



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Designated Registered Nurse Prescribing

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office Communique

August 2026

Designated RN prescribing in Western Australia: Implementation update August 2026

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

Legislative amendments

On 19 June 2026, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) published the outcomes of its May 2026 meeting. PBAC formally recognised designated Registered Nurse (RN) prescribers as authorised prescribers and recommended amendments to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listings for most Tranche 1 medicines (across the alimentary tract, cardiovascular, genitourinary and antiparasitic therapeutic groups) to include designated RN prescribers. Consideration of Tranche 2 medicines occurred in July 2026 with notification of what drugs are to be included expected soon.

On 2 July 2026, the Australian Government passed the *Health Legislation Amendment (Prescribing of Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill 2025*. This legislative change enables amendments to the *National Health Act 1953* to allow authorised nurses to prescribe PBS-subsidised medicines in partnership with an authorised health practitioner, supporting expanded access to PBS medicines through collaborative prescribing arrangements.

Designated RN prescriber courses of study

There are now five (5) accredited Registered Nurse prescribing programs available across Australia. A list of approved programs of study is available on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) website [here](#).

Edith Cowan University (ECU) is delivering a Graduate Certificate in Registered Nurse Prescribing and received a high volume of applications for its inaugural intake, reflecting strong interest in designated RN prescribing.

The Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office (CNMO) is partnering with ECU to provide full tuition-fee scholarships to eligible registered nurses who have endorsement from their Executive Director of Nursing (or equivalent). These scholarships support workforce capability development and implementation of designated RN prescribing in WA.

Designated RN Prescribing Nurse Practitioner Forum

On 20 June 2026, the CNMO, ECU and Ahpra co-hosted a Designated RN Prescriber Forum at ECU City Campus.

The forum was primarily aimed at members of the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP), with attendance also open to Nurse Practitioners and RNs interested in the new prescribing model.

The forum was facilitated by Jodie Holbrook, WA Aphra State Manager. Adam McCavery, WA ACNP Chapter Chair and ECU Course Coordinator for the Graduate Certificate in Registered Nurse Prescribing, provided an overview of the designated RN prescribing program, including the course structure, delivery model and current enrolments.

Annie Thompson and Jill Law from the CNMO presented an update on the regulatory and governance framework supporting the prescribing model, national and state implementation activities, and the progress of implementation planning within WA.

A panel discussion, facilitated by Jodie Holbrook and Catherine Barratt (from the CNMO), provided attendees with the opportunity to explore key aspects of the new prescribing model, discuss implementation considerations and ask questions about the new endorsement pathway.

The event attracted 39 registrations, with 20 participants attending. The forum provided a valuable opportunity to share information, strengthen stakeholder engagement and support understanding of designated RN prescribing as implementation progresses across WA.

Designated RN Prescribing Stakeholder Engagement

The CNMO continues to support health services and organisations to prepare for the safe, effective and consistent implementation of designated RN prescribing across WA. To date, the CNMO has delivered information sessions and presentations to South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS), East Metropolitan Health Service, St John of God Healthcare Group, Ramsay Health and the WA Primary Health Alliance. Future information sessions are planned for Aegis Australia and North Metropolitan Health Service.

On 13 July 2026, Jill Law participated in SMHS's Designated RN Prescribing Implementation "Discover" Workshop, facilitated by Sharon Delahunty and Jenni Ng. The workshop commenced with an update on designated RN prescribing, including the regulatory framework, governance requirements and progress of state-wide implementation activities. Participants then explored the key principles that will guide implementation within SMHS and considered the opportunities and practical considerations associated with introducing designated RN prescribing into clinical services. Discussions focused on identifying potential early adopter sites and assessing organisational readiness.

Using a structured discovery approach, participants considered models of care that could benefit from designated RN prescribing, with particular emphasis on addressing service gaps, improving access to timely care and enhancing service efficiency. Discussions centred on ensuring implementation efforts are directed towards high-impact clinical areas where the prescribing model can deliver the greatest benefit for patients and health services.

The "Discover" Workshop represents the first phase of SMHS's implementation planning. Subsequent "Define" and "Design" workshops will further develop implementation priorities, governance arrangements and service models to support the introduction of designated RN prescribing within SMHS.

Designated RN Prescribing Guidelines and Framework Consultation

The second consultation round for the Designated RN Prescriber Prescribing Guidelines (Guidelines) and the Designated RN Prescriber Mentorship Framework (Framework) concluded on 26 June 2026. This followed an initial consultation period in March 2026, with feedback from the first consultation informing revisions to both documents prior to further stakeholder review.

Overall, stakeholders expressed strong and consistent support for both documents, indicating that the Guidelines and Framework provide a sound foundation for the safe and effective implementation of designated RN prescribing in WA. Feedback largely focused on opportunities to enhance clarity, consistency and usability, rather than proposing substantive changes to the overall approach.

Proposals to introduce prescriptive checklists, rigid approval pathways, or restrictions on the prescribing of Schedule 4 Restricted and Schedule 8 medicines were not supported. Such measures were considered inconsistent with the Registration Standard, which requires designated RN prescribers to prescribe within their competence, scope of practice and legislative authority.

A number of minor amendments have subsequently been incorporated to improve clarity, consistency and readability of both documents. The consultation also generated questions relating to implementation, governance and operationalisation of the designated RN prescribing model. Responses to frequently asked questions are being developed and will be published on the WA Designated RN Prescribing webpage

The finalised Guidelines and Framework have been endorsed by the Designated RN Prescribing Advisory Committee, the Nursing and Midwifery Leadership Council, and the WA Health Director General. These will also be made available on the website.

For more information, visit the WA Designated RN Prescribing webpage:

https://www.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Designated-registered-nurse-prescribing.

National Nurses Forum 2026

Designated RN Prescribing featured prominently at the Australian College of Nursing National Nursing Forum 2026, held in Melbourne on 6 - 7 August 2026.

The forum's opening panel brought together Chief Nursing Officers and Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers from Australian jurisdictions to discuss the introduction of designated RN prescribing. Panel members explored the opportunities and challenges associated with implementation and responded to delegates' questions on governance, workforce implications, clinical safety and the future role of prescribing within nursing practice.

Representatives from the Designated RN Prescribing Jurisdictional Leads Group, including Jill Law representing WA, subsequently presented on the collaborative national leadership approach to progress the reform. The presentation highlighted the significant contribution of cross-jurisdictional partnerships in advancing implementation planning and supporting a nationally consistent approach to designated RN prescribing.

The session showcased how collective leadership, shared expertise and coordinated engagement across jurisdictions have helped shape and progress the nursing workforce reform. It also highlighted the value of collaboration in supporting national policy development and implementation, while ensuring the model remains responsive to the needs of local health systems and communities.

Contact us

The CNMO has a dedicated email address for designated RN prescribing.

Please contact us for further information or to answer any queries.

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