



Delegating personal care work position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the process and criteria the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) considers should be used to determine which level of worker will provide personal care.

2. Definitions

Personal care refers to activities of daily living that a person would normally do independently but because of illness, disability, or frailty, they now need help to do them. Personal care activities may be performed by registered or enrolled nurses; midwives, assistants in nursing; home help or home care workers; and family members.

3. Context

Personal care can be provided in a range of settings including acute, community, primary care and aged care. It aims to help people needing such care to live as independently as they can.

It is important that the person receiving care, or their support person, has a role in directing the personal care provided and is aware of the different types of workers providing the personal care.

4. Position

Registered nurses and midwives

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. Decisions about who will provide personal care must be made by a registered nurse or midwife.
2. Their decision must be consistent with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) *Decision-making framework* (DMF) and take into account:¹
 - the characteristics and health status of the person requiring personal care
 - the activities to be performed and the skills, knowledge and experience they require
 - the competence, education and authority for practice of the personal carer.
3. The registered nurse or midwife must be responsible for the nursing or midwifery assessment of the person at the first point of referral.
4. Protocols for referral, assessment and case allocation must be developed and agreed to by nursing or midwifery organisations and other relevant organisations and must reflect local service arrangements and health and aged care facility agreements.
5. After assessment, the assessing registered nurse or midwife can develop a care plan and make a professional decision about which level of worker will provide the personal care.

¹ Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2020. Decision-making framework for nursing and midwifery. Melbourne: NMBA. Available at: <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/codes-guidelines-statements/frameworks.aspx>.



Assessments

It is the position of the ANMF that:

6. When undertaking an assessment, the registered nurse or midwife must identify:
 - the health status of the person
 - the personal care deficit and the complexity of the personal care required
 - the most appropriate worker to provide that personal care.
7. The registered nurse or midwife must review the care plan in collaboration with the team member providing personal care and reassess and redelegate as the person's health status changes.
8. The decision about which level of worker will perform the personal care must be based on the following criteria:
 - A registered nurse or midwife must provide the personal care when the complexity of care requires the skill of a registered nurse or midwife or when an existing health issue could be exacerbated during personal care.
 - An enrolled nurse may provide the personal care when the care is within the scope of practice of the enrolled nurse, can be safely delegated to an enrolled nurse, and is accepted by the enrolled nurse. This care must be supervised (either directly or indirectly) by the registered nurse, who retains overall responsibility for the care provided.
 - An assistant in nursing may provide elements of personal care when the registered nurse considers it can be safely delegated to them without compromising the health status of the person receiving care. This care must be supervised (either directly or indirectly) by the registered nurse, who retains overall responsibility for the care provided.
 - Home care workers may provide personal care when all the following are true:
 - the health status of the person is stable
 - the person has been assessed as not requiring nursing or midwifery care
 - the person can take responsibility for monitoring their own ongoing health status
 - the worker does not require nursing or midwifery supervision.

In this case, the person remains responsible for their health status and the service employing the worker remains responsible for the personal care provided.

5. Position statement management

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