

HEALTH PROFESSIONS LICENSING AUTHORITY	
TITLE: Authorisation to practice in a restricted practice area - Nurse Practitioner	
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 2008	REVIEW DATE: March 2010
BOARD: Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory	

Purpose of Policy

To inform staff of the Health Professions Licensing Authority, members of the public, intending applicants and Board members regarding the determination of applications for authorisation as a Nurse Practitioner received under Section 32 of the *Health Practitioners Act 2004* ("the Act").

Nurse Practitioner

The title "Nurse Practitioner" is a protected title and only a person who is authorised by the Board to practice as a nurse practitioner is legally entitled to call himself or herself a Nurse Practitioner.

A nurse is only authorised to practice as a Nurse Practitioner if he or she is in a designated Nurse Practitioner role.

Definitions

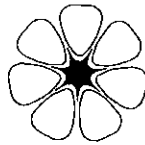
Nurse Practitioner

A Nurse Practitioner is a registered nurse educated to function autonomously and collaboratively in an advanced and extended clinical role. The Nurse Practitioner role includes assessment and management of clients using nursing knowledge and skills and may include, but is not limited to, the direct referral of patients to other health care professionals, prescribing medications and ordering diagnostic investigations. The Nurse Practitioner role is grounded in the nursing profession's values, knowledge, theories and practice and provides innovative and flexible health care delivery that complements other health care providers. The scope of practise of the Nurse Practitioner is determined by the context in which the Nurse Practitioner is authorised to practise.¹

Advanced Practice

The Royal College of Nursing Australia has defined advanced practice nursing as a level of nursing practice that utilises extended and expanded skills, experience and knowledge in assessment, planning, implementation, diagnosis and evaluation of the care required. Nurses practising at this level are educationally prepared at postgraduate level and may work in a specialist or generalist capacity. However, the basis of the advanced practice is the high degree of knowledge, skill and experience

¹ Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Nurse Practitioner*, (Appendix 2).



that is applied within the nurse-patient/client relationship to achieve optimal outcomes through critical analysis, problem solving and accurate decision-making.

Competent

The person is competent across all the domains of competencies applicable to the nurse, at a standard that is judged to be appropriate for the level of nurse being assessed.

Competence

The combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective performance in a profession/occupational area.

Capacity

The ability to function appropriately. A person's capacity will be impaired if they have an alcohol problem, a drug problem, a psychiatric problem and/or a physical problem.

Supporting documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Board's Registration/ Enrolment Policy and the Board's Entitlement to Registration/ Enrolment/ Authorisation Policy.

In addition, the practice of all applicants must be consistent with:

- (a) Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse*
- (b) ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Nurse Practitioner*
- (c) ANMC (2002) *Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia*
- (d) ANMC (2003) *Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia*

Who can apply for authorisation to practise in a restricted practice area?

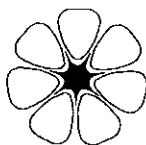
Section 32 of the Act states;

- (1) A registered health practitioner may apply for an authorisation to practise in a restricted practise area if the health practitioner:
 - (a) Has the qualification, training and experience determined by the relevant Board in respect of the area of practise; or
 - (b) Has qualifications, training and experience that the relevant Board considers to be at least substantially equivalent to those determined by it under paragraph (a).

Who is entitled to be authorised to practise in a restricted practice area?

Section 34 states that an applicant for an authorisation is entitled to be granted the authorisation if the relevant Board is satisfied that the applicant:

- (a) Is eligible to apply for the authorisation; and
- (b) Is competent and has the capacity to practise in the restricted practice area.



Authorisation Pathways

There are three pathways for registered nurses who seek to be authorised to practise as a Nurse Practitioner in the Northern Territory.

Pathway 1 is for registered nurses who are authorised, registered or endorsed to practice as Nurse Practitioners by another Australian or New Zealand Nursing and Midwifery Board.

Pathway 2 is for registered nurses who have completed a masters program accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory as leading to authorisation as a Nurse Practitioner.

Pathway 3 is for registered nurses who are working at an advanced practice level and wish to become authorised as a Nurse Practitioner but have not completed a clinically focussed masters program which has been accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory.

