

FAQs enrolled nurse scope of practice

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When will changes to the scope come into effect?

The changes to the scope came into effect on **20 January 2025**.

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Who made the changes?

- The Nursing Council has introduced changes to enrolled and registered nurse scopes of practice and to standards of competence which will underpin and guide the way in which nurses practise.
- The new enrolled nurse scope has been developed from a comprehensive literature review, information from international jurisdictions and with expertise from design and reference groups of nurses, educators and employers. There was also widespread consultation with the sector which informed this work.

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Why is the Council changing the scope?

- The Council's role is to protect the health and safety of the public. Reviewing scopes of practice ensures that nurses are equipped to provide safe and effective care.
- The Council, under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act), is required to determine scopes of practice and standards of competence. The scope was last reviewed in 2012. Health care is constantly changing, including new technologies and treatments, where much more is being asked of nurses who are working differently in a range of healthcare settings.

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What has changed?

- The scope recognises the Council's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kawa whakaruruhau and the importance of cultural safety.
- Direction and delegation of enrolled nurses by registered nurses has changed:
 - Enrolled nurses must work with access to, and seek when appropriate, guidance from a registered nurse or other registered health practitioner.
 - Registered nurses provide support and guidance to enrolled nurses.
 - Registered nurses are still responsible and accountable for directing and delegating to members of the healthcare team.
- Enrolled nurses are responsible and accountable for their practice, based on their education, assessed competence and experience.
- Good communication between enrolled nurses and registered nurses, teamwork and working effectively together are key for safe care.

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What does this mean in practice?

- Enrolled nurses will work with patients and their whānau to initiate and monitor care, providing ongoing assessment and care planning, all while documenting the outcomes, and seeking guidance as necessary.
- Enrolled nurses can work in a variety of clinical settings and will lead care with support and guidance from a registered nurse.
- If a patient's condition changes, enrolled nurses will need to recognise the change and are required to escalate findings as appropriate.
- Enrolled nurses can offer a wider range of nursing care as defined by their education, assessed competence and experience.



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- An enrolled nurse's practice, which is informed by their level of education, assessed competence and practice experience, may include a leadership or coordination role within the healthcare team.

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What is the purpose of this scope?

- The focus in the scope is not to set out what you can and cannot do but to better reflect, in a changing healthcare environment, the knowledge and skills required for enrolled nurses, as set out in the scope statement and standards of competence.

You can read about the scope [here](#).

- The Nursing Council does not give advice on whether individual tasks are within a nurse's scope of practice. It is every nurse's responsibility, supported by their employer, to determine whether what they are doing is within their scope of practice and that they have the skill, knowledge, clinical expertise and competence to undertake care delivery, guided by an organisation's policies and guidelines.
- Review your organisation's policies and guidelines to fully understand what you can undertake.

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Will the scope be the same for all enrolled nurses as some are allowed to administer IV antibiotics?

- The enrolled nurse scope of practice applies to all enrolled nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- It is the professional responsibility of all practising nurses to maintain their competence to practise. However, we recognise hospitals and healthcare settings vary in their policies and practices when it comes to what nursing care enrolled nurses can provide. Check your organisation's policies and guidelines.



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Do enrolled nurses need to do any more training for this scope of practice?

- We are not anticipating any retraining of current enrolled nurses, but there will be changes to the enrolled nurse education curriculum over 2025.
- The new enrolled nurse standards of competence will support design and delivery of enrolled nurse education programmes and guide curriculum content and learning outcomes. The new enrolled nurse standards of competence will provide more clarity around the knowledge, skills and attributes e.g. medication knowledge, to prepare enrolled nurses with the appropriate education and to help guide ongoing training and professional development.

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What is whakapapa-centred care?

- Whakapapa-centred care describes the multi-generational and long-term impacts and outcomes (both positive and negative) of nursing care and support.

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Is the Council looking to change the title of enrolled nurse?

- The Council is not proposing to change the title of enrolled nurse.
- During the consultation process, the Council sought feedback from the profession as to the appropriateness of the title. The Council has gathered this feedback and will share this. The Council has made it clear that any future decisions on the title of enrolled nurse will be made by the profession and the Council will not play any role in the decision making of any potential name change.

