Guidelines: Determining When Return-To-Nursing Programme is Mandatory

The chart below provides information on when a nurse needs to attend the Return-to-Nursing (RTN) Programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not on SNB’s Register/Roll (“Off-Register”)</th>
<th>Still on Register/Roll (“On-Register”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Have practised nursing</em> overseas in the past 5 years?</em>*</td>
<td><em><em>Have practised nursing</em> in the past 5 years</em>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show evidence of nursing practice &amp; verification of registration with overseas nursing council/board</td>
<td>Change of practice roles / settings that requires different competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for Re-registration</td>
<td>Practise under supervision for a period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Return-to-Nursing (RTN) Programme (on temporary registration)</td>
<td>Not sure if current nursing competencies are sufficient to support new nursing role/ scope.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend Return-to-Nursing (RTN) Programme</td>
<td>Use decision-making questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete employer conducted induction programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Nursing practice\(^1\) may be defined as any role in which the nurses are in paid employment to provide nursing care or to use/apply their nursing knowledge and skills in the course of their work. It is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical nursing care and includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles or any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of nursing services and use of their professional nursing skills.

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\(^1\) Adapted from Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia’s definition of “practice” which is “any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a nurse or midwife …practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use of their professional skills”. Any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a nurse or midwife …practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use of their professional skills”. Any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a nurse or midwife …practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use of their professional skills”.

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Page 1 of 3
**Decision-Making Questions**

Where nurses’ or their employers are not clear as to whether nurses have the relevant competencies to perform the role/ scope of nursing practice expected in the new role/ setting, the following decision-making questions may be used to provide some guidance:

1) the individual’s nursing qualifications, past nursing practice experiences and nursing registration history;

2) the length of time away from nursing practice;

3) past participation in continuing professional nursing education (CPE) programmes while away from nursing practice and

4) the scope of work and competencies required for future nursing practice.

Any nurse assessed to have gaps in their nursing competencies may be required to complete an induction programme and practise under supervision for a period of time or to undergo a RTN programme.

**Induction programme**

An Induction programme is conducted by their employers and is tailored for individual nurses who:

a) Have extensive nursing experience prior to the lapse in nursing practice;
b) Have relevant experience in related fields and have kept up-to-date with post-registration or post-graduate nursing education;
c) Is able to demonstrate most of the required competence for nursing practice (with reference to Core Competencies for Registered/ Enrolled Nurses);
d) Continuous participation in CPE programmes;
e) Considerably shorter period of work experience that is spent not-working or not related to nursing; and
f) Able to demonstrate relevance of past experience to future nursing practice.

**RTN programme**

The RTN programme is required for individual nurses who clearly have not practised nursing at all in the past 5 years or individuals who:

a) Have no or minimal nursing experience prior to the lapse in nursing practice;
b) Have little experience in related fields and have not kept up-to-date with post-registration or post-graduate nursing education;
c) Is not able to demonstrate the required competence for nursing practice (with reference to Core Competencies for Registered/ Enrolled Nurses);
d) Have very minimal or have not participated in CPE programmes;
e) Long periods of work experience that is spent not-working or not related to nursing; and
f) Unable to demonstrate relevance of past experience to future nursing practice.
Due to the variety of scope of practice in various settings, SNB will not approve/ accredit individual induction programmes. Employers will assess the individual nurses’ competencies for practise in their own settings using SNB’s Core Competencies and Scope of Practice.

Where nurses and employers are in doubt or unsure, SNB can offer the appropriate guidance. SNB will mandate the RTN programme for individual nurses where required.

As at 30 August 2016