Authorisation Pathway 1

Applicants applying via Pathway 1 must:

1. Provide evidence of current registration as a Nurse Practitioner in another Australian state or territory or in New Zealand;
2. Lodge a Mutual Recognition & Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Form, pay the prescribed fee and provide all the required documentation as listed on the application form.

Authorisation Pathway 2

Applicants applying via Pathway 2 must:

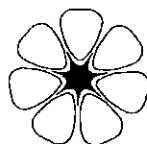
1. Provide evidence of current registration as a nurse in the Northern Territory;
2. Provide evidence of successful completion of a masters qualification that has been accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory as leading to authorisation as a Nurse Practitioner; and
3. Lodge an Application for Authorisation Form – Nurse Practitioner, pay the prescribed fee and provide all the required documentation as listed on the application form.

Authorisation Pathway 3

The Board has determined that this Pathway will be time limited. Applications via Pathway 3 will cease to be accepted after 31 March 2009.

Applicants applying via Pathway 3 must:

1. Provide evidence of current registration as a nurse in the Northern Territory;
2. Provide evidence to demonstrate a minimum of 3 years advanced practise within the preceding 5 years, in the relevant area of practise;
3. Lodge an Application for Authorisation Form – Nurse Practitioner, pay the prescribed fee and provide all the required documentation as listed on the application form;



4. Demonstrate advanced and extended clinical practice incorporating the knowledge, skill and attributes necessary to meet the ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Nurse Practitioner* through:
- a written submission addressing the ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Nurse Practitioner*;
 - an evidence based portfolio of supporting documentation (see Appendix 1) ;
 - an interview and oral assessment with the Board's Nurse Practitioner Assessment Committee .

Assessment of applications

Assessment of applications via Pathway 1 will be based on the applicant having current registration in the category of Nurse Practitioner in another jurisdiction..

Assessment of applications via Pathway 2 will be based on the applicant providing evidence of successfully completing all course requirements for a masters qualification that has been accredited by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory and providing evidence that they have been assessed against the ANMC competencies for Nurse Practitioners and found competent. .

Assessment of applications via Pathway 3 will be based on an evaluation of the practitioner's application for authorisation as a Nurse Practitioner conducted by a Nurse Practitioner Assessment Panel. Each Panel will comprise of;

- A member of the Board who will Chair the Panel;
- A nurse academic with current expertise in advanced and extended nursing practice;
- Two registered nurses (ideally they will be authorised as nurse practitioners) with experience in the area of practice; and
- Other co-opted members as identified by the Chair of the Committee (for example a medical practitioner, mental health specialists, radiographer, pharmacist, pathologist)

The Health Professions Licensing Authority will provide the Secretariat functions for the Committee.

Nurse Practitioner Assessment Committee

Pursuant to Section 15 of the Act ~~(the Act)~~ the Board may establish a committee to assist it to carry out its functions. The Board has determined to establish a Nurse Practitioner Assessment Committee that will assess all applications associated with Pathway 3.

Appendix 1:

Evidence Portfolio

Purpose

The purpose of the evidence portfolio is to enable you to provide evidence to the Nurse Practitioner Assessment Committee of your competence as a nurse practitioner.

Developing your professional portfolio

Your professional portfolio comprises, in this instance, a summary of your achievements compared and contrasted to the standards required the role of Nurse Practitioner in the specific field you are designating, and relevant supporting evidence. You are encouraged to seek feedback from your colleagues, academic advisors, or the Board during the preparation of your portfolio.

Your portfolio should be coherent, concise but comprehensive, well-organised and clearly labelled, and easy for the Assessment Committee to follow. Material should not be enclosed in plastic sleeves.

All documents in the evidence portfolio must be originals, or a photocopy, certified to be a true copy by a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, Police Officer, Solicitor. An original and five copies of the portfolio must be submitted to the Board. The original and one copy will be retained for Board records.

The process of portfolio development requires you to move through several steps.

