



## SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD

### GUIDELINES FOR AGENCY NURSES/ MIDWIVES AND AGENCIES ENGAGING THEM

#### 1. Introduction and Definition

- 1.1 “Agency Nurses/ Midwives” are nurses/ midwives engaged<sup>1</sup> by independently operated private nursing agencies to provide nursing/ midwifery care to patients in their own homes. These agency nurses/ midwives can also be deployed to provide care to clients in healthcare institutions to supplement nursing manpower.
- 1.2 As Singapore faces an aging population, the demand for agency nurses/ midwives will increase as more family members engage agency nurses/ midwives to look after their loved ones at home or by various healthcare organisations to meet their service needs. As such, there is a need to regulate these agency nurses/ midwives to ensure that they maintain their competency for patient safety.
- 1.3 Likewise, the agencies engaging these nurses/ midwives have the responsibility to ensure that the nurses/ midwives they engage must meet SNB’s criteria and deliver safe and competent care.

#### 2. Criteria for Agency Nurses

- 2.1 Due to the nature of their work, these agency nurses/ midwives may be assigned to provide nursing/ midwifery care to clients with varying care needs in any setting. Therefore, these nurses/midwives must have the relevant professional preparation and requisite competencies to provide care in various challenging situations.
- 2.2 Hence, all RNs, ENs and RMWs working as agency nurses/ midwives must have
  - a) a current **FULL** registration/enrolment with the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB);
  - b) a minimum of two years’ experience in providing direct inpatient nursing/ midwifery care (for RNs and ENs - preferably in a medical & surgical setting);
  - a) a current certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automated External Defibrillator (CPR & AED).

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<sup>1</sup> Nursing agencies do not have a legal employment contract with the nurses and thus they could not be considered as employers of the nurses. Instead, nursing agencies have a contract of service with these agency nurses.

### **3. Standards of care**

The nurse/midwife shall:

- 3.1 comply with the Nurses and Midwives Act (Chapter 209);
- 3.2 comply with the Singapore Nursing Board's Code of Nurses and Midwives;
- 3.3 demonstrate the set of performance domains and their corresponding behavioural elements specified in Core Competencies of Registered Nurse/ Enrolled Nurse / Midwives;
- 3.4 practice within the scope of her qualifications, knowledge and skills;
- 3.5 be personally accountable for providing safe and competent care to their clients and to the law for their actions;
- 3.6 obtain consent before care or treatment is given;
- 3.7 perform nursing/ midwifery procedures, which are current and relevant;
- 3.8 practice standard precautions in the delivery of care;
- 3.9 be responsible to refer the patient to an appropriate healthcare professional when required. Similarly, the agency nurses/ midwives must have an escalation plan in situations where patient's conditions worsen or require medical attention;
- 3.10 maintain complete, legible, dated and signed nursing/midwifery records, which accurately document the assessment, plan of care, nursing actions and outcomes of care;
- 3.11 keep all information strictly confidential.

### **4. Training and Professional Development**

- 4.1 All agency nurses/ midwives must practise within their scope of practice.
- 4.2 Agency nurses/ midwives are responsible for ensuring that their clinical practice is safe, updated, effective and evidence based.
- 4.3 They must attend continuing professional nursing education to enable them to deliver updated skills and competencies.
- 4.4 All agency nurses/ midwives must maintain a portfolio of attendance of continuing professional education programmes.

## **5. Offence/ Disciplinary action**

- 5.1 Agency nurses/ midwives who fails to practise within their professional scope of practice or to comply with SNB's Code for Nurses and Midwives shall be liable for disciplinary action under the Nurses and Midwives Act (Chapter 209).

*Approved by SNB Board 22 April 2015*

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