

## Response by ANMAC to the consultation by the NMBA; Nurse practitioner standards for practice

### Introduction

This submission is made on behalf of the Australian and Nursing Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) in response to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) consultation on the revised Nurse practitioner standards for practice (2020).

ANMAC is the external accreditation entity appointed by the NMBA under the Health Practitioner National Law Act 2009, for the accreditation of all nursing and midwifery education programs in Australia. ANMAC is also responsible for the development of the Nurse practitioner accreditation standards. These accreditation standards detail the minimum requirements to be met by higher education providers who offer nurse practitioner programs leading to eligibility to apply for endorsement by NMBA as a nurse practitioner. These programs are also required to be approved by the NMBA as an approved program of study for registered nurses applying for the endorsement as a Nurse Practitioner.

It is critical that the Nurse practitioner accreditation standards align with the Nurse practitioner standards for practice to ensure that students receive appropriate education in advanced practice issues, including the use of diagnostic investigations and the prescribing of pharmacological interventions.

The ANMAC Nurse practitioner accreditation standards (2015) will be scheduled for a review following the finalisation of the Nurse practitioner standards for practice (2020). This will include the required consultation with relevant stakeholders and professional representatives. As part of the review, ANMAC will refine the framework of the current Nurse practitioner accreditation standards from nine domains to five domains in keeping with other recently published ANMAC accreditation standards.

The revised NMBA Nurse practitioner standards for practice only include minimal changes within the four standards. These do not affect the existing structure or integrity of the document. However, ANMAC provides the following comments on these changes with some additional matters for consideration by the NMBA.

### 1. Do you agree that the content and structure of the proposed revised standards improved from the previous iteration?

Overall, the changes and revision of the four practice standards provides further clarity and supports a fuller understanding of the regulatory requirements to practice as a nurse practitioner.

The use of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) at the commencement of each statement and in replacing the *cues* better promotes and defines the practitioner's title. The use of *autonomous* and *independence* within the paper and the glossary also provides a means to improve the understanding and knowledge of the advanced role of the nurse practitioner.

The inclusion of culturally safe and respectful practice is also important and fundamental in the performance and practice by the nurse practitioner. This includes the identification of any form of discrimination which may express itself within the work environment. The development of relationships through collaboration, mutual trust, respect, and cultural safety is also fundamental within the role and function of the nurse practitioner.

The revised standards of practice also include significant changes to the orientating statements that introduce the standards. The emphasis is now placed on the advanced and independent practice of the nurse practitioner. This is achieved through the recognition of the practitioner's role as leader, manager of complete episodes of care, the independent use and interpretation of diagnostic and screening investigations and prescribing of medicines.

**2. Do you agree with the way that 'Support of systems' has been included in the document? If no, how could it be improved?**

The renaming of the fourth standard from 'Evaluates outcomes and improves practice' to '*Support of systems*' does change the language from the passive to active form. It also incorporates the use of reflective practice and developing plans which also affirms the advanced and autonomous role of the nurse practitioner.

The choice of the word 'supporting' may also be deepened to include the use of 'strengthening'. (i.e. 'Support and strengthening of systems'). This would affirm the active role of the nurse practitioner as a leader and advocate in healthcare who works within a full scope of practice. The definition of 'Support of systems' within the glossary also affirms this role of leadership, mentor and advocate.

**3. Do you agree with the changes made to the Nurse practitioners standard framework (Figure 1, on page 2 of the Standards for practice document)? If no, how could it be improved?**

The improved presentation of the nurse practitioner's standard framework provides a clearer and more comprehensive image of the four domains which underpin the four standards. Having descriptors against the domains of education, research and leadership is also informative and brings more clarity to these fields. Importantly, the emphasis on 'Independence' which surrounds the whole framework attests to the autonomous role of the practitioner. The importance and emphasis on this independent role is maintained throughout the paper.

The second standard which is titled '*Plans care and engages others*' could be improved and be strengthened to also include the independent and autonomous role of the practitioner. As an explanation, the nurse practitioner's advanced practice extends further than planning care as it also encompasses the role of leadership and management within a health care team who are collaboratively providing services to the client.



**4. Are there any other terms that are used in the document that you feel should be included in the glossary to provide greater clarity?**

- **Self-monitoring** – to describe the role of the nurse practitioner in the monitoring of their own work (referred to in the Orientating statements on page 1).
- **Leadership** – to describe the role of the nurse practitioner as an independent but collaborative member of the health team. Leadership also encompasses the role of mentoring, and clinical supervision. (referred to in the Orientating statements on page 1).
- **Systems literacy** – the nurse practitioner working autonomously across multiple health systems.

**5. Do you have any other comments on the proposed revised standards?**

**Nil**