

Fact sheet

December 2016

Enrolled nurse standards for practice

Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) undertakes functions as set by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). The NMBA regulates the practice of nursing and midwifery in Australia, and one of its key roles is to protect the public. The NMBA does this by developing registration standards, professional codes, guidelines and standards for practice which together establish the requirements for the professional and safe practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

Registration as an enrolled nurse (EN) means you need to meet the NMBA's mandatory registration standards. ENs are expected to practise within the relevant NMBA-approved standards for practice and decision-making frameworks.

The following questions answer common queries that you might have about the *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* (the standards), which will replace the *National competency standards for the enrolled nurse* and are available on the [NMBA website](#).

What are the standards for?

The *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* are the core practice standards that provide the framework for assessing EN practice. The standards:

- communicate to the general public the standards that can be expected of ENs
- determine the eligibility for registration of people who have completed an EN program of study in Australia
- determine the eligibility for registration of ENs who wish to practise in Australia but have completed courses elsewhere
- assess ENs who wish to return to work after being out of the workforce for a defined period, and
- assess ENs who need to show that they are competent to practise.

These standards replace the *National competency standards for the enrolled nurse* that were first published in 2002 by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) and adopted by the NMBA at the start of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) in July 2010 (18 October in Western Australia).

The standards have been developed following an extensive literature review, a survey of ENs, interviews with ENs, observations of ENs in practice, and consultation with consumers and other key stakeholders including education providers.

When do the standards take effect?

The *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* (2015) take effect on 1 January 2016.

What are the key dates for these standards?

- 21 October 2015 – the NMBA *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* released
- 1 January 2016 – the NMBA *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* come into effect

- During the transition period – 21 October 2015 to 31 December 2015 – the current *National competency standards for the enrolled nurse* apply.

Why have you removed the term ‘competency’ from the standards?

Research suggested that confusion existed between the use of the term ‘competency based assessment’ in the vocational education and training (VET) sector and use of the term ‘competency’ in other settings.

I am an EN, what do I need to do when the standards take effect?

You need to familiarise yourself with the standards before 1 January 2016.

During the transition period (21 October 2015 to 31 December 2015), we encourage you to reflect on your practice using the standards, and complete continuing professional development (activities) that will help you identify and address areas of learning.

What are the key features of the standards?

The standards provide clarity about supervision, delegation and role relationships, including:

- the EN needs to work under the direct or indirect supervision of a registered nurse (RN)
- the EN keeps responsibility for their actions, and
- the EN is accountable in providing delegated care.

What does direct and indirect supervision mean?

Direct supervision is when the supervisor is actually present and personally observes, works with, guides and directs the person who is being supervised.

Indirect supervision is when the supervisor works in the same facility or organisation as the supervised person, but does not constantly observe their activities. The supervisor must be available for reasonable access. What is reasonable will depend on the context, the needs of the person receiving care and the needs of the person who is being supervised.

- It is generally expected that in the case of indirect supervision that the registered nurse and enrolled nurse have the same employer. There may be situations where the registered nurse and the enrolled nurse may not have the same employer but work in the same facility or organisation. In these situations clearly documented arrangements between the employers, supported by the registered nurse(s) and the enrolled nurse(s), must be in place. These documented arrangements should include details of all aspects of the supervision arrangements (including insurance) and describe how the registered nurse will be available for reasonable access to ensure effective timely direction and supervision so that the delegated practice is safe and correct and public safety is ensured.

How is the role of the EN described in the standards?

The *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* reflect the role of the EN in the current health environment, remaining broad and principle-based, to ensure they are sufficiently dynamic and applicable for a range of practice settings.

What are the key changes to the domains and their related standards?

These contemporary standards have been revised using the best available evidence to ensure a strong foundation for the education and assessment of ENs into the future. The standards also provide clearer wording about supervision, delegation, and role relationships.

