



Scope of practice and standards of competence for enrolled nurses 2025

Information for nurses

February 2025

Why the changes?

The Nursing Council has introduced changes to the enrolled nurse scope of practice and is implementing new standards of competence.

The Council, under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act), is required to determine scopes of practice and standards of competence. The Council regularly reviews these documents to ensure enrolled nurses are equipped to meet the challenges of today's complex healthcare environment. The current competencies for enrolled nurses were last reviewed in 2012.



Major shifts – enrolled nurse scope

- Recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kawa whakaruruhau (cultural safety within the Māori context) and cultural safety as foundational to practice.
- Enables a greater breadth of practice across the life span and in all health settings.
- Recognises the accountability of the enrolled nurse to provide nursing care to their level of education, assessed competence and experience.
- Direction and delegation requirement by registered nurses of enrolled nurses has changed (see later in presentation).
- Introduces new concepts such as whakapapa-centred care.
- Scope has expanded the potential of enrolled nurse practice.



Te Tiriti o Waitangi in nursing practice

The Council recognises the importance of nursing practice that supports kawa whakaruruhau, culturally safe care that promotes equitable health outcomes. The standards of competence incorporate the articles and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.



Incorporating te reo Māori (the Māori language) and Māori concepts:

The Council recognises the importance of preserving te reo Māori and Māori culture in nursing practice and education. This commitment promotes cultural competency, inclusivity and respect for Māori culture and values within the nursing profession. Ensuring cultural understanding is essential for providing equitable health care for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The standards of competence include both Māori kupu (words) and English terms. These are not direct translations but are used together to add depth and meaning. The *pou* (pillar) is a significant symbol in Māori culture, representing identity, heritage and the connection to land and traditions. In this context, the *pou* tells the story of core nursing values and the integration of a Māori worldview into professional practice.



Common kupu in scope and standards of competence

Pou: a pillar or anchor that supports and guides the foundations of practice.

Whakapapa: understanding relationships and ancestry.

Manaakitanga: care, respect and hospitality.

Kawa whakaruruhau: cultural safety in Māori context.

Pūkengatanga: knowledge, wisdom, collaborative care.

Mana hautū: authority, respected influence, prestige leadership, cultural guidance.

Whanaungatanga: establishing relationships, trust and connection.



Enrolled Nurse – scope of practice

Enrolled nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand reflect knowledge, concepts, and worldviews of both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. Enrolled nurses uphold and enact ngā mātāpono – principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, based on the kawa whakaruruhau framework and cultural safety, promoting equity, inclusion, diversity, and rights of Māori as tangata whenua. These concepts also relate to Pacific peoples and all population groups to support quality services that are culturally safe and responsive.

Enrolled nurses are accountable and responsible for their nursing practice, ensuring that all health care provided is consistent with their education, assessed competence, relevant legislative requirements, supported by relevant practice standards and guided by the Nursing Council of New Zealand's standards for enrolled nurses.

The enrolled nurse works in partnership and collaboration with individuals, their whānau, communities, and the interprofessional healthcare team, to deliver equitable person/ whānau/ whakapapa-centred nursing care, including advocacy and health promotion, across

the life span in all settings. An enrolled nurse's practice is informed by their educational preparation and practice experience and may include a leadership or coordination role within the healthcare team.

Enrolled nurses partner with people receiving health and/or disability support services to initiate and monitor care through nursing assessments, care planning, implementation, and evaluation of care. Enrolled nurses must work with access to, and seek when appropriate, guidance from a registered nurse or other registered health practitioner.*

*A health practitioner is a person who is registered under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 – for example a nurse practitioner, midwife or medical practitioner.

For the avoidance of doubt in other legislation where nurse is defined, this scope of practice includes general nursing and nursing functions.



Direction and delegation has changed

- Enrolled nurses **practise according to their education, assessed competence and experience** within the EN scope.
- Enrolled nurses must work with access to and **seek support and guidance from registered nurses when appropriate**. Registered nurses will provide support and guidance to enrolled nurses as required.
- Enrolled nurses can provide **direction and coordination, as appropriate**, to other health workers.
- Good communication between enrolled nurses and registered nurses, teamwork and working effectively together are key for safe care.



Standards of competence– 5 pou

Pou one: Māori health

Pou two: Cultural safety

Pou three: Whanaungatanga, partnership and communication

Pou four: Pūkengatanga and knowledge-informed practice

Pou five: Mana hautū, professional accountability and responsibility

Each pou has descriptors which identify the requirements for the pou.



Pou one and two in everyday practice

Pou one: Māori health

Reflecting a commitment to Māori health, enrolled nurses must support, respect and protect Māori rights while advocating for equitable and positive health outcomes. Nurses are also required to demonstrate kawa whakaruruhau by addressing power imbalances and working collaboratively with Māori.

Pou two: Cultural safety

Cultural safety in nursing practice ensures enrolled nurses provide culturally safe care that is inclusive, responsive and equitable. This requires nurses to reflect on their practice and understand their cultural identity and the power imbalances between the nurse and the recipient of care.



Pou three, four and five

Pou three: Whanaungatanga, partnership and communication

A commitment to whanaungatanga, partnership and communication requires enrolled nurses to work in partnership, using a range of communication techniques, to work effectively with individuals, whānau, communities and the interprofessional healthcare team.

Pou four: Pūkengatanga and knowledge-informed practice

Pūkengatanga and knowledge-informed practice requires enrolled nurses to use clinical knowledge and expertise to undertake a nursing assessment, inform clinical decision-making and provide safe care to individuals, whānau and communities. Enrolled nurses integrate clinical and cultural expertise and acknowledge people's unique and diverse values and circumstances.

Pou five: Mana hautū, professional accountability and responsibility

Mana hautū, professional accountability and responsibility in nursing practice, requires enrolled nurses to provide care within professional, ethical and legal boundaries to ensure safe quality nursing practice that upholds people's rights, confidentiality and dignity.



Enrolled nurses: non-direct clinical roles

- The standards of competence are designed at a level that enables every enrolled nurse to apply them in the practice context where they work.
- Practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care.
- Nursing practice extends to a role where the nurse uses their nursing skills and knowledge. Practice includes working in non-clinical roles such as in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory and policy development roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services.
- Enrolled nurses are responsible for their own practice and work in collaborative relationships with other healthcare professionals.



In general

Do I need to undertake any additional education to meet the new standards of competence?

- It may take some time to familiarise yourself with the new standards. Some aspects of the standards may require you to undertake additional education such as Māori health, cultural safety.
- You may need to familiarise yourself with kupu Māori used in the document. The Council has provided a glossary of terms to support your knowledge and will provide further guidance. We also encourage you to discuss your educational needs with your employer who will be able to offer support.

Will I be assessed differently to meet the new standards of competence?

- Yes, the new standards of competence will mean that you will be assessed against these updated standards. Your ability to demonstrate your practise against these new standards will be essential as part of PDRP and the Council's recertification audit.



When do the changes take effect?

- The full scope statement and standards of competence are available on the Nursing Council [website](#). This includes a glossary of terms.
- The continuing competence requirements are changing – please see the Council [website](#) for more information about the changes.
- **01 April 2025** for Nursing Council continuing competence requirements and APC declaration.
- **From February 2025 until 01 January 2026** the standards can be transitioned to practice for all other purposes including PDRP.

