



Update – 03 March 2005

Recommendation 4: A nationally consistent scope of practice of the *National Review of Nursing Education 2002: Our Duty of Care* report, focuses on bringing a national perspective, and national consistency to dimensions of nurses' and midwives' practice, education and professional regulation through the development of a national framework for scopes of practice. To advance the work, there will need to be agreement by stakeholders on the purpose and nature of the framework before it can be put into practice.

N³ET is conducting staged program of work to implement

- ❑ **Scopes of Practice Commentary Paper**
- ❑ **Scopes of Practice Symposium**
- ❑ **A platform for working together on national work**
- ❑ **A map of the work to be undertaken**
- ❑ **Working groups for identified arms of work**

Scopes of Practice Commentary Paper

The **Commentary Paper** is the first step in this work. The purpose of the paper is to introduce stakeholders to some of the complexities and barriers to implementing a national framework and to promote vigorous dialogue and debate of the issues by stakeholders. Stakeholders will be discussing these issues further during the **Scope of Practice Symposium** scheduled for March 30.

The **Commentary Paper** addresses a number of questions such as:

- ❑ *What drives a scope of practice?*
- ❑ *What is a scope of practice?*
- ❑ *What might be the key elements of a definition and/or description of a nurse or midwife's scope of practice?*
- ❑ *How can we represent the relationship between nurses' and midwives' scopes of practice and that of other health occupations?*
- ❑ *Who (which organisation/body) is best positioned to determine the professional activities consistent with a scope of practice?*
- ❑ *Under which circumstances should a scope of practice be extended or expanded?*
- ❑ *What is the best way to enable and sustain scopes of practice so they can adapt to changing demand?*
- ❑ *To what extent should scopes of practice be regulated?*
- ❑ *How can this be done so that the public interest is protected while at the same time, flexibility and responsiveness is preserved?*
- ❑ *What might the key elements of a national framework look like?*
- ❑ *What needs to happen at the local, jurisdictional and national levels to implement an agreed, consistent approach to scopes of practice?*

It is hoped that through reading this **Commentary Paper**, nurses and midwives, and those with an interest in their practice, will be prompted to delve deeper into issues



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linked to scopes of practice, to examine assumptions, biases and perspectives, and to think differently about the way scopes of practice for nurses and midwives are currently constructed. The Taskforce hopes that in engaging with this type of inquiry, the stakeholders will be open to contemplating new possibilities and potentials for nurses and midwives to contribute to health care in the future.

How to use this paper

The **Scopes of Practice Commentary Paper** has been written to reach a wide audience, including nurses and midwives wherever they work and whatever work they are engaged in, employers, education and training providers, governments and policy makers, health workforce planners, regulators and other health workers. Representatives of these stakeholders have been invited to attend the **Scope of Practice Symposium**

The Taskforce encourages you to **read this paper** and to **discuss** it with your colleagues and members.

Some suggestions:

- ❑ Print the **Commentary Paper** and leave it in the tea-room with a comments sheet
- ❑ Nurse leaders could arrange forums to discuss some of the key issues, or raise particular issues in meetings in your workplace
- ❑ Notify your members of the **Commentary Paper** on www.nnnet.gov.au through your website, newsletter or meetings
- ❑ Make a link on your website to the N3ET website and direct your members to the **What's New** section (<http://www.nnnet.gov.au/whatsnew.htm>)
- ❑ Create a "E notice board" on your website for members to post their comments and reflections
- ❑ Nurse leaders could lead discussion of various issues at executive and multidisciplinary team meetings to canvas a range of perspectives
- ❑ Discuss the paper and its issues at professional and special interest group meetings and provide mechanisms for collecting feedback.
- ❑ Reflect on the issues with patients and carers.

Not all of the content may interest to you, but where you think your views should be considered in forming the way forward, then the Taskforce encourages you to communicate your views to the **stakeholder representative** for the **Scope of Practice Symposium** who best represents your interests.
