

Joint communiqué

April 2018

Following the Registered Nurse/Midwife Prescribing Symposium held by the Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer in March 2017, a joint working group between Australian and New Zealand Council of Chief Nurses and Midwives Officers (ANZCCNMO) and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) has been formed to develop a nationally consistent framework for prescribing by registered nurses and midwives in Australia.

The Nursing and Midwifery Prescribing Working Group (NMPWG) released a prescribing discussion paper for public consultation in October 2017. The discussion paper explored the expansion of autonomous prescribing for registered nurses (RNs) and midwives, the development of the designated/supervised prescribing model for RNs and midwives and prescribing via a structured prescribing arrangement for RNs and midwives. A total of 62 responses were received with 22 from individuals and 40 from nursing and/or midwifery organisations.

Based on the feedback provided the NMBA and the ANZCCNMO supported the following:

Midwifery prescribing

Feedback to the discussion paper supported the NMBA's current approach to midwifery prescribing through the *Endorsement for scheduled medicines for midwives registration standard* (the standard) and that there was no need to establish another pathway for midwife prescribing i.e. – the designated/supervised prescribing model was not needed for midwives. Based on this feedback the NMBA agreed that no changes will be made to the midwifery prescribing model at this point in time. Any changes proposed in the feedback to the current standard would be considered as a part of the NMBA's cycle of review process.

Registered nurse prescribing

Feedback to the discussion paper provided mixed support for autonomous prescribing for RNs and the NMBA agreed therefore that this should not be the next step for RNs at this time but may consider in the future. There was strong support for the expansion of the supervised/designated prescribing model for RN – with the preferred term being 'partnership' given the established use and meaning of the term 'supervision' within the nursing profession and the general misunderstanding of the term 'designated'.

Feedback to the discussion paper also provided clear support that education for RNs relating to protocol/standing order supply is already captured at the undergraduate level which includes any form of prescribing under protocol (including the current *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registered nursing (rural and isolated practice) registration standard*). This has been further supported by an analysis undertaken by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council.

Next steps

The NMBA will commence initial consultation on an *Endorsement for scheduled medicines for registered nurses prescribing in partnership* with key stakeholders, which will be followed by public consultation.

Consultation forums will be held in both rounds of consultation and will afford an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide further feedback on the proposed endorsement.