



Standards for practice for nurses and midwives

Standards for practice should be broad and principle based to ensure they are sufficiently dynamic to use as a benchmark for assessment of competence for practice in a range of settings.

It is the policy of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation that:

1. The interests of nurses and midwives must be represented in all forums where standards for practice relevant to nursing and midwifery are being developed or reviewed.
2. National standards for practice developed for nurses and midwives must:
 - 2.1 reflect the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities required for the provision of safe, quality care;
 - 2.2 reflect the relationship, and allow for articulation, between the different levels of nursing and midwifery;
 - 2.3 form the basis for curriculum development;
 - 2.4 reflect the relationship between nursing and midwifery practice and the practice of other workers in the health sector; and
 - 2.5 reflect community needs in relation to health and aged care outcomes.
3. National standards for practice have been prepared by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia in consultation with the professions. These standards are used as the baseline for nursing and midwifery practice when assessing the competence of registered nurses, enrolled nurses, midwives, nurse practitioners and eligible midwives.*
4. National or jurisdictional standards for practice developed by professional organisations for nurses and midwives must be prepared in consultation with the nursing and midwifery professions. They are not mandatory but may be used by nurses and midwives as a framework to guide practice in a particular context or setting.
5. Practice standards for nurses and midwives must be validated and evaluated, and have processes for review.
6. Standards for practice should not be developed in a manner that creates barriers for recruitment and retention of the nursing and midwifery workforce.
7. When standards for practice are used as criteria for performance appraisal, the process must include fair, valid and reliable assessment, undertaken by competent assessors, with provision for avenues of appeal.

*adopted by federal executive June 1998
reviewed and re-endorsed May 2005
reviewed and re-endorsed November 2008
reviewed and re-endorsed November 2011
reviewed and re-endorsed May 2015*

*For further information on the suite of core National Standards for Practice refer to www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au