



What is a Nurse Practitioner?

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A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse who is educated and endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the Board) to function autonomously and collaboratively in an advanced and extended clinical role.

Registered nurses, who hold general registration with the Board and who have completed a master's degree that is clinically relevant to the context of their advanced practice nursing, may seek endorsement as a nurse practitioner from the Board.

The nurse practitioner role

The nurse practitioner role includes, but is not limited to the:

- Ordering and interpretation of investigations
- Referring patients to other health care professionals
- Prescribing medications
- Facilitating diagnosis and care planning
- Providing continuous patient care
- Taking responsibility for follow-up on any components of care initiated
- Working autonomously and self-monitoring their work

The role is grounded in the nursing profession's values, knowledge, theories and practice, and provides innovative and flexible health care delivery that complements other health care providers (National Competency Standards for the Nursing Practitioner, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council 2006).

Areas of specialist practice may include:

- Diabetes care
- Primary care
- Paediatric care
- Mental health care
- Care of the older person or aged care
- Acute or supportive care
- Perioperative care
- Critical care

Endorsement

By endorsing the registration of nurses and midwives, the Board identifies practitioners with additional qualifications, completion of approved study and specific expertise. The endorsements available for nursing and midwifery are:

- Eligible midwife
- Nurse practitioner
- Scheduled medicines
- Scheduled medicines for eligible midwives
- Supply scheduled medicines (in rural and isolated practice)

The nurse practitioner title can only be used by a person who has been endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

Pathways for endorsement

Applicants for endorsement as a nurse practitioner may apply via one of two pathways.

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

Practice Assist is an initiative of



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Pathway 1: Applicants who have successfully completed a Board approved master's degree (nurse practitioner) course which addresses the national competency standards for nurse practitioners and was approved by the Board after June 2006.

Pathway 2: Applicants who have a substantially equivalent master's education that assists the applicant to meet the competency standards for the nurse practitioner. This pathway is also for applicants who entered and/or completed a nurse practitioner master's degree approved by previous Boards in Australia prior to June 2006.

Application for endorsement as a nurse practitioner

An applicant seeking to be endorsed as a nurse practitioner must be able to demonstrate:

- Current general registration as a registered nurse with no conditions on registration relating to unsatisfactory professional performance or unprofessional conduct;
- The equivalent of three years full-time experience in an advanced practice nursing role, within the past six years from the date when the complete application seeking endorsement as a nurse practitioner is received by the Board;
- Successful completion of a Board-approved nurse practitioner qualification at master's level or education equivalence as determined by the Board;
- Compliance with the Board's national competency standards for the nurse practitioner which can be accessed from the board's website at www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under Codes and Guidelines; and
- Compliance with the Board's registration standard on continuing professional development.

Designated nurse practitioner areas

To possess, use, supply or prescribe any poisons (including medicines for health services) in Western Australia (WA) a nurse practitioner must work in a Designated Nurse Practitioner Area as per:

- the WA Poisons Act 1964 - 23(2)(e): a nurse practitioner is authorised to possess, use, supply or prescribe any poison, in accordance with the regulations, while lawfully carrying on the practice of nursing as a nurse practitioner in an area designated by the Chief Executive Officer [of the WA Department of Health] in accordance with the regulations; and

- the WA Poisons Regulations 1965 -11A: Areas for Act s. 23(2)(e), designation of: The Chief Executive Officer may, in writing, designate an area for the purposes of section 23(2)(e) of the Act.

Applications for Designated Nurse Practitioner Areas are managed and coordinated by the Department of Health, Medicines and Poisons Regulation Branch.

Contact

Medicines and Poisons Regulation Branch
Department of Health, Western Australia
PO Box 8172 Perth Business Centre WA 6849

Telephone: 9222 6883

Email: poisons@health.wa.gov.au

Website:

http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Authories-for-health-practitioners-working-with-medicines

Access to the Medicare Benefits Schedule and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

Endorsed nurse practitioners may apply for:

Medicare provider number: Location specific provider numbers are allocated to eligible midwives and nurse practitioners working in private practice to provide services listed under the Medicare Benefits Schedule and request certain diagnostic imaging and pathology services.

Prescriber number: Nurse practitioners and midwives who have completed an approved prescribing qualification may apply for a prescriber number which will enable them to prescribe medications listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

The application for a Medicare provider number and/or Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme prescriber number for a midwife or nurse practitioner can be found online at <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/spw/health-professionals/forms/resources/2960-1102en.pdf>

Nurse practitioner Medicare Benefits Schedule items

The nurse practitioner MBS items include four time-tiered consultation attendances providing for short straightforward consultations through to longer, more complex services.

MBS item number	Description	Fee and 85% benefit
82200	Level A Short consult	Fee: \$9.60 Benefit: \$8.20
82205	Level B Standard consult	Fee: \$20.95 Benefit: \$17.85
82210	Level C Long consult	Fee: \$39.75 Benefit: \$33.80
82215	Level D Extended consult	Fee: \$58.55 Benefit: \$49.80

Continuing professional development

Nurses are required to comply with the Board's registration standard on continuing professional development (CPD) and complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD annually. This CPD should be relevant to their context of practice and evidence is required at renewal of registration.

Nurse practitioners are required to undertake an additional 10 hours of specified CPD per year, in addition to the 20 hours of CPD required for general registration.

CPD must be relevant to the nurse practitioner's context of practice and where appropriate, address:

- Prescribing and administration of medicines;
- Diagnostic investigations; and
- Consultation and referral.

For more information

Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
<http://acnp.org.au/>

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority
<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>

Medicare Australia
www.humanservices.gov.au

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
<http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/>

Nursing and Midwifery Office, Department of Health, Western Australia
www.nursing.health.wa.gov.au