



Partnership prescribing by registered nurses and midwives position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) support for partnership prescribing by registered nurses and midwives who meet the registration standard for partnership prescribing being developed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).¹ It should be read with the ANMF position statement: *Quality use of medicines*.

2. Definitions

Prescribing involves an authorised prescriber gathering information, making clinical decisions, communicating and evaluating to initiate, continue, or cease a consumer's medicine.²

Independent prescribing refers to prescribing by a health practitioner within their scope of practice and without the approval or supervision of another health practitioner.

Partnership prescribing refers to prescribing by a health practitioner within their scope of practice in partnership with a designated authorised independent prescriber.

Structured prescribing refers to a prescribing by a prescriber under a guideline, protocol or standing order, with the prescriber limited in their authority to prescribe by legislation, the requirements of their national Board or the policies in their health service.

3. Context

The *Prescribing competencies framework* (the framework) developed by NPS MedicineWise promotes the quality use of medicines across all prescribing professions and describes the competencies that health practitioners in Australia must have to uphold the quality use of medicines principles and prescribe medicines judiciously, appropriately, safely, and effectively.^{3,4}

Registered nurses and midwives have been involved in structured prescribing for decades, and current Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Midwifery, and Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery programs continue to prepare students to do so.

Registered nurses and midwives commenced independent prescribing in 2000 with the recognition of nurse practitioners, and in 2010, midwives with scheduled medicines endorsement were permitted to prescribe independently.

With the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) developing a registration standard leading to endorsement as a partnership prescriber, the ANMF is advocating for registered nurses and midwives to be able to prescribe in partnership with an independent prescriber when they meet this standard.

¹ Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2018. Proposed registration standard: Endorsement for scheduled medicines for registered nurses prescribing in partnership – Public consultation. Available at <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx>

² For all definitions see: Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation. 2013. *Nursing guidelines: Management of medicines in aged care*. Melbourne. ANMF. Available at: https://www.anmf.org.au/media/akibu01s/management_of_medicines_guidelines_2013.pdf

³ NPS MedicineWise. 2012. *Competencies required to prescribe medicines: Putting quality use of medicines into practice*. Available at: https://www.nps.org.au/assets/682949fec05647bc-2c0de122631e-Prescribing_Competencies_Framework.pdf

⁴ Department of Health and Ageing. 2011. *National medicines policy*. Available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-medicines-policy?language=en>



4. Position

Scope of practice

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. All registered nurses and midwives must be able to operate to their full scope of practice – this includes partnership prescribing.
2. Australian governments must develop and implement a consistent and standard approach to prescribing for all health practitioners with prescribing rights.
3. This should include amending state and territory drugs and poisons legislation and regulations amended to support:
 - structured prescribing by registered nurses and midwives
 - partnership prescribing by registered nurses with at least two years' clinical experience when they meet the registration standard for partnership prescribing being developed by the NMBA leading to endorsement.

Educational preparation and recognition

It is the position of the ANMF that:

4. The NPS MedicineWise *Prescribing competencies framework* should be used to develop or revise prescribing curricula.
5. Registered nurses with at least two years' clinical experience should be eligible to enter an accredited and approved program (postgraduate certificate or equivalent level) leading to endorsement as a partnership registered nurse prescriber.
6. All such postgraduate programs must be accredited by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) and approved by the NMBA.
7. The successful completion of an approved program should enable registered nurse graduates to carry out partnership prescribing with a health practitioner authorised to prescribe independently, such as a nurse practitioner.
8. Registered nurses and midwives with an endorsement that permits them to prescribe should be paid an allowance in addition to any other payment or allowance.
9. Registered nurses with an endorsement for scheduled medicines (rural and isolated practice), commonly referred to as 'RIPERN', who have completed an ANMAC accredited and NMBA approved postgraduate program to enable them to supply medicines under protocol, should:
 - not be disadvantaged under any regulatory prescribing reforms
 - have their endorsement recognised for the life of their registration
 - be able to convert to endorsement as a partnership prescriber following completion of an ANMAC accredited and NMBA approved bridging program, at no cost or disadvantage.

5. Position statement management

Document type: Position statement	Review process: Federal Executive every three years
Title: Partnership prescribing by registered nurses and midwives	Last reviewed: November 2023
Endorsed: February 2018	Next review: November 2024