

## Nurse Practitioner Roles within Southern DHB (District)

This document defines the scope of the nurse practitioner role and access to secondary services and diagnostics.

### Nurse Practitioner Scope

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Nurse practitioner (NP) is a legal title for a nurse working in an advanced clinical role who has completed higher education and training (minimum of clinical masters) in a specific area of clinical practice. To become an NP a nurse must meet Nursing Council of New Zealand requirements and gain formal NP registration.

The NP's role offers an alternative and cost effective contemporary model of health care delivery which allows for greater substitution between clinical roles thereby promoting efficiency and flexibility in the use of valuable resources.

NPs are advanced clinical nurses who work within a specific area of practice incorporating advanced knowledge and medical skills into their practice. They are regulated, autonomous health practitioners who assume full clinical responsibility for patients, working both independently and in collaboration with other health care professionals to promote health, prevent disease and to diagnose, assess and manage people's health needs.

They provide a wide range of assessment and treatment interventions, including diagnoses, ordering, and interpreting diagnostic and laboratory tests, prescribing medicines,(within their specialty area) administering treatments/therapies admitting and discharging from hospital and other health care settings. They work in partnership with individuals, families (whānau) and communities across a range of settings.

NPs are authorised prescribers under the [Medicines Amendment Act 2013](#).

### Nurse Practitioner Access to DHB Service

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NPs have the same rights and access to services as medical staff within DHB based services irrespective of their employing organisation. This includes being able to refer patients from

Primary Health Care into specialist services within the DHB.

**Right to Admit**

NPs have the right to refer for admission to inpatient services following discussion with relevant clinical personnel.

**Right to Access Diagnostic Services**

NPs have the right to order the full range of diagnostics they require within their scope of practice.

**Clinical Responsibility**

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**Shared Care with Consultants within the MDT**

NPs have clinical responsibility for their population /group / patients. They will triage and refer to medical colleagues based on complexity of presentation at which point clinical responsibility is determined.

At times a shared care arrangement between NP and consultant may be beneficial to the patient and appropriate. This will be determined between the two clinicians and the clinician with overall clinical responsibility will be designated 'intervention' on iPM.

**Shared Care with GPs**

NPs may also enter into shared care arrangements with general practitioners based on the physical health needs of the clients. Responsibility will be defined in the treatment plan.

**Clinical Advice**

NPs, irrespective of employing organisation, have the right to seek clinical advice from medical colleagues.

NPs will also provide an expert opinion within their scope when this is requested.

**Escalation Process**

- If issues arise in relation to access or other activities identified within this document it may be necessary to escalate this to the appropriate clinical leader and organisation in the first instance.
- Involve medical directors and chief medical officer if the issues are unable to be resolved at the clinical leader level.

**Associated Documents:**

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- None

**References:**

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Documents below available from Nursing Council website - [Nurse Practitioner](#)

- Guidelines for Nurse Practitioner June 2014
- Competencies for nurse practitioners December 2012
- Gazette, Notice of Replacement and Revocation of Notices of Nurse Practitioners 3141
- [Analysis of submissions NP scope of practice February 2013](#)

#### General Notes

**Scope of Practice:** Ensure you are fully qualified to perform the role specified in any document.

**Deviations:** If you need to deviate from any procedure, policy, or guideline, make notes and follow up.

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