

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia's consultation regarding the future of community pharmacy

15 December 2017

The Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation regarding the future of community pharmacy. We are providing this submission on behalf of our membership, Australian primary health care nurses.

APNA Submission

How will the provision of medicines and medication management in 2025 differ from today?

Primary health care nursing refers to nursing that takes place within a range of primary health care settings, each sharing the characteristic that they are part of the first level of contact with the health system. In Australia, nurse practitioners, registered nurses (RN) and enrolled nurses (EN) practice in primary health care in a range of clinical and non-clinical roles, in urban, rural and remote settings.

In Australia, nurse practitioners have been able to autonomously prescribe since 2000. Prescribing by nurse practitioners "requires them to meet the requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia including the completion of approved post graduate education, compliance with standards for practice and relevant state and territory legislation and local policies".¹

"Registered nurses who meet the requirements of the NMBA *Registration standard: Endorsement for scheduled medicines for nurses (rural and isolated practice)* are able to supply medicines under protocol in accordance with state and territory poisons legislation".¹

Concerns have been raised amongst our Nurse Practitioner membership that some pharmacists are currently rejecting Nurse Practitioner prescriptions despite that prescribing being within their scope of practice. This highlights the need for a clear communication and education strategy around prescribing and dispensing requirements to all relevant stakeholders. Given the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and the Australian and New Zealand Council of Chief Nursing and

¹ The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and the Australian and New Zealand Council of Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers. Registered Nurse and midwife prescribing – Discussion paper. (2017). Available from: <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx>

Midwifery Officers are currently exploring potential models of prescribing by RNs and midwives, minimising any ambiguity in the provision of medicines is essential now and into the future.

How will community pharmacies integrate with the broader health system in 2025?

As detailed in the *Community Pharmacy 2025 – Introduction*, the scope of practice of community pharmacists in both the provision of dispensing and non-dispensing related services is broadening.

APNA supports models of care that enhance patient outcomes whilst maintaining quality of care for patient safety. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring privacy and confidentiality for consumers, reducing fragmentation and enabling continuity of care.

To achieve this, greater integration across the health care system will be essential. Primary health care settings such as general practice and community health already deliver preventative health services and lifestyle interventions. There is an opportunity for community pharmacy and other primary health care services to better coordinate patient care for improved health outcomes.

Primary health care nurses are skilled, regulated and trusted health professionals capable of delivering patient care such as screening, administering vaccinations, chronic disease education and lifestyle intervention strategies within their scope of practice. Nurses work in partnership with their local communities, recognising the strengths of families and populations to prevent illness and promote health across the lifespan. They foster a sense of self-determination and empowerment of clients through either centre-based care or the provision of post-acute care to people in their homes and primary health services.

There is an opportunity for the sector to better utilise and integrate primary health care nursing within community pharmacy to optimise patient outcomes. Optimal use of the nursing skill set as part of an interdisciplinary team enables other health professionals, such as pharmacists, to focus their time on other services and patient experiences.

About APNA

The Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA) is the peak professional body for nurses working in primary health care. APNA champions the role of primary health care nurses; to advance professional recognition, ensure workforce sustainability, nurture leadership in health, and optimise the role of nurses in patient-centred care.

APNA is bold, vibrant and future-focused. We reflect the views of our membership and the broader profession by bringing together nurses from across Australia to represent, advocate, promote and celebrate the achievements of nurses in primary health care.

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