

**Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia**

# REGISTRATION STANDARD: ENDORSEMENT AS A NURSE PRACTITIONER

1 June 2016

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## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's (NMBA) requirements for endorsement as a nurse practitioner under section 95 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

## Does this standard apply to me?

This registration standard applies to nurses and nurse practitioners who hold registration as a nurse in Australia, who are applying for, or maintaining, endorsement as a nurse practitioner.

## What must I do?

When applying for endorsement as a nurse practitioner, a nurse must be able to demonstrate all of the following.

1. Current general registration as a registered nurse in Australia with no conditions or undertakings relating to unsatisfactory professional performance or unprofessional conduct.
2. The equivalent of three years' full-time experience (5,000 hours) at the clinical advanced nursing practice level, within the past six years, from the date when the complete application seeking endorsement as a nurse practitioner is received by the NMBA.
3. Successful completion of:
  - an NMBA-approved program of study leading to endorsement as a nurse practitioner, or
  - a program that is substantially equivalent to an NMBA-approved program of study leading to endorsement as a nurse practitioner as determined by the NMBA.
4. Compliance with the NMBA's *Nurse practitioner standards for practice*.

## Ongoing requirements for endorsement

Ongoing endorsement by the NMBA is conditional on the nurse practitioner complying with the current:

1. NMBA-approved *Continuing professional development registration standard*, *Recency of practice registration standard*, *Criminal history registration standard*, and *Professional indemnity insurance arrangements registration standard*, and
2. *Safety and quality guidelines for nurse practitioners* and any other applicable codes and guidelines approved by the NMBA.

## What does this mean for me?

### At renewal of registration

When you apply to renew your registration, you need to declare that you comply with the ongoing eligibility requirements for endorsement as set out in this registration standard.

Nurse practitioners need to demonstrate recency of practice at the advanced practice nursing level to retain the endorsement.

### During the registration period

Your compliance with this registration standard may be audited from time to time and 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 registration standard in case you are audited.

## What happens if I don't meet this standard?

If you don't meet the criteria of this registration standard you will not be eligible for endorsement as a nurse practitioner.

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you do not meet the ongoing requirements of this registration standard, including that:

- the NMBA can impose conditions on your registration/endorsement or refuse renewal of

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registration/endorsement (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 the nursing and midwifery professions (section 41 of the National Law).

## Safety and quality guidelines for nurse practitioners

The *Safety and quality guidelines for nurse practitioners* outline the regulatory requirements for nurse practitioners providing clarity and support to practise in their role as a nurse practitioner.

## Guidelines for registered nurses applying for endorsement as a nurse practitioner

The *Guidelines: For nurses applying for endorsement as a nurse practitioner* provide guidance about how to meet the requirements of the registration standard. You are expected to apply these guidelines together with the registration standard in your application.

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 30 October 2015.

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

## Definitions

**Advanced nursing practice** is defined as a continuum along which nurses develop their professional knowledge, clinical reasoning and judgement, skills

and behaviours to higher levels of capability (that is recognisable).

Nurses practising at an advanced level incorporate professional leadership, education and research into their clinically based practice. Their practice is effective and safe. They work within a generalist or specialist context and they are responsible and accountable in managing people who have complex health care requirements.

Advanced nursing practice is a level of practice and not a role. It is acknowledged that advanced nursing practice is individually attributed within a regulated nursing scope (enrolled nurse, registered nurse or nurse practitioner). Advanced nursing practice for the purpose of the 5,000 hours required is not related to a job title or remuneration.

**Advanced practice nurse** is a nurse practising in the advanced practice role.

Advanced practice nursing as a nurse practitioner is a qualitatively different level of advanced nursing practice to that of the registered nurse due to the additional legislative functions and the regulatory requirements. The requirements include a prescribed educational level, a specified advanced nursing practice experience, and continuing professional development.

Advanced practice nursing should not be confused with the term 'practice nurse' that is used commonly to describe nurses working in the general practice setting.

**Approved program of study** means a postgraduate nursing masters degree approved by the NMBA under section 49 of the National Law and included in the NMBA-approved list of programs of study for endorsement as a nurse practitioner. This includes NMBA-approved masters level units in advanced health assessment, pharmacology for prescribing, therapeutics and diagnostics and research.

**General registration as a nurse** means a person whose name is entered on the Register of Nurses in the division of registered nurses in the general category.

**Nurse practitioner** is an advanced practice nurse endorsed by the NMBA who has direct clinical contact

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and practises within their scope under the legislatively protected title 'nurse practitioner' under the National Law

**Program that is substantially equivalent** means a postgraduate nursing masters degree that is relevant, clinically, to the context of the applicant's advanced nursing practice, for which they are seeking endorsement as a nurse practitioner, and who have completed appropriate supplementary education. Supplementary education includes advanced health assessment, pharmacology for prescribing, therapeutics and diagnostics and research, however titled. Applicants will need to map evidence for assessment against the *Nurse practitioner standards for practice*.

**Standards for practice** are those standards outlined in the *Nurse practitioner standards for practice* (2014).

**Unprofessional conduct of a registered health practitioner** means professional conduct that is of a lesser standard than that which might reasonably be expected of the health practitioner by the public or the practitioner's professional peers, and includes:

- a. a contravention by the practitioner of the National Law, whether or not the practitioner has been prosecuted for, or convicted of, an offence in relation to the contravention
- b. contravention by the practitioner of: (i) a condition to which the practitioner's registration was subject; or (ii) an undertaking given by the practitioner to the National Board that registers the practitioner
- c. the conviction of the practitioner for an offence under another Act, the nature of which may affect the practitioner's suitability to continue to practise the profession
- d. providing a person with health services of a kind that are excessive, unnecessary or otherwise not reasonably required for the person's well-being
- e. influencing, or attempting to influence, the conduct of another registered health practitioner in a way that may compromise patient care
- f. accepting a benefit as inducement, consideration or reward for referring another person to a health

service provider or recommending another person use or consult with a health service provider

- g. offering or giving a person a benefit, consideration or reward in return for the person referring another person to the practitioner or recommending to another person that the person use a health service provided by the practitioner, and
- h. referring a person to, or recommending that a person use or consult, another health service provider, health service or health product if the practitioner has a pecuniary interest in giving that referral or recommendation, unless the practitioner discloses the nature of that interest to the person before or at the time of giving the referral or recommendation.

**Unsatisfactory professional performance** of a registered health practitioner, means the knowledge, skill or judgment possessed, or care exercised by, the practitioner in the practice of the health profession in which the practitioner is registered is below the standard reasonably expected of a health practitioner of an equivalent level of training or experience.

**Note:** The NMBA and Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) operate in a co-regulatory model in some jurisdictions and may not be the only entities involved in completing assessment related to a notification.

In co-regulatory definitions these terms may be described differently but have the same intent.

## 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 previously published registration standard dated 4 April 2011.