

Nurses in General Practice

New Nurse's Award commenced 1st January 2010:

Title: Nurses Award 2010

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission has released the new occupational national Nurses Award 2010 to commence in January 2010 under its award modernisation scheme. From that date, all nurses except primary and secondary school nurses will be covered under a single national award.

The new award will see nurses in general practice and nurses working in the hospital system under the same award for the first time. Possible implications for practice nurses include provisions for leave as well as weekend and holiday loadings. The award also has implications for the development of a formal career path for practice nurses in its classification definitions and progress through 'pay points'.

The Nurses Award 2010 can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.airc.gov.au/awardmod/awards/nurses.pdf>

Alternatively copies of this Award can be obtained from Brisbane South Division

Stay informed about the transition to the Registration and Accreditation Scheme, due to commence on 1 July 2010.

What is the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme?

The Scheme will for the first time, create a single registration and accreditation system for ten health professions, including chiropractors; dentists (including dental hygienists, dental prosthetists and dental therapists); medical practitioners; **nurses and midwives**; optometrists; osteopaths; pharmacists; physiotherapists; podiatrists; and psychologists. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, Chinese medicine practitioners, medical radiation practitioners, and occupational therapists will also be included in the Scheme from 1 July 2012.

The Scheme will enable health professionals to practice in any jurisdiction and help to promote greater flexibility and efficiency of the health workforce. The Scheme aims to improve management of practitioners and will also aid in the detection of those engaged in misconduct, unacceptable practice or impairment issues.

So what will be the benefits for Nurses?

The new national registration scheme will have quite a few positives for Nurses. On the practical side, the scheme will allow for you to renew your registration online, there will be a single national fee for your annual registration (no more doubling up on registration fees if you work across state borders) and you will be able to practice anywhere in Australia with this license.

It is proposed that there will be 4 types of registration available to each profession Board: general, specific (for endorsements or conditions on practice), non-practicing, and student. All health professionals with general registration will need to maintain annual registration, provide evidence of their ongoing professional development and competence annually, provide evidence that they have professional indemnity, and be accountable to their Board for their professional practice.

How will the Scheme affect you?

Details around the specific requirements for nurses and midwives under the Scheme are yet to be determined. RCNA will provide any new information and updates on these requirements as they become available.

Compulsory CPD - All health professionals, including nurses and midwives, will be required to participate in an approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program from their national board in order to renew registration. The professions of nursing and midwifery, while represented by one national board, will be regarded as separate under the Scheme.

Professional Indemnity requirement-

There are currently laws in every state and territory requiring health professionals to have professional indemnity insurance. The national registration scheme will have this requirement to. The difference will be that meeting this requirement will be built into the re-registration process.

Other requirements - Mandatory reporting, student registration, criminal history and identity checks, strong community member representation on national boards, ombudsman arrangements and easier public access to make complaints, are some key aspects that will be provided for under the Scheme.

So what will happen in 2010?

The detailed arrangements for the transition to the new national register from 1 July 2010 are still being worked out. The National Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia is being formed next year to assist with setting up all of the arrangements that will be needed to ensure a smooth hand over from the state and territory Nursing and Midwifery Boards to the new national Board.

For more information:

http://www.rcna.org.au/policy/national_registration

<http://www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp>

