

Employment of Assistants in Nursing (AIN) in NSW Health Acute Care

Summary This Policy Directive is to facilitate uniform practices for employing, expanding and developing the Assistant in Nursing role in Public Health acute care facilities. It outlines the education, qualification or equivalency, scope of practice and skills recognition processes to be applied to those in this employment category. It also refers employers to assessment processes for identifying the appropriate clinical environments for Assistants in Nursing allocation in acute care.

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Audience Nursing, Workforce, Human Resources

EMPLOYMENT OF ASSISTANTS IN NURSING (AIN) IN NSW HEALTH ACUTE CARE

POLICY STATEMENT

All NSW Health organisations must ensure practices for employing, expanding and developing the Assistant in Nursing (AIN) role in public health acute care facilities are consistent with procedures outlined in this policy.

This Policy Statement applies to the employment of all AINs employed under the Award classification of Assistants in Nursing (AIN) in the NSW public health system. This Policy Directive does not apply to students on clinical placement.

SUMMARY OF POLICY REQUIREMENTS

AINs are to be employed in acute care areas following the assessment process outlined in the [Assistants in nursing working in the acute care environment – Health Service Implementation package](#).

An AIN will work within a plan of care under the supervision and delegation of a registered nurse when providing aspects of nursing care.

An AIN will be responsible for their own actions and will remain accountable to the registered nurse for all delegated duties.

An AIN working in acute care will be delegated nursing activities that are within the parameters documented in the NSW Health Assistant in Nursing – Acute Care position description.

Any additional context specific nursing activities delegated must follow a formally documented process that reflects the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia Decision Making Framework and Health Service guidelines.

AINs are to be assigned to appropriate clinical areas according to identified skill mix assessment process guidelines and be provided with support and supervision at all times.

The skill mix for the provision of nursing care in acute care areas is to reflect those categories of staff who are required to meet the clinical needs of patients/clients as determined by established tools.

The AIN will wear the NSW Health uniform and identification badge that indicates their AIN classification.

AINs employed in NSW Health acute care environments are to have completed a relevant Certificate III (or higher) qualification in Health Services Assistance, for example the current course [HLT33115 Certificate III Health Services Assistance \(Assisting in Nursing Work in Acute Care\)](#), or having equivalent experience or have completed 1 or more years training as an undergraduate nursing student.

AINs who are employed in public health aged care facilities must successfully complete a relevant Certificate III (or higher) qualification in aged care, for example the current course [CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support](#) or have equivalent experience.

AINs currently employed in NSW Health acute care areas, who are not current undergraduate students of nursing or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cadets, will be supported by Health Services to upgrade their qualification to the level of *HLT33115 Certificate III Health Services Assistance (Assisting in Nursing Work in Acute Care)* skills pathway.

AINs working in Acute Care

NSW Health supports the qualification, HLT33115 Certificate III Health Services Assistance (Assisting in Nursing Work in Acute Care) skills pathway for AINs working in acute care environments who are not undergraduate students of nursing.

NSW Health has identified preferred units of competency (Group B electives) for students to complete as part of their qualification, to support their employment as acute care AINs in the NSW public health system.

Recognition of Skills Process

Health Services are encouraged to support AINs to convert or upgrade their current qualifications to the HLT33115 Certificate III Health Services Assistance (Assisting in Nursing Work in Acute Care) skills pathway, through a “recognition of skills” process.

Existing workers employed as AINs at the date of issue of this Policy Directive are encouraged but not required to obtain formal qualifications.

Undergraduate Students of Nursing

NSW Health supports the employment of undergraduate nursing students in the role of AIN in acute care environments.

The employment of undergraduate nursing students as AINs in acute care environments does not form part of their formal education program. This employment provides students with increased exposure to clinical environments in preparation to practice as a nurse and the opportunity to gain an income while studying.

Undergraduate nursing students may be employed as AINs in the second or third year of their Bachelor program. First year undergraduate students may be employed as an AIN if previously gained qualifications and/or experience are deemed equivalent. The scope of practice for the undergraduate student of nursing employed as an AIN in the acute care environment is consistent with that outlined in the NSW Health Assistant in Nursing Acute Care Position Description.

For the purpose of the COVID-19 Pandemic response in NSW, first year undergraduate nursing students (who don't have previous qualifications or experience as above) may be employed in a modified AIN role, consistent with that outlined in the NSW Health First Year Undergraduate AIN Position Description. These first year undergraduate AINs are supernumerary and not included in nursing workload numbers.

Supporting resources such as background to AIN employment in acute care facilities, positions descriptions for AINs in acute care facilities, and associated activities and task lists are available at:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/Pages/Working-with-Assistants-in-Nursing-AIN.aspx>

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Amendment notes
September-2021 (PD2021_035)	Deputy Secretary People, Culture and Governance	Updated Policy to include First Year Undergraduate AINs supernumerary roles as part of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response
May 2018 (PD2018_017)	Deputy Secretary People, Culture and Governance	Updated Policy to reflect course codes and hyperlinks
September 2010 (PD2010_059)	Deputy Director- General Health System Support	Updated Policy to recognise expanded employment criteria for AINs in acute care health services
August 2001 (PD2005_214)	Director-General	New Policy