

Fact sheet

Updated March 2023

Registration as a nurse or a midwife

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 of the professional practice framework for the professional and safe practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

In order to become registered, nurses and midwives must meet the NMBA's mandatory [registration standards](#).

This fact sheet addresses common queries about registration as a nurse or a midwife.

What is the 'Register of practitioners'?

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) manages the registration and renewal process on behalf of the NMBA.

Ahpra keeps a list of every health practitioner who is registered to practise in Australia. The list is called the '[Register of practitioners](#)' (also referred to as the 'national register').

Under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme), there is a national register for nurses, and a separate national register for midwives. On the register of nurses there are two divisions – registered nurses and enrolled nurses.

How can I check my registration status?

You can use the online [national register](#) to confirm your registration status. A nurse or midwife's listing on the national register is proof that they are registered to practise.

What information is published on the national register?

The following fields are published to the national register: Condition (where applicable), Date of first registration, Division (where applicable), Endorsement (where applicable), Notation (where applicable), Principal place of practice, Profession, Qualifications, Registration expiry date, Registration number, Registration status, Registration type, Reprimand (where applicable), Spoken languages, Suspension (where applicable) and Undertaking (where applicable).

For further information refer to the [Glossary](#) on the Ahpra website.

What are the different types of registration?

General registration is granted to nurses and midwives to practise the profession. In general, nurses and/or midwives who hold general registration have graduated from a Board-approved, accredited program of study in the profession(s) and completed any required period of supervised practice or re-entry to practice program, or they have demonstrated equivalence of their overseas qualifications.

Provisional registration is granted to nurses and midwives to enable them to complete either a period of supervised practice or re-entry to practice program to be eligible for general registration.

Non-practising registration is granted to nurses and midwives who have previously held general registration, who do not wish to practise the profession(s) but wish to remain registered. Some nurses and/or midwives choose to hold non-practising registration so that they may use a protected title (i.e. enrolled nurse, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, midwife).

What endorsements can nurses and midwives have on their registration?

The endorsement of registration identifies registered nurses and midwives with additional qualifications and specific expertise who meet the requirements of the relevant registration standard. There are no endorsements for enrolled nurses.

Nurse practitioner endorsement

An [endorsement as a nurse practitioner](#) identifies registered nurses who have completed an NMBA-approved program of study or program that is substantially equivalent leading to endorsement as a nurse practitioner and the equivalent of three years' (5,000 hours) full-time experience in the advanced clinical nursing practice level, within the past six years

Midwife – prescribe scheduled medicines endorsement

A [scheduled medicines endorsement](#) identifies midwives qualified to prescribe schedule 2, 3, 4 and 8 medicines and to provide associated services required for midwifery practice, in accordance with relevant state and territory legislation.

Note: There is no registration standard against which individuals can seek endorsement as a midwife practitioner. Refer to the NMBA's [Position statement on midwife practitioners](#).

What are conditions and how are they applied on a nurse or midwife's registration?

The NMBA or an adjudication body can impose a **condition** on the registration of a nurse or midwife or student, or on an endorsement of registration. A condition aims to restrict a nurse or midwife's practice in some way, to protect the public.

Conditions can be placed on a nurse or midwife's registration for disciplinary reasons, such as because the NMBA has found that a nurse or midwife has departed from accepted professional standards.

Conditions can also be placed on a nurse or midwife's registration for reasons that are not disciplinary, such as for a nurse or midwife who is returning to practice after a break.

Current conditions which restrict a nurse or midwife's practice of the profession are published on the register of practitioners. When a National Board or adjudication body decides they are no longer required to ensure safe practice, they are removed and no longer published.

Examples of conditions include requiring the practitioner to:

- complete specified further education or training within a specified period
- undertake a specified period of supervised practice
- do, or refrain from doing, something in connection with the practitioner's practice
- manage their practice in a specified way
- report to a specified person at specified times about the practitioner's practice, or
- not employ, engage or recommend a specified person, or class of persons

There may also be conditions related to a practitioner's health (such as psychiatric care or drug screening). The details of health conditions are not usually published on the register of practitioners.

What notations can nurses and midwives have on their registration?

A **notation** records a limitation on the practice of a nurse/midwife. It is used to describe and explain the scope of a nurse/midwife's practice by noting the limitations on that practice. The notation does not change the nurse/midwife's scope of practice but may reflect the requirements of a registration standard.

- [Nurses with a sole qualification in mental health nursing, paediatric nursing or disability nursing](#) notation
- [Enrolled nurse and medication administration](#) notation
- [Mothercraft nursing](#) notation

Do I need to tell Ahpra about postgraduate studies I have completed?

You only need to let Ahpra know if you have completed postgraduate studies that lead to an endorsement on your registration or the removal of a notation on your registration. If you have completed postgraduate studies that do not lead to either of these then you do not need to tell Ahpra.

Does my principal place of practice have to be published on the national register?

The National Law requires that the suburb and postcode of your principal place of practice (PPP) is published on the national register. The PPP is defined as the address from which you predominantly practice the profession, or if not practising, or not practising predominantly from one address, then your home address. If you are practising through an agency, your principal place of practice can be the address of the agency.

If you believe that publishing information about you on the public register would pose a significant risk to your health or safety as a nurse or midwife, you can [apply to exclude information about you from the public register](#). The NMBA will consider each application individually.

For more information

The following pages on the NMBA website contain useful information for nurses and midwives and employers:

- [Registration standards](#)
- [Registration and endorsements](#)
- [Professional codes and guidelines](#)
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an [online enquiry form](#)
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)

Document history

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Next review due: December 2027

Policy history: Is this a new policy? **N**
Does this policy amend or update an existing policy? **Y**
If so which version **v2.1**
Does this policy replace another policy with a different title? **N**

Approval date	Version	Reason for change
March 2023	v3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New document template• Headings changed to Q&A format• Inclusion of additional details - national register, registration types, endorsements, conditions and notations• Removal of 'Registered nurse – supply scheduled medicines (rural and isolated practice) endorsement' reference• Insertion of document history table
June 2019	v2.1	Removal of eligible midwife notation reference
November 2016	v2.0	Inclusion of detail regarding endorsements
March 2015	v1.0	n/a