

AMT Position Statement

Dry Needling Practice

Dry needling is an invasive procedure with documented risks, ranging from minor complications to serious adverse events, such as pneumothorax. Given these potential risks, it is imperative that remedial massage therapists and myotherapists carefully assess the risk-to-benefit ratio before performing dry needling.

AMT has established a [Dry Needling Standard](#) to outline the minimum requirements for the safe, lawful, and ethical practice of dry needling within the massage therapy industry.

Summary position on dry needling practice

AMT members who practice dry needling must:

- hold professional indemnity insurance that provides coverage for dry needling. Dry needling must be listed on their policy.
- be aware of the statutory requirements for skin penetration procedures in their state/territory and always comply with those requirements. This may also include registering a premises with the local council.
- have read and understood [AMT's Dry Needling policy](#) and comply with all requirements.
- have read and understood [AMT's Infection Control and Hygiene policy](#) and comply with all requirements.
- have read and understood AMT's [Work Health and Safety policy](#) and comply with all requirements.
- have read and understood [AMT's Informed Consent policy](#) and obtained written informed consent from the client before embarking on a course of Dry Needling treatments. This includes providing a clear explanation of the risks and benefits of needling to the client.

- establish a risk management framework for the application of dry needling and manage all risks associated with skin penetration procedures.

Qualification and training requirements

Dry needling competency can be achieved through completion of the Advanced Diploma of Myotherapy or via comprehensive postgraduate professional development courses that include supervised practice and practical skills assessment.

AMT requires members who are performing dry needling to:

1. hold a nationally recognised Diploma of Remedial Massage or Advanced Diploma of Myotherapy
2. have completed dry needling training that substantially aligns with the national competency standard [VU23639 Provide myofascial dry needling treatment](#).

Therapists who attain dry needling competence through a professional development workshop must complete a minimum of 80 nominal hours of learning. This training must include face-to-face sessions for comprehensive skill acquisition and clinical competence confirmation, along with a minimum of 15 hours of directly supervised clinical practice. It must also include a comprehensive understanding of infection control and work health and safety principles, including knowledge of applicable skin penetration legislation.

Therapists whose training does not broadly conform to these requirements may be in breach of AMT standards and void their insurance cover.



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Professional development

Practitioners of dry needling have an obligation to maintain the currency of their knowledge and refresh their understanding of the latest developments in dry needling methodologies, safety practices, and relevant regulation.

Professional development workshops that do not broadly conform to the [national competency standard](#) will not be recognised as part of AMT's 20-hour professional development requirement.

Insurance

Practitioners of dry needling must hold professional indemnity insurance that provides specific coverage for dry needling. Dry needling must be listed on their policy as a modality.

Risk management and clinical reasoning

Therapists are responsible for formulating a risk management framework and ensuring that their dry needling policies, protocols, and informed consent processes align with AMT standards.

When applying dry needling, therapists must:

- demonstrate sound clinical reasoning to justify its use
- exercise caution when treating anatomical regions with a higher risk profile, limiting needle use in these areas
- prioritise non-invasive treatment alternatives before using dry needling.

A thorough understanding of local anatomy and any anatomical variations is essential, particularly when working in high-risk regions (e.g., thoracic region near the lungs or areas with major blood vessels and nerves).

Legal and ethical considerations

[AMT's Dry Needling Standard](#) is the basis for its position on disciplinary or legal matters. Therapists must ensure their training and practice meet AMT's standard to maintain compliance and insurance coverage.

Recommendation

AMT recommends that newly qualified therapists gain at least one year of practical experience before pursuing postgraduate dry needling training. This timeframe allows ample opportunity to develop and refine palpation skills and clinical reasoning.