

## Public consultation

---

August 2014

### Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia draft Enrolled nurse standards for practice

#### Background

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) for health professions in Australia commenced on 1 July 2010 under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory. Under the National Law, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the National Board) is responsible for the regulation of the nursing and midwifery professions and is supported in this role by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). The National Board has approved registration standards, codes and guidelines and competency standards, which together form a Professional Practice Framework (PPF) that defines the requirements and Board expectations guiding the professional practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (National Board) is to protect the public and facilitate access to health services. The National Board sets registration, as well as professional codes, standards and guidelines that underpin safe and competent practice. These standards also help to clarify the National Boards expectations on a range of matters.

Section 38 of the National Law empowers the National Board to develop, consult on and recommend to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) Board – approved registration standards. These standards address issues relevant to nurses and midwives, such as:

- eligibility for registration in the nursing and midwifery profession, or
- suitability to competently and safely practise the profession.

#### Summary of Issues

Since the national competency standards for the Enrolled nurse were released in 2002, there have been significant changes in the way in which enrolled nurses (EN) work. The biggest changes have been in the range of the tasks they perform and in the settings in which they work. Although the majority of ENs are providing direct consumer care working alongside registered nurses and midwives, there have been an increase in the number and complexity of the tasks that some ENs perform. In addition, in some contexts they are supervising other workers providing direct consumer care and instructing students.

AHPRA on behalf of the NMBA contracted Monash University to undertake a review of the current NMBA standards for practice for enrolled nurses for relevance and currency against the contemporary role and scope of practice for enrolled nurses. A review of the literature, data analysis and subsequent development of draft standards of practice for enrolled nurses was completed.

As the Australian nursing workforce shares greatest similarities with the United Kingdom and New Zealand, international literature search was limited to these countries. The review examined the EN role

and scope of practice within Australia and similar countries with EN workforce and in doing so, explored the issues surrounding enrolled nursing within Australian and the EN in the nursing workforce.

In Australia, the regulatory framework and the EN competency standards require ENs to practise under the direction and supervision of RNs, either directly or indirectly. The introduction of the *National Framework for the Development of Decision Making Tools for Nursing and Midwifery Practice* (DMF) (ANMAC 2007) adopted by the NMBA in 2010 is intended to provide guidance for registered and enrolled nurses and midwives on delegation and supervision.

Mixed method research was undertaken incorporating the literature review and stakeholder contribution, (surveys, interviews, forums, focus groups, observations and interviews with key personnel), such as:

- Governmental entities: Ministerial Council (MNCO), Agency Management Committee (AManC), Health Workforce Australia (HWA), Australian Health Workforce Principles Committee (AHWPC), Standing Council on Health (SCoH)
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC)
- Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers (CNMO)
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) Federal Branch
- Australian College of Nursing (ACN)
- Australian College of Midwives (ACM)
- Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM)
- Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (CDNM)
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF)-States and Territories
- Nursing Council of New Zealand
- Midwifery Council of New Zealand
- Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO)
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN)
- Education Providers (Higher Education, Vocational Education)
- Council of Remote Areas Nurses of Australia (CRANaplus)

Communication was also sent through the 'Nurse Click' online magazine, as well as profession specific publications (For example: CoNNO, ANJ, NENA).

Participants included:

- nine hundred and forty-seven (947) ENs participated in the survey, of which there were 892 valid responses,
- one thousand three hundred and fifty-six (1356) RNs participated in the survey, of which 1198 responses were valid,
- fourteen focus groups and four interviews were held across Australia involving 95 ENs,
- eight CNMOs were interviewed,
- one hundred and thirty nine (139) participants attended the forums across seven states, including some via teleconference; the team also received a number of written submissions from stakeholders unable to be present at a stakeholder forum,
- seventy-five ENs have been observed across Australia. They were observed in various settings such as acute care, aged care, primary care, mental health, paediatrics, emergency departments, renal dialysis, operating rooms and Aboriginal health services. They were observed in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations.

A gap analysis was undertaken of the 2002 national competency standards for Enrolled nurse (ANMC 2002) and 2013 contemporary practice and context for enrolled nursing to develop the revised standards. The re-drafted standards were mapped against the Australian Quality Framework (AQF) and curriculum for the Diploma of Nursing to determine compatibility.

The third draft of the Enrolled nurse standards for practice have been written as a minimum expectation of practice and to inform the education standards for ENs; they will assist regulators in determining fitness for practice as well as guiding employers and others as to what is reasonable to expect from an EN.

The draft enrolled standards have been through a preliminary consultation process and have been revised on the basis of the feedback received. The NMBA has considered the data collected in the research phase of this project and has considered its role in ensuring that regulation is effective, and has

determined that there is a need for the registered nurse to provide oversight, support and guidance to the enrolled nurse. The draft standards have been revised to reflect this position.

The third draft of the Enrolled nurse standards for practice are clinically focused, and reflect the ENs capability to provide direct and indirect care; engage in reflective and analytical practice; and demonstrate professional and collaborative practice. The three domains, namely; Provision of care; Reflective and analytical practice; and Professional and collaborative practice and supporting indicators are expressed through knowledge, skills and attitudes inherent within these clinically focussed domains.