



## EXPOSURE-PRONE PROCEDURES

A new question has been added to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) annual registration renewal.

Do you perform exposure-prone procedures (EPPs)?

This is to ensure that nurses, midwives and students of nursing and midwifery comply with the NMBA *Guidelines: Registered health practitioners and students in relation to blood-borne viruses*, which took effect in July 2020.

An EPP is a procedure where:

1. there is a risk that a health practitioner may sustain an injury from a sharp (an instrument, needle, or fragment of bone or tooth) within a patient's body, and
2. the health practitioner's view of their fingertips or hands is obscured.

For almost all nurses, midwives, and students of nursing and midwifery, the answer to this question will be 'no'.

The use of a sharp (for example, collecting blood, administering injections/immunisations) does not qualify as an EPP.

Procedures where part or all of a health practitioner's hands are not visible but there is no sharp (for example, inserting a suppository, dressing a deep wound or performing a vaginal examination) are also not EPPs.

Midwives who work in birthing settings may perform EPPs, including repairing an episiotomy or tear, applying a foetal scalp electrode, or assisting with a caesarean.

Some nurses who work in emergency departments or operating rooms may also perform EPPs such as clearing the mouth of a trauma patient who has broken teeth, or assisting in an open surgical procedure.

If you do not currently perform EPPs, or do not know if you will be performing EPPs, you should answer 'no'.

Responding 'yes' if you are not sure may delay your registration or renewal. In the event that your practice changes, you do not need to notify the NMBA until your next renewal declaration.

If you do currently perform EPPs you must answer 'yes' and commit to complying with the guidelines. This means being tested for blood-borne viruses (HIV, hepatitis C, and if you have not been vaccinated, hepatitis B) every three years.

### For more information go to:

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (2021) Fact sheet: Exposure-prone procedures – registration and renewal declaration <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-and-Endorsement/Registration-Renewal/fact-sheet-exposure-prone-procedures.aspx>

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (2020) Guidelines: registered health practitioners and students in relation to blood-borne viruses <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD20%2f30047&dbid=AP&chksum=7mUJeeTw6OIUIA8SAx1eLA%3d%3d>

Department of Health (2018) Communicable Diseases Network Australia: Australian National Guidelines for the Management of Healthcare Workers Living with Blood Borne Viruses and Healthcare Workers who Perform Exposure Prone Procedures at Risk of Exposure to Blood Borne Viruses <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/cda-cdna-bloodborne.htm>

Department of Health (2017) Guidance on classification of exposure prone and non-exposure prone procedures in Australia [https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/36D4D796D31081EBCA257BF0001DE6B7/\\$File/8guide-exposure-non-procedure.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/36D4D796D31081EBCA257BF0001DE6B7/$File/8guide-exposure-non-procedure.pdf)