The *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* have revised the domains as follows:

- professional and collaborative practice
- provision of care, and
- reflective and analytical practice.

The key changes to the domains are described below.

Domain: Professional and collaborative practice

Old domain	New domain
Professional and ethical practice	Professional and collaborative practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasises that professional practice is also ethical and collaborative. Although collaboration is central it also occurs in the other domains as specific indicators.
Old standard	New standard
Conducts nursing practice in a way that can be ethically justified.	Practises nursing in a way that ensures the rights of the people are upheld.

Domain: Reflective and analytical practice

Old domain	New domain
Critical thinking and analysis	Reflective and analytical practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is expected that ENs reflect on evidence-based practice and ensure currency of essential knowledge and skills.
Old standard	New standard
Demonstrates critical thinking in the conduct of enrolled nursing practice.	Provides care that is informed by evidence. Practices within safety and quality assurance guidelines. Engages in ongoing development of self as a professional.

Domain: Provision of care

Old domain	New domain
Management of care	Provision of care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encompasses all aspects of care from assessment to engaging in care, and includes health education and evaluation of outcomes.
Old standard	New standard
Contributes to the formulation of care plans in collaboration with the registered nurse, individuals and groups. Manages nursing care of individuals and groups within the scope of enrolled nursing practice.	Synthesises information from a range of sources in order to plan appropriate care. Collaborates with the healthcare team when developing plans of care. Provides skilled and timely care to people receiving care and others while promoting their independence and involvement in care decision-making. Uses documentation to inform and report care.

Domain: Enabling

Old domain	New domain
Enabling	Removed (covered in other domains)
Old standard	New standard
<i>Contributes to the promotion of safety, security and personal integrity of individuals and groups within the scope of enrolled nursing practice</i>	Removed (covered in other domains)
<i>Provides support and care to individuals and groups within the scope of enrolled nursing practice</i>	Removed (covered in other domains)
<i>Collaborates with members of the healthcare team to achieve effective healthcare outcomes</i>	Removed (covered in other domains)

Can an EN give medications with no RN present in the same room?

Under the *Enrolled nurse standards for practice* an EN needs to practice within their scope of practice, in line with the relevant state drugs and poisons legislation and their own educational preparation and experience. ENs may administer medication if they have completed the required education and are competent to do so. ENs are also expected to work in accordance with the relevant policies of their employer.

Supervision by an RN may be direct or indirect according to the nature of the work delegated to the EN. For further information see the NMBA fact sheet: [Enrolled nurses and medicine administration](#) and the NMBA [Decision-making framework](#) available on the NMBA website. You may also wish to refer to local protocols approved by your employer/health service.

Can an RN be replaced by an EN and be expected to do an RN's work?

The scope of practice of an EN and RN are different. An EN must work under the direct/indirect supervision of an RN at all times. An EN should only be carrying out practice that they are appropriately trained and competent to do, and which is within their scope of practice. This does not include working at the level of an RN.

I have submitted an application for registration as an EN which is currently being assessed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Will these standards affect my application?

If you have completed an [NMBA-approved program of study](#), assessment of your application will not be affected by the standards.

I am currently completing an approved program of study leading to registration as an EN. Will the standards affect me applying for registration?

If you are currently enrolled in an NMBA-approved program of study leading to registration as an EN and are due to graduate after 1 January 2016, your program of study is still recognised. The standards will not affect you applying for registration.

I enrolled in an NMBA-approved program of study, which leads to registration as an EN. Will the course still be recognised after the standards are implemented?

Yes. Your program of study is still recognised if you are currently enrolled in an NMBA-approved program of study leading to registration as an EN and are due to graduate after 1 January 2016.

Students will not be disadvantaged in any way by the introduction of the standards. The NMBA encourages you to discuss your individual circumstances with your education provider.

For more information

- [Enrolled nurse standards for practice](#)
- [Audit](#) information on the NMBA website
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)

Document control

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