

Definitions:

All definitions are from the AHPRA – Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia website (factsheets), unless cited otherwise.

1. Enrolled Nurse

Enrolled nurse is a person who provides nursing care under the direct or indirect supervision of an RN. They have completed the prescribed education preparation, and demonstrate competence to practise under the National Law as an enrolled nurse in Australia. Enrolled nurses are accountable for their own practice and remain responsible to an RN for the delegated care.

2. Enrolled Nurse (Medication Endorsed)

Enrolled nurses (ENs) are able to administer medicines if they have completed medication administration education at some stage in their career. An EN is able to administer medicines unless they have a notation on their registration which advises that they have not completed medication education.

ENs **with** a notation cannot administer medicines, including intravenous medicines.

ENs **without** a notation can only administer intravenous (IV) medicines if they have completed intravenous medication administration education.

An EN who does not have a notation on their registration and, has **not** completed education in IV medication administration, can expand their scope of practice to include intravenous medication administration by undertaking further relevant education.

3. Registered Nurse

Registered nurse is a person who has completed the prescribed education preparation, demonstrates competence to practise and is registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as a RN in Australia.

General registration as a registered nurse (RN) requires you to meet the NMBA's mandatory registration standards. RNs are required to practise within the relevant NMBA approved standards, codes, guidelines and frameworks.

4. Advanced Practice Nurse

Advanced practice nurse is a nurse practising in the advanced practice role.

Advanced practice nursing as a nurse practitioner is a qualitatively different level of advanced nursing practice to that of the registered nurse due to the additional legislative functions and the regulatory requirements. The requirements include a prescribed educational level, a specified advanced nursing practice experience, and continuing professional development.

Advanced practice nursing should not be confused with the term 'practice nurse' that is used commonly to describe nurses working in the general practice setting.

Advanced Nursing Practice

Advanced nursing practice is defined as a continuum along which nurses develop their professional knowledge, clinical reasoning and judgement, skills and behaviours to higher levels of capability (that is recognisable).

Nurses practising at an advanced level incorporate professional leadership, education and research into their clinically based practice. Their practice is effective and safe. They work within a generalist or specialist context and they are responsible and accountable in managing people who have complex health care requirements.

Advanced nursing practice is a level of practice and not a role. It is acknowledged that advanced nursing practice is individually attributed within a regulated nursing scope (enrolled nurse, registered nurse or nurse practitioner). Advanced nursing practice for the purpose of the 5,000 hours required is not related to a job title or remuneration.

Advanced program of study (nursing)

Approved program of study means a postgraduate nursing masters degree approved by the NMBA under section 49 of the National Law and included in the NMBA-approved list of programs of study for endorsement as a nurse practitioner. This includes NMBA-approved masters level units in advanced health assessment, pharmacology for prescribing, therapeutics and diagnostics and research.

5. Clinical nurse consultant

It appears that a clinical nurse consultant and advanced practice nurse are interchangeable in Australia and that the clinical nurse consultant role is specific to NSW. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia does not refer to 'clinical nurse consultant'.

A 2014 journal article 'Clarifying Clinical Nurse Consultant work in Australia: A phenomenological study' states that:

- "Clinical nurse consultants (CNCs) are a type of an advanced practice nurse in the Registered Nurse scope in the state of New South Wales (NSW) Australia. The CNC position was introduced into the NSW state aware structure in 1986, and was modelled on the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) role in the UK and USA. The role was created to provide a career pathway for experienced nurses who wished to maintain a clinical role, rather than moving into administration or education. Similar roles exist in other states and territories, but have different position titles. At the most general level, a NSW CNC is a Registered Nurse who possesses at least five years full-time equivalent post registration experience, and who, in addition, has attained approved post-registration nursing/midwifery/qualifications relevant to the speciality field which he or she is appointed¹.

6. Nurse practitioner

Highest nursing qualification you can have in Australia.

Nursing and Midwifery Board Australia

Nurse practitioner is an advanced practice nurse endorsed by the NMBA who has direct clinical contact and practises within their scope under the legislatively protected title 'nurse practitioner' under the National Law.

An endorsement as a nurse practitioner identifies registered nurses who have completed an NMBA-**approved** program of study or program that is substantially equivalent leading to endorsement as a nurse practitioner and the equivalent of three years' (5,000 hours) full-time experience in the advanced clinical nursing practice level, within the past six years.

Commonwealth Department of Health

A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse educated and authorised to function autonomously and collaboratively in an advanced and extended clinical role.

To be eligible for this endorsement, you must be able to demonstrate all the following:

- general registration as a registered nurse with no restrictions on practice;
- advanced nursing practice in a clinical leadership role in the area of practice in which you intend to practise as a nurse practitioner, within the past five years, complemented by research, education and management;
- competence in the competency standards for nurse practitioners approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia; and

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1322769614000845> pp. 405-406.

- completion of the requisite qualification determined by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia².

Nursing Courses Australia

A nurse practitioner (NP) is an experienced registered nurse (RN) who provides an advanced level of healthcare in a clinical role. All NP's must hold a Master's degree and be endorsed by the Nurse and Midwives Board of Australia (NMBA). Nurse practitioners are a valued and integral part of the healthcare workforce in Australia.

The role was originally designed in response to the increasing demand for healthcare, especially in rural and remote locations where there may be a lack of available health professionals. A nurse practitioner possesses extensive clinical knowledge and offers nurses the opportunity to grow their career beyond a RN.

As a nurse practitioner, you will be able to treat medical conditions without the direct supervision of a doctor. NP's are clinical and professional leaders that are usually placed where their advanced training and expertise will be of most value. Nurse practitioners can be expected to work autonomously as well as in collaboration with other healthcare professionals. Further, you can work in additional professional settings that are not available to regular nurses.

The responsibilities can vary from day-to-day, and you can take on different roles in a wide selection of healthcare settings. In particular, a NP will:

- Refer patients directly to other healthcare practitioners
- Diagnose a patient's health problem
- Order as well as interpret diagnostic tests
- Prescribe medication
- Collaborate with your patients, their families, and other health professionals to establish and implement treatment modalities.
- Give continuous health care to your patient.

These are just some of the tasks you'll be able to do as a nurse practitioner, depending on your authority to practice³.

² <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/work-nurse-prac>

³ <http://nursingcourses.net.au/nurse-practitioner/>