

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

REGISTRATION STANDARD: REGENCY OF PRACTICE

1 June 2016

Summary

This registration standard sets out the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's (NMBA) minimum requirements for recency of practice for enrolled nurses, registered nurses and midwives.

Does this standard apply to me?

This registration standard applies to all:

- enrolled nurses, registered nurses and midwives
- applicants for registration as an enrolled nurse or registered nurse or a midwife
- registered nurses and midwives applying for an endorsement, and
- enrolled nurses, registered nurses and midwives renewing registration including those with an endorsement.

This standard does not apply to those with non-practising registration or to recent graduates or students of nursing or midwifery.

What must I do?

Your practice hours will be recognised as meeting this standard if:

- you hold or have held current and valid registration with a recognised nursing or midwifery regulatory authority (either in Australia or overseas), or
- your role involves the application of nursing and/or midwifery knowledge and skills, or
- you have carried out postgraduate education leading to an award or qualification that is relevant to the practice of nursing and/or midwifery.

Meeting the NMBA's minimum requirements for recency of practice doesn't automatically satisfy your professional and ethical responsibilities to ensure that you recognise and work within the limits of your competence and maintain adequate knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care.

The NMBA acknowledges two main areas of practice in the profession for the purposes of this registration standard.

Nurses and midwives in clinical practice

Enrolled nurses, registered nurses and midwives will fulfil the recency of practice requirements if they can demonstrate one or more of the following:

- completion of a minimum of 450 hours of practice within the past five years
- successful completion of a program or assessment approved by the NMBA
- successful completion of a period of supervised practice approved by the NMBA.

Nurses and midwives in non-clinical practice

Nurses and midwives working in non-clinical practice are required to meet the recency of practice standard. If you have recent clinical practice you are deemed to be recent in non-clinical practice.

During the yearly registration renewal process you must declare whether you continue to meet this registration standard.

Are there exemptions to this standard?

There are no exemptions to this standard. The section below, 'What happens if I don't meet this standard?' explains what you need to do if you don't meet this standard and wish to continue or return to practice.

What does this mean for me?

At application for registration

When you apply for registration as an enrolled nurse, registered nurse or midwife, you must meet this registration standard. This includes practitioners who are applying for new or additional types of registration, such as changing from non-practising to general registration or applying for an endorsement.

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You do not need to meet this registration standard if you are a recent graduate applying for registration for the first time.

At renewal of registration

When you apply to renew your registration, you are required to declare that you have complied with this registration standard.

Nurse practitioners

Nurse practitioners are required to demonstrate recency of practice at the nurse practitioner level to retain the endorsement.

During the registration period

Your compliance with this registration standard may be audited from time to time. It may also be checked if the NMBA receives a notification about you.

Evidence

You should retain records as evidence that you meet the requirements of this standard for five years in case you are audited.

What happens if I don't meet this standard?

If you want to continue to practise, or return to practice after taking a break, and you don't meet this standard, you will need to provide information to help the NMBA decide whether you are able to continue to practise.

Nurses in clinical practice

Nurses seeking to work in clinical practice who do not satisfy the requirement for recent clinical practice must meet different requirements, depending on the length of absence from practice. The NMBA's *Re-entry to practice policy* provides information about how you may retain or obtain registration and return to practice.

Nurses in non-clinical practice

- If you are unable to meet the standard and you are working in non-clinical practice, you will be required to submit a professional plan which will outline

past education, experience, continuing professional development (CPD) activities within the past 12 months, employment history for the past five years and the role you wish to undertake, and

- following an assessment you may be required to complete further CPD or submit a professional development plan or/and complete a period of supervised practice within your scope of practice.

Other possible consequences

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet the recency of practice requirements in this standard, including that:

- the NMBA can impose a condition or conditions on your registration or refuse an application for registration or renewal of registration, if you do not meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82 and 112 of the National Law), and
- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for registered nurses and/or midwives (section 41 of the National Law).

Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 27 August 2015.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide-ranging consultation.

Definitions

Clinical education means education, both theoretical and practical, that is required to prepare the nurse or midwife to be directly involved in providing direct clinical care or providing oversight of direct clinical care of patients.

Clinical practice is when the nurse or midwife is directly involved in providing direct clinical care or providing

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oversight of direct clinical care of patients, or is directly involved in clinical education of either pre-registration or post registration, including bridging programs.

National Law means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

Non-clinical practice is where a nurse or midwife is not directly involved in providing direct clinical care or providing oversight of direct care of patients or is not directly involved in clinical education of either pre-registration or post registration, including bridging programs.

Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. Practice in this context is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge (working) in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on the safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

Recency of practice means that a health practitioner has maintained an adequate connection with, and recent practice in the profession since qualifying for, or obtaining registration.

Recent graduate means a person applying for registration for the first time whose qualification for registration was awarded not more than two years prior to the date of their application.

Scope of practice means the professional role and services that an individual health practitioner is educated and competent to perform.

Review

This registration standard will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every five years.

Last reviewed: 1 June 2016

This standard replaces the previous registration standard from 1 July 2010.