernia. Best practice for this patient would be to:

- a. Refer the patient back to their general practitioner for assessment and management
- b. Treat the hernia with osteopathic techniques
- c. Treat the structures related to the hernia using osteopathic techniques
- d. Advise the patient to avoid spicy or acidic foods

### Question 10

Your patient Jane calls you and says she is experiencing significantly worsening neck pain after your treatment 3 days ago. In this situation, good practice would be:

- 1. Denying that the problem has anything to do with your treatment
  - 2. Immediately apologizing and accepting full responsibility
  - 3. Recognizing what has happened and acting immediately to rectify the problem
  - 4. Explaining to the patient promptly and fully what has happened and the anticipated long/short term consequences
  - 5. Provide support to the patient
- 
- a) 1 & 4
  - b) 2 & 3
  - c) 3 & 4
  - d) 3, 4, & 5
  - e) 2, 3, & 5