

## NURSE PRACTITIONER INFORMATION SHEET

### 2 How do I become a Nurse Practitioner?

The Nurse's Board of Victoria has established a series of information sheets to inform clinicians and consumers about the endorsement of nurse practitioners in the State of Victoria. The information is current as of September 2008. All ongoing queries can be made by emailing [accreditation@nbv.org.au](mailto:accreditation@nbv.org.au).

#### How do I become a nurse practitioner?

Nurse practitioner endorsement is an endorsement on the nurse's registration. The process for the individual to gain this endorsement is outlined in the Board's document - Nurse Practitioner endorsement process.<sup>1</sup> There are three main components to endorsement - the education, a time for consolidation of your competence (as a nurse practitioner candidate) and the application process.

#### Do I need to do any further study to become a nurse practitioner?

Yes. The minimal education requirement for endorsement is a Masters qualification. You must complete an approved Masters of Nurse Practitioner course prior to applying for endorsement.

Part of this course includes a therapeutic medication module(s) and a clinical internship.<sup>2</sup> You will need to supply the University with evidence from your employer that they support you to complete the clinical components of the course.

#### But I have already completed a Masters?

If the Masters program is directly linked to your area of advanced clinical practice, then you need to make an application to the Board for equivalence of qualifications.<sup>3</sup> You will also need to complete an approved therapeutic medication module prior to applying for endorsement.

#### The Board didn't deem my Masters equivalent, what can I do?

You will need to complete a Masters of Nurse Practitioner before applying for endorsement as nurse practitioner. You should discuss any previous study with the University to gain credit for this prior learning.

#### What is a nurse practitioner candidate?

A nurse practitioner candidate is a registered nurse engaged to undertake a course of study and undertake clinical experience leading to endorsement as a Nurse Practitioner.<sup>4</sup> This is the time when a nurse consolidates his or her competence at the level of a nurse practitioner prior to applying for endorsement. It is a time for learning a new role and involves engagement with mentors and learning opportunities both within and outside the candidate's organisation.

#### How do I become a candidate?

An organisation will usually advertise positions internally or externally. Candidates may be appointed when a model of care is being developed or when a new candidate needs to be recruited to an established model of care.

#### I have completed my Masters of Nurse Practitioner but my employer won't appoint me as a candidate?

Employers appoint nurse practitioner candidates when they are developing a model of care or when recruiting to an established model. These models of care help meet a particular service need.

It is important that you have a conversation with your managers early in the process to communicate your interest in working towards endorsement as a nurse practitioner so they understand your intent and you understand the needs of the organisation.

#### What is a model of care?

A model of care identifies and works to meet a particular service need.

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#### What is a model of care? (cont.)

It provides a framework for the role of the NP. It defines the type of patients seen by the NP, the scope of practice of the NP does and how the patient is 'discharged' from the NP.

The model will determine what clinical governance structures including policies and guidelines the organisation needs to have in place to support the role. The model supports your practice at the level of the ANMC competency standards for NPs.

#### Is it my responsibility to develop the model?

No. The development of the model occurs when an organisation identifies a service need. You may work in an organisation where the NP role is established in which case there will be little to do in regards development. If the role is not established in your organisation then there will be a considerable amount of work to be done to get the role established. You will be involved in this but it not your responsibility.

Information for organisations implementing nurse practitioner roles can be obtained from the Department of Health's Nurse Policy Branch.<sup>5</sup>

#### What am I responsible for?

You are responsible for ensuring that you are developing your clinical, professional and leadership skills to evidence your practice at the level of ANMC nurse practitioner competency standards.

#### How long will it take to get endorsed?

It usually takes 3-5 years to get the role established within an organisation and 18 months to 3 years for the individual nurse to complete all the requirements of the endorsement process.

#### When do I apply for endorsement?

You apply for endorsement when you have completed the education requirements, the role is established, and you are confident and competent to practice at the level of competence outlined in the ANMC standards.

#### I am an authorised nurse practitioner in another Australian state or territory or New Zealand. Can I get mutual recognition?

If you have a completed Masters program and a current authorisation as a NP then you can apply for mutual recognition. An application form for this can be found on the Board's website.<sup>6</sup>

#### I have worked as an independent nurse prescriber overseas. Will I get recognition of these qualifications?

The Board assesses each of these situations individually so you are advised to contact the Board via email on [accreditation@nbv.org.au](mailto:accreditation@nbv.org.au) for further assistance.

#### Where can I get further information?

Further information can be gained by attending a NP information workshop at the Board. The dates for upcoming workshops can be found at [www.nbv.org.au](http://www.nbv.org.au). Information for organisations implementing nurse practitioner roles can be obtained from the Department of Health's Nurse Policy Branch.<sup>7</sup>

1 <http://www.nbv.org.au>

2 The term Masters of Nurse Practitioner is used to refer to a masters program approved by the Board to lead to endorsement as a nurse practitioner. An approved list of courses can be found at <http://www.nbv.org.au/web/guest/np-become>

3 <http://www.nbv.org.au>

4 Nurses (Victorian Health Services) Award 2000, <http://www.fwa.gov.au>

5 <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing>

6 <http://www.nbv.org.au>

7 <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing>