



## Nurse practitioners position statement

### 1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the qualifications, classifications and other specifications the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) considers should be in place to recognise and support the role of nurse practitioners. It should be read with the ANMF position statement: *Medicare*.

### 2. Definitions

A **nurse practitioner** is a registered nurse endorsed as a nurse practitioner by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (the National Law).<sup>1</sup> Nurse practitioners practice at an advanced level.

The title nurse practitioner is protected under the National Law, making it an offence for anyone to use the title unless authorised to do so under this legislation.<sup>2</sup>

**Medicare** is Australia's publicly funded universal healthcare insurance system. Medicare pays for the health services listed on the **Medicare Benefits Schedule** (MBS) and subsidises the cost of the medicines listed on the **Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme** (PBS).

### 3. Context

Nurse practitioners are an integral part of the Australian health system. They work in a variety of contexts across diverse practice settings to deliver high-level clinical nursing care.

Drawing on current evidence-based knowledge, they use comprehensive assessment techniques in screening, diagnosis and treatment and:

- order and interpret diagnostic tests
- prescribe therapeutic interventions including medicines
- refer people to healthcare professionals for conditions that would benefit from integrated and collaborative care.

Nurse practitioners also actively participate in research, education and leadership as it applies to clinical care.

By extending and supporting the role of nurse practitioners, including providing full access to the MBS, governments and employers will improve individual and community health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (National Law) as it applies in each state see: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/about-ahpra/what-we-do/legislation.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> See the orientating statements in the NMBA *Nurse practitioner standards for practice* for a comprehensive overview of the role of the nurse practitioner. Available at: <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/codes-guidelines-statements/professional-standards/nurse-practitioner-standards-of-practice.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> See the ANMF position statement *Medicare* for more information.



## 4. Position

### Endorsement

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. Endorsement to practise as a nurse practitioner is vested in the national nursing and midwifery regulatory authority, the NMBA.
2. To be eligible for endorsement, an applicant must meet the NMBA *Registration standard: Endorsement as a nurse practitioner*.<sup>4</sup>
3. To do so, nurse practitioners must hold a Master of Nurse Practitioner accredited by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) and approved by the NMBA.

### Career pathways

It is the position of the ANMF that:

4. The career pathway for nurse practitioners must be part of the nursing clinical career structure.
5. The classification nurse practitioner must be:
  - included in nursing awards and agreements at the highest level in the nursing clinical career structure
  - linked to specific remuneration that recognises their advanced level of practice and additional responsibilities.

### Practice support

6. The *Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Act 2010* which governs access to the MBS and the PBS must be amended so nurse practitioners can:<sup>5</sup>
  - access Medicare rebates for their services
  - offer their clients rates that are equivalent to those offered by other health practitioners providing the same services
  - ensure their clients receive PBS subsidies for the medicines they prescribe.<sup>6</sup>
7. Nurse practitioners must have professional indemnity insurance cover.<sup>7</sup>

## 5. Position statement management

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<sup>4</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016. *Registration standard: Endorsement as a nurse practitioner*. Available at <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/registration-standards/endorsement-as-a-nurse-practitioner.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> *Health Legislation Amendment (Midwives and Nurse Practitioners) Act 2010* Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2010A00029>.

<sup>6</sup> Nurse practitioners and midwives with scheduled medicines endorsement must prescribe in accordance with all relevant government policies and state and territory laws and regulations.

<sup>7</sup> Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016. *Registration standard: Professional indemnity insurance arrangements*. Available at <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/registration-standards/professional-indemnity-insurance-arrangements.aspx>.