

College of Emergency Nursing New Zealand (CENNZ^{NZNO}) Position Statement for Clinical Nurse Specialists in the Emergency Department

Purpose

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand (CENNZ) is committed to the recognition and integration of Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) and Nurse Practitioner Intern (NPI) roles as advanced nursing practice roles within Emergency Department (ED) teams.

In the context of emergency care, CNS and NPIs manage