

## Authority

This standard has been approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 31 March 2010 under to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory with approval taking effect from 1 July 2010.

## Summary

An applicant seeking to be identified as an eligible midwife under section 38(2) of the National Law must be able to meet all the requirements, including:

- being currently registered as a midwife in Australia
- being able to demonstrate the equivalent of three (3) years full-time post-registration experience as a midwife and evidence of current competence to provide pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care, through professional practice review, and
- have an approved qualification, or the ability to gain such a qualification within an 18 month period to acquire the skills required to prescribe scheduled medicines required for practice across the continuum of midwifery care.

## Wording to appear in the register of midwives

Notation to state: *An eligible midwife competent to provide pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care and qualified to provide the associated services and order diagnostic investigations required for midwifery practice, in accordance with relevant state or territory legislation - under section 225(p) of the National Law.*

## Scope of eligibility

Notation as an eligible midwife applies to a class of registered midwives and not to all registered midwives.

Having notation as an eligible midwife on the register of midwives indicates that the midwife is competent to: provide pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care to women and their infants; and is qualified to provide the associated services and order diagnostic investigations appropriate to the eligible midwife's scope of practice.

An eligible midwife may also prescribe scheduled medicines in accordance with relevant state or territory legislation once an endorsement for scheduled medicines under section 94 has been attained.

## Requirements

To be entitled to be identified as an eligible midwife, a midwife must be able to demonstrate, at a minimum, of the following:

- a) Current general registration as a midwife in Australia with no conditions on practice.
- b) Midwifery experience that constitutes the equivalent of three (3) years full-time post-registration as a midwife.
- c) Successful completion of an approved professional practice review program for midwives working across the continuum of midwifery care which demonstrates continuing competence in the provision of pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care to women and their infants.
- d) Successful completion of, or formal undertaking to complete within 18 months of recognition as an eligible midwife:
  - an Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) accredited and Board-approved program of study to develop midwives' knowledge and skills in prescribing medicines, or
  - a program that is substantially equivalent to such an approved program of study, as determined by the Board.

## Definitions

**Approved midwifery professional practice review program** means a formal professional practice review program for midwives accredited by the ANMAC and subsequently approved by the Board, that is designed to review evidence of a midwife's professional performance over time across the continuum of midwifery care. A list of Board-approved midwifery practice review programs will be published on the Board's website ([www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au)).

**Approved program of study** means an educational program to develop the midwife's knowledge and skills in prescribing medicines that has been accredited by the ANMAC and subsequently approved by the Board for the purpose of enabling the eligible midwife to seek endorsement under section 94 of the National Law to prescribe schedule 2, 3, 4, and 8 medicines, in accordance with relevant state or territory legislation.

**Pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care (the continuum of midwifery care) incorporates:** antenatal care, intrapartum care and postnatal care for women and their infants, and includes clinical assessment, exercise of

clinical judgement, planning, implementation, monitoring and review, responding to maternity emergencies, assessment and care of the newborn infant, management and administration of medicines, judicious use of diagnostic investigations.

**The Board** or NMBA means the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

## Other requirements

This standard is applied in conjunction with the National Board-approved *Guidelines and Assessment Framework for Registration Standard for Eligible Midwives and Registration Standard for Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines for Eligible Midwives*.

An eligible midwife is required to undertake an additional 20 hours of specified continuing professional development (CPD) per year relating to the continuum of midwifery care, in addition to the 20 hours of CPD for general registration as a midwife. This CPD must be relevant to the continuum of midwifery care.

An eligible midwife is also required to successfully complete a Board-approved midwifery professional practice program every three years across the continuum of midwifery care to demonstrate continuing competence in the provision of pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care to women and their infants.

An eligible midwife is required to meet the requirements for endorsement as a midwife within 18 months of notation as an eligible midwife. Information on the requirements for endorsement for scheduled medicines for midwives can be found at [www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au)

## References

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) (2008) *Code of Professional Conduct for Midwives in Australia*, Canberra. Available at [www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au)

ANMC, Australian Nursing Federation, Australian College of Midwives (2008) *Code of Ethics for Midwives in Australia*, Canberra. Available at [www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au)

Australian College of Midwives (2008) *National Midwifery Guidelines for Consultation and Referral, Revised Edition*, Canberra.

## Review

This standard will commence on 1 July 2010. The Board will review this standard at least every three years of operation.

The provision to enable a midwife to be able to make a 'formal undertaking to complete within a period of time as determined by the Board, an accredited and approved program of study determined by the Board to develop midwives' knowledge and skills in prescribing, or a program that is substantially equivalent to such an approved program of study' (requirement D) will only be available from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2015\*.

\*Date amended on 13 August 2013, following Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council approval dated 31 July 2013.