



## Digital health and medicine position statement

### 1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the principles and standards the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) considers should apply to the design, management and implementation of digital health platforms as well as the pre-registration curricular requirements the ANMF considers essential to preparing students for the digital health workforce.

### 2. Definitions

**Digital health** is a broad term that can encompass a wide range of applications, from fitness trackers and apps that help people manage their health, to telemedicine and remote patient monitoring. **Digital medicine** is a more specific term that refers to the use of technology to diagnose, treat, and prevent disease.

### 3. Context

Digital technology is now an integral part of Australian healthcare, making technical competence now a fundamental element of nursing and midwifery practice.

Australia's *National digital health strategy* committed to building a workforce confidently using digital health technologies by 2022.<sup>1</sup> This included a network of clinician digital health leaders and champions across Australia.

As the largest professional cohort of registered health practitioners in Australia, nurses and midwives play a vital role in digital health. They are the largest users of digital health platforms and are perfectly placed to be the champions of change. It is therefore imperative that nurses and midwives are involved in planning, implementing and evaluating digital health information management systems and are educationally prepared to work in a digital health environment.

### 4. Position

#### Design and management

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. Digital health information systems must be designed to:
  - a. fit in with the workflow of nurses and midwives and be intuitive and user friendly
  - b. connect across the health and aged care sectors and provide a seamless interface between nursing, midwifery and other health and aged care information systems
  - c. collect purposeful data and nurse sensitive indicators that facilitate care delivery;<sup>2</sup> improve the co-ordination of services; advance nursing and midwifery knowledge; and develop nursing and midwifery practice.

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<sup>1</sup> The *National digital health strategy and Framework for action* is available at <https://www.digitalhealth.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-plans/national-digital-health-strategy-and-framework-for-action>.

<sup>2</sup> National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. Second edition. 2017. Available at <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National-Safety-and-Quality-Health-Service-Standards-second-edition.pdf>.



## Privacy

It is the position of the ANMF that:

2. Digital health information systems must be managed in accordance with national privacy legislation and standards.
3. This means each health and aged care facility provider must ensure:
  - a. the system meets the highest possible privacy and security standards
  - b. all security or data breaches are promptly investigated and appropriate action is taken to mitigate future risk
  - c. nurses and midwives receive regular cyber security so they are up to date with the privacy and security requirements
  - d. nurses and midwives have authorised individual access to digital health information systems
  - e. data is only collected and used to facilitate and advance care delivery and is never used or made available for commercial purpose such as private health or travel insurance.

## Implementation – workflow and workload

It is the position of the ANMF that:

4. Each health and aged care facility provider should:
  - a. involve nurses and midwives in planning, selecting, implementing, evolving and evaluating their digital health information management systems to ensure the data they collect:
    - is essential and purposeful
    - is easy to input and part of their normal workflow process
    - meets external documentation and reporting requirements so they don't need to capture or enter additional data anywhere else
  - b. appoint a Chief Nursing Information Officer (however titled) to provide leadership in digital health and represent the digital workload, workflow and learning needs of nurses and midwives and
  - c. ensure nurses and midwives, including those working remotely, have direct one to one access with a digital device provided by the workplace so they can work in an effective and efficient manner
  - d. provide staff with 24/7 access to digital health support services for real-time troubleshooting
  - e. have an effective business continuation system in place in the event the digital health information system fails and provide training for nurses and midwives so they can switch to a paper process if necessary.



## Change management

It is the position of the ANMF that:

5. Each health and aged care facility provider should:
  - a. appoint and resource nurse and midwife informaticians who have the expertise to manage the change process needed to introduce clinical digital health information systems for nursing and midwifery – these positions should be included in all enterprise agreements
  - b. provide effective orientation to nurses and midwives on the digital health information system including regular ongoing education and support in work time about how data should be entered, coded and analysed to promote data accuracy

## Pre-registration education

6. Digital health information management and technology, telehealth and simulated telehealth must be included in undergraduate nursing and midwifery curricula.
7. Education providers must ensure their nursing and midwifery students:
  - a. understand the fundamentals of managing digital health information systems and have at a minimum, access and exposure to these systems in the learning environment so they are competent to use them when on placement in a clinical setting
  - b. understand coding and the impact data and data collection has on care outcomes.

## 5. Position statement management

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