

Media statement

21 November 2013

National Board statement on proposed endorsement standard for nurses and midwives supplying medicines under protocol

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (National Board) is consulting on a proposed registration standard: *Registration standard for endorsement of registered nurses and/or registered midwives to supply and administer scheduled medicines under protocol.*

The proposed standard aims to:

- enable a registered nurse or midwife with an endorsement for scheduled medicines to obtain, supply and administer scheduled medicines under protocol, and
- set out the qualifications and other requirements that must be met in order for the National Board to grant a registered nurse or midwife the endorsement under section 94 of the National Law.

The expanded standard aims to introduce national consistency and enable employers to require any nurses and midwives working in areas of high complexity assessment and low supervision to have their registration endorsed to supply medicines under protocol.

The proposed registration standard seeks to encourage workforce flexibility for registered nurses and registered midwives while balancing public protection. It supports a reliable level of quality emergency and primary health care to members of the community as close as possible to where they live. It brings the potential benefit of increased patient access to safe and timely health care through a registered nurse or midwife with a scheduled medicines endorsement to supply medicines under protocol.

In this proposed registration standard, the National Board is not specifying where these nurses and midwives would be working. However the proposal does identify practice settings where there may not be a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner in attendance at all times and where systems, policies and protocols have been developed to support the nurse and/or midwives supplying medicines under protocol.

The National Board does not expect that the proposal to expand the existing *Registration standard for endorsement for scheduled medicines* will overlap with medical practitioner or nurse practitioner practice.

The National Board expects that the nurse or midwife would be supplying medicines when the medical practitioner or nurse practitioner is not immediately available and only in practice settings where supporting policies and protocols are in place.

These nurses and midwives would be required to complete additional education to ensure that they have skills required to safely and competently supply medicines under protocol.

In rural and isolated practice areas of Australia, registered nurses have been supplying medicines under protocol for several years. There are 826 registered nurses who currently have a scheduled medicines endorsement.

The public consultation period to support the National Board's review of this registration standard was open for two months until 4 November 2013.

The National Board will now analyse feedback from the consultation and decide whether to refine the revised registration standard and submit it to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for approval, or revise the standard and circulate it again for another round of public consultation.

The National Board values all feedback received during the consultation and will review it closely before making a decision about future directions.

Course accreditation standards that meet the educational requirements required for nurses and midwives to safely and competently supply medicines under protocol will be developed and be widely consulted upon by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC).

Useful links for more information

- [Registration standard for scheduled medicine endorsement for public consultation](#) (media release)
- [Enrolled nurse and medicine administration](#)
- [Scope of practice for registered nurses and midwives](#)
- [Advanced practice nursing](#)
- [Endorsements and notations](#)
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200