



ANMF (Vic Branch) Policy

Position statement – Nurse / Midwife unit manager

Each ward/unit/service/program must have one EFT Nurse/Midwife (N/M) Unit Manager position (however titled) appointed.

The N/M Unit Manager is a nurse or midwife leader who is at the forefront of the health care system and its ever-changing and evolving organisational and management systems. The N/M Unit Manager is responsible for the ongoing day to day operational and clinical aspects of the ward/unit/service/program they manage combined with a focus on the provision of service provision of the employing health service.

The N/M Unit Manager is pivotal in managing and leading their designated care team in order to ensure the primary objective of the employing organisation and to optimise best practice outcomes in nursing and midwifery care. The critical component of the role requires employing health service to ensure that there are sufficient resources, including appropriate clinical and management nurse/midwife staffing and skills mix, with adherence to legislated obligation under the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015 where it is applicable.

The role of the N/M Unit Manager position involves the functions of and responsibility for nursing and/or midwifery leadership, management and clinical oversight within a designated work environment with elements of the following attributes:

1. The role contributes to the health services broader governance mechanisms is integral to the ability of the health care system to achieve safe patient care outcomes and contributes to retention of nurses and midwives.
2. The Unit Manager is required to demonstrate a sound clinical knowledge and have the ability to apply relevant legislation, guidelines and standards.
3. The workload associated with the role of NM requires a minimum appointment of 1 EFT to manage each 30 bed ward/unit/service and/or program.
4. The Unit Manager must have sufficient resources that consider the level of patient acuity and patient throughput.
5. The N/M Unit Manager must be employed in a supernummary capacity and have a solid understanding of organisational clinical governance and demonstrated excellence in nursing/midwifery practice and clinical research to promote and maximise optimal outcomes.
6. The Unit Manager must hold authority for decision making in the areas for which he/she is both responsible and accountable and have access to professional development opportunities to enhance both clinical and financial management skills. The Unit Manager is involved in the following:
 - quality and safety programs;
 - the evaluation of clinical standards and quality of care;

- relevant nursing or midwifery research and research funding applications; and
 - approving CPD/study leave applications for subordinates and arranging application self-development.
7. The Unit Manager has relevant professional post graduate qualifications or will be supported in the acquisition ongoing personal and professional development.
 8. The Unit Manager works with the support for designated Associate N/M Unit Managers whose roles optimises the functioning of the ward/unit and to whom nursing or midwifery management is delegated in his/her absence.
 9. The N/M Unit Manager has access to senior nursing/midwifery management and other nursing/midwifery resources through the organisational executive management structure.
 10. The N/M Unit Manager has a strong leadership role, exhibiting communication and problem-solving ability.
 11. The N/M Unit Manager is accountable for and can demonstrate:
 - a keen understanding of the dynamic nature of the health sector;
 - a knowledge of clinical risk and governance obligations;
 - an ability to initiate and review operational/clinical and organisational change;
 - an ability to appropriately delegate responsibilities;
 - encouragement of professional development;
 - an ability to enhance the quality of nursing and midwifery practice;
 - understanding of recruitment and retention of nursing and midwifery personnel processes;
 - encouragement of professional development of staff;
 - management of human resources;
 - excellent financial and material resource management;
 - understanding of occupational health and safety and return to work practices; and
 - management of financial data, education records, enabling Unit based information technology.

It is mandatory in Australia for the Nurse Unit Manager to be a registered nurse with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

It is mandatory in Australia for the Midwife Unit Manager to be a registered midwife with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

12. The Unit Manager as clinician has an extensive teaching/mentoring/enhancing role, which encompasses all health professionals involved in a patient's health care as well as the patient and their family.

As an expert clinician, the N/M Unit Manager, applies specialised nursing knowledge relevant to the area of professional practice and establishes, promotes and embeds the professional and practice standards and organisational policies of nursing or midwifery practice to promote optimal patient care.

13. The N/M Unit Manager has advanced and expert clinical knowledge and skill that is central to the management of the particular clinical specialty in which they are appointment to manage.

14. Professional nursing/midwife knowledge is required to make judgements and decisions about the quality and resources required for clinical services and the clinical insight to understand the environmental support and resources required for optimal care and service provision.

The N/M Unit Manager has a lead role in ensuring that the working environment is one in which all nurse midwife health practitioners, including students of nursing and/or midwifery and new graduates, are enabled to strive towards and achieve excellence in their own nursing or midwifery practice.

15. A N/M Unit Manager requires an excellent understanding of current trends, research and policies in their area of nursing or midwifery practice and utilises this knowledge to promote and encourage professional development and to develop effective networks across the multi-disciplinary team.
16. The N/M Unit Manager must have access to contemporary teaching techniques and principles to ensure the clinical role is supported. He/she also needs to develop professional formal and informal links, both internally and externally, for the purposes of accessing quality nursing or midwifery resources and education.