



SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD

GUIDELINES FOR AGENCY NURSES/ MIDWIVES AND NURSING AGENCIES ENGAGING THEM (INCLUDING COMPANIES SUPPLYING NURSING MANPOWER)

1. Introduction and Definition

- 1.1 “Agency Nurses/ Midwives” refers to those nurses/ midwives who have a contract for service with nursing agencies or companies that supply nursing/ midwifery manpower. These agency nurses/ midwives can be deployed to provide care to clients in healthcare institutions to supplement nursing manpower or to provide nursing/ midwifery care to clients in their own homes and/ or any setting.
- 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 nursing agencies and companies supplying nursing/ midwifery manpower whilst engaging these nurses/ midwives, have the responsibility to ensure that nurses/ midwives they engage adhere to Singapore Nursing Board (SNB)’s guidelines and can 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 **General** registration/ enrolment with SNB;
 - b) current certification in Basic Cardiac Life Support (BCLS) and/ or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Automated External Defibrillator (CPR & AED).
- 2.3 Agency nurses/ midwives may practise in any setting. However, a minimum of **1 year** inpatient clinical experience is required for those agency nurses/ midwives practising in the following areas:
 - (a) homecare settings (with or without other nurses);
 - (b) settings whereby there is minimal or no nursing supervision;
 - (c) settings whereby he/ she is the only nurse/ midwife (without any medical supervision).

3. Standards of care

The nurse/ midwife shall:

- 3.1 comply with the Nurses and Midwives Act (1999);
- 3.2 comply with the Code for 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 (for RNs/ ENs) or of Midwives (RMWs);
- 3.4 practise within their scope of practice and within the scope of their 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 practise standard precautions in the delivery of care;
- 3.9 be responsible to refer the client 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 Agency nurses/ midwives are responsible for ensuring that their clinical practice is safe, updated, effective and evidence based.
- 4.2 They must attend Continuing Professional Education (CPE) to enable them to deliver updated skills and competencies and must meet the prevailing CPE requirements for their registration/ enrolment.
- 4.3 All agency nurses/ midwives must maintain a portfolio of their attendance of CPE programmes.

5. Offence/ Disciplinary action

- 5.1 Agency nurses/ midwives who fail 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 (1999).

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