Designated RN prescribing in Victoria: Implementation update

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OFFICIAL

The Department of Health is working to introduce designated registered nurse (RN) prescribing in Victoria.

Designated RN prescribing will allow eligible RNs, who hold an endorsement for scheduled medicines, to prescribe certain medicines in partnership with an authorised prescriber.

When will designated RN prescribers be able to practice in Victoria?

Designated RN prescribing cannot commence in Victoria until changes to the state's drugs and poisons regulations are made.

These regulatory amendments are expected to be in place around October 2026.

Where will designated RN prescribers be able to practice?

Victoria will introduce designated RN prescribing in stages. In the first phase, designated RN prescribers will only be able to practice in these settings:

- hospitals
- residential aged care
- palliative care
- prisons and police gaols

Allowing prescribing in other settings will require legislative changes, which will happen at a later time.

For RNs considering further study

RNs who are planning to undertake further study to become a designated RN prescriber should talk to their employer first, to ensure their workplace can support the role once it becomes available.

Please note: completing the qualifications and obtaining the endorsement for scheduled medicines - designated registered nurse prescriber indicates an RN is qualified to prescribe Schedule 2, 3 4 and 8 medicines in partnership with an authorised health practitioner. However, it does not mean RNs can immediately prescribe in their workplaces. This is contingent on amendments to Victoria's drugs and poisons regulations (estimated to occur around October 2026) and the model being implemented in your health service.

Further updates will be provided as work progresses.

Background

- In December 2024, State and Territory Health Ministers approved for appropriately experienced and qualified RNs to prescribe Schedule 2, 3, 4 and 8 medicines in partnership with an authorised health practitioner (e.g. medical practitioner or nurse practitioner). These RNs will be known as designated RN prescribers.
- To be endorsed as a designated RN prescriber, an RN must:
    - Hold general registration as an RN in Australia, with no conditions or undertaking relevant to this endorsement.
    - Have completed 5,000 hours of clinical experience within the past six years (equal to three years full-time experience).
    - Have completed postgraduate study that leads to the endorsement or have completed equivalent units approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).
    - Apply and successfully achieve endorsement as a designated RN prescriber from Ahpra.
- Once endorsed by the NMBA, a designated RN prescriber must:
    - Complete a six-month clinical mentorship with an authorised health practitioner.
    - Only prescribe when the following are in place:
        - a prescribing agreement with an authorised health practitioner
        - a clinical governance framework to support the model of prescribing
        - any legislative and/or regulatory amendments to authorise prescribing at a state/territory level
- Designated RN prescribers must also follow any requirements set by their health service (e.g. obtaining organisational sign-off prior to commencing prescribing).
- RNs interested in becoming designated RN prescribers should see the following resources published by Ahpra:
    - Registration standard: Endorsement for scheduled medicines – designated registered nurse prescriber
    - Guidelines for registered nurses applying for and with the endorsement for scheduled medicines – designated registered nurse prescriber.
- RNs are also encouraged to visit the Department's Designated RN Prescribing website.