1. *Identify your goal* – support your application and demonstrate competency to the registration board.
2. *Identify the standards you will use to gauge your practice or achievements* - The standards of practice for nurse practitioners in NT are the ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for Nurse Practitioners*.
3. *Collect and organise evidence to demonstrate your professional achievements* – This might include your academic transcripts, performance appraisals, thank you letters from patients, presentations you have given or papers you have presented.
4. *Critically evaluate your professional achievements, comparing them to the identified standards* This is likely to involve a qualitative analysis summarising your achievements in a particular area and comparing them to the expected standard. You should also explicitly identify the evidence in your portfolio that supports

Identify professional standards of practice

In addition to the ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for Nurse Practitioners*, your role as a nurse or midwife is regulated by a series of boundaries. All your professional activities, your 'scope of practice', must sit within the Health Practitioners Act 2004.

The Health Practitioners Act 2004 does not specify the educational preparation, scope of practice, employment requirements or other specific details in regards to professional practice as an RN. For this information you will need to access the ANMC publications *National Competency Standards for Nurse Practitioners*, *National Competency Standards for the Midwife*, *National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse*, *Code of Ethics for Nurses (2002)* and *Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses (2003)*.

These publications describe the national standards for nurse practitioners, nurses and midwives and are the benchmarks against which your practice will be judged when graduating from your nurse practitioner course, nursing or midwifery degree, applying for professional registration or appearing before a disciplinary hearing or a court of law.

Other useful documents include:-

- ANMC (2007) *A national framework for the development of decision-making tools for nursing and midwifery practice*
- ANMC (July 2007) *Bulletin 1 : The Development of ANMC National Guidelines on Boundaries of Professional Practice for Nurses and Midwives*
- Australian College of Critical Care Nurses (2002). *Competency Standards for Specialist Critical Care Nurses 2nd ed*
- Australian College of Operating Room Nurses (2004) *ACORN Standards for Perioperative Nurses including Nursing Roles, Guidelines, Position Statements and Competency Standards*
- *Other specialist competency standards relevant to your practice.*

Collect and organize your evidence of professional achievement

Types of evidence

Once you have identified your professional practice and or achievements the next step is to collect evidence that demonstrate your practice or achievements. To do this effectively you will need to consider the types of evidence that demonstrate your achievement in relation to the standards you selected.

Useful advice is that each piece of evidence you submit ought link to specific standards.

You should submit evidence from a wide range of appropriate sources. The Evidence Portfolio **may** include:

- Transcripts of educational qualifications;
- Statement on your scope of practice;
- Person and position description/Job description.
- Case studies or exemplars of practise;
- Clinical log book;
- Testimonials/letters of formal endorsement from health professionals/service providers;
- Performance review;
- Peer review;
- Quality assurance reviews;
- Service evaluation statistics and/or development plans;
- Continuing education undertaken;
- Education/training programs/learning packages developed;
- Professional development plans.
- Published articles/conference papers;
- Published research papers;

Matrix

Standards

Evidence 2

Critically evaluate your professional achievements

Your portfolio must include summary statements against each of the standards and a list or table referring to the supporting evidence.

You must systematically review each standard, analyse your achievements, evaluate the evidence you have collected to demonstrate your achievements and develop a statement to summarise those achievements. Your summary statements should be clear, concise and comprehensive. Each statement should be followed by a table or list of the relevant supporting evidence to enable the reader to easily find this evidence.

The summary statements should appear early in the portfolio, immediately following your CV and Scope of Practice, to orient your reader to the evidence you will be presenting in your portfolio.

The final component of a professional portfolio is generally a professional development plan. The purpose of this plan is to demonstrate your ability to reflect on your practice, analyse the evidence, identify gaps and determine appropriate steps to address those gaps. Professional growth is one of the hallmarks of thinking professionals, and this development plan will help you demonstrate your ability to direct such growth.

The professional development plan may go at the end of your portfolio, or at the end of the introductory section of your portfolio before the sections presenting your evidence.

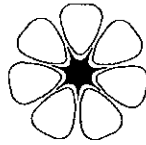
Submitting your portfolio

You must notify the Board in writing a minimum of three months prior to submitting an application via Pathway 3 to provide adequate time for the Board to convene an appropriate Nurse Practitioner Assessment Committee. Your notification needs to include your area of practice, contact details and planned date of submission.

