



Professional practice framework and standards for nurses and midwives position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the responsibilities the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) considers employers, nurses and midwives, and the nursing and midwifery professions must meet to ensure nurses and midwives can, and do, meet appropriate professional practice standards.

2. Definitions

Professional practice standards define the practice and behaviour of nurses and midwives.

3. Context

Nurses and midwives practice under the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) professional practice framework (PPF).

Developed with the professions, the PPF includes:¹

- standards for practice for registered and enrolled nurses, midwives, and nurse practitioners
- codes of conduct and international codes of ethics for nurses and midwives
- frameworks for decision making and assessing standards of practice
- guidelines for registration standards, professional practice, safety and quality for nurse practitioners and privately practicing midwives
- registration standards for criminal history; English language skills; continuing professional development; recency of practice; professional indemnity insurance; endorsement as a nurse practitioner and endorsement for scheduled medicines for midwives and registered nurses.

The standards also inform national accreditation standards for nursing and midwifery education.

4. Position

It is the position of the ANMF that responsibility for maintaining professional practice standards is a shared responsibility between the NMBA, employers, and individual nurses and midwives.

Responsibility of the professions

The professions must ensure the following:

1. Nurses and midwives and the ANMF are represented in all forums where standards for practice relevant to nursing and midwifery are developed, reviewed or revised.
2. Standards for nursing and midwifery practice are broad and principle based so they can be used as a benchmark for assessment in all contexts of practice and do not create unnecessary barriers to recruitment and retention.

¹ The documents listed are available on the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia website at <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/>.



3. Standards for nursing and midwifery practice reflect:
 - the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values essential for safe, quality care
 - the relationship between the different levels of nursing and midwifery and allow for articulation into other levels
 - the relationship between nursing and midwifery practice and the practice of other workers in the health sector
 - community needs in relation to health and aged care outcomes.
4. Standards for practice for nurses and midwives are appropriately validated and evaluated by the nursing and midwifery professions and agreed processes are in place for their regular review.
5. Other standards for practice developed by professional organisations for nurses and midwives are:
 - prepared in consultation with the nursing and midwifery professions
 - used only as a framework to guide practice and self-assessment in a particular context or setting and are not mandatory.

Responsibilities of employers

6. Employers must provide nurses and midwives with an environment which facilitates effective, efficient, high-quality care so they can meet the NMBA Standards for practice.
7. Employers should provide nurses and midwives with support, including financial support and leave, to access learning opportunities in a range of settings including at work, online, and via other distance education methods.
8. Employers should collaborate with and support nurses and midwives who identify learning needs to formulate and implement a professional development plan to meet those needs.
9. When using the NMBA standards for practice in performance appraisals, employers must ensure assessment:
 - is conducted by a competent registered nurse or midwife assessor
 - appropriately acknowledges and considers the extent of experience the nurse or midwife has to date
 - provides access to a fair and transparent avenue of appeal.

Responsibilities of nurses and midwives

10. All nurses and midwives must:
 - always provide high quality, safe and competent care
 - meet the relevant NMBA standards for practice and maintain a contemporary knowledge and skill base.
11. To this end, all nurses and midwives should:
 - support each other in demonstrating and maintaining their standards for practice



- demonstrate a commitment to their professional practice through life-long learning, seeking quality educational experiences and documenting all professional development activities as required by the NMBA continuing professional development registration standard²
- use the relevant standards for practice for regular self-assessment or peer review and to identify learning needs.

Self-assessment

12. When making a self-assessment, nurses and midwives should consider their participation in the following:

- formal and informal learning such as postgraduate education, conferences, seminars and mandatory education such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation and workplace safety
- evidence-based practice and research
- continuing professional development activities including reading and reviewing professional literature and research and reflecting on their practice against the relevant standards
- workplace performance appraisals to identify knowledge and practice gaps and learning opportunities
- professional and industrial organisations.

5. Position statement management

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² Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016. *Registration standard: Continuing professional development*. Available at: <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>.