

MEDIA RELEASE

31 October 2024

Momentous reform will improve access to quality health care

The introduction of laws to remove outdated ‘collaborative arrangements’, which take effect from tomorrow 1 November, will allow Nurse Practitioners and Endorsed Midwives to autonomously provide Medicare services and prescribe Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule (PBS) medications.

This is a big win for nurses and midwives who, since 2010, have had a legal requirement to have collaborative arrangements with a medical practitioner for them to be able to provide these services.

It is also a big win for patients who will now have better, quicker, and more affordable access to important care and treatments.

ACN CEO, Adjunct Professor Kathryn Zeitz FACN, said this momentous reform will allow Endorsed Midwives and Nurse Practitioners to use their education and skills to work to their full scope of practice, practise autonomously, and deliver more care to patients.

“It will have a significant positive impact on health service delivery, especially for those who live in rural, regional, and remote communities, and other underserved communities,” Adjunct Professor Zeitz said.

“The removal of collaborative arrangements will provide nurses and midwives with much-deserved respect and acknowledgement of their clinical expertise.

“The requirement to have a collaborative arrangement has limited the ability and opportunities and career progression of many appropriately qualified Nurse Practitioners.

“We hope this landmark change will help attract more Registered Nurses to become Nurse Practitioners and more Midwives to become Endorsed.

“Primary health care Nurse Practitioners support diverse groups, including people in aged care, First Nations peoples, and people with disabilities.

“They are also often the most highly qualified – or the only – health professional in many rural and remote communities.

“Endorsed Midwives and Nurse Practitioners working in these settings have been establishing innovative health services.

“They will now be able to practise autonomously. Patients will benefit. Communities will benefit.

“ACN congratulates the Government – especially Health Minister Mark Butler and Assistant Health Minister Ged Kearney – for driving this welcome and much-needed reform,” Adjunct Professor Zeitz said.

For more information:

Kirsty Waterford 0403 295 934

Email: acn.media@acn.edu.au

Social media channels:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acnursing>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/acn_tweet

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/australian-college-of-nursing>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/acn_nursing