All documents in the evidence portfolio must be originals, or a photocopy, certified to be a true copy by a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner for Oaths, Police Officer, Solicitor.

An original and five copies of the portfolio must be submitted to the Board. The original and one copy will be retained for Board records.

Material should not be enclosed in plastic sleeves.



The Committee may take up to 3 months to convene and consider an application from the date an application is lodged. The date of lodgement is the date that the application is complete.

In order to assess the application the Committee may request the applicant to attend the Committee meeting in person. Once an application has been assessed the Committee will advise the Board of its decision to grant or to refuse authorisation to practice as a Nurse Practitioner.

If the applicant is successful, the applicant will be issued with a practising certificate that shows they are registered as a nurse and authorised to practice as a Nurse Practitioner.

If the applicant is unsuccessful they will be provided with a Notice of Decision which provides the reasons as to why the Committee has refused to grant them with an authorisation.

An applicant who has been refused authorisation has a Right of Appeal in accordance with section 99 of the Act.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (2006) National Competency Standards for Nurse Practitioners

The Board has endorsed the ANMC (2006) *National Competency Standards for the Nurse Practitioner* as the accepted standards for practice (Appendix 2).

Curriculum vitae

Your Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a critical component of your professional portfolio. It usually comes at the beginning of the portfolio where it provides the outline for the portfolio and orients the reader to the highlights of your professional career. A CV should be:

- well laid out so it is easy to follow with headings appropriate for its purpose;
- current, clear and comprehensive with sufficient detail to outline key components of employment, publications etc.;
- complete in relation to professional achievements but without unnecessary personal details eg age, marital status, recreational interests, etc.

The information you might consider including in your CV includes:

- Contact details
- Formal education (initial nursing qualification, tertiary and post-basic certificates)
- Professional awards
- Nursing/midwifery employment including key responsibilities
- Informal education (inservices, continuing education)
- Educational contributions (teaching, workshops, learning packages etc)
- Research and clinical audits (funded and unfunded)
- Publications and presentations (professional journals, conferences, media)
- Relevant professional experience
- Membership/leadership in committees/working parties
- Professional memberships and contributions
- Referees (names, positions, contact details including email)

Organising your evidence: An evidence matrix

As has been suggested, it is important that you select your evidence in a manner that reflect the standards that govern your practice. Each piece of evidence should be linked to a specific standard and each standard should have at least one piece of evidence to demonstrate its attainment.

One way in which to organise your evidence is to develop a matrix. Start with the professional achievements you are trying to demonstrate. List the standards you need to demonstrate in the left hand column, and the various pieces of evidence that would be useful in demonstrating achievement across the top of your matrix. This is not the same as listing your achievements as you have done in your CV – it is **PROVING** those achievements. As an example, you may have listed your post-graduate certificate in the CV but in your portfolio you will need to include an university transcript and/or copy of the certificate. An **example** of an evidence matrix to support an application for authorisation as a Nurse Practitioner using the ANMC (2006) *National Standards for the Nurse Practitioner* follows.

Evidence Matrix – Nurse Practitioner National Competency Standards

	CV	Scope of practice	Prac Certificate	Transcript	Job Description	Letters	Performance Review	Peer review	Case study	Viva	Publications/Presentations	Service evaluation	* Clinical Plan	QA	Clinical log	Skills log	Learning pkg	Prof Development
Standard 1 – Dynamic Practice																		
1.1 Health Assessment																		
1.2 Range of procedures, treatments and interventions																		
1.3 Complex and unfamiliar environments																		
1.4 Application of knowledge to patient care and education																		
Standard 2 – Professional efficacy																		
2.1 Within a nursing model of practice																		
2.2 Therapeutic links with the patient/ client/community																		
2.3 Clinical service autonomous accountable practice																		
Standard 3 – Clinical Leadership																		
3.1 Engages in and leads clinical collaboration																		
3.2 Leads informed critique at the systems level																		

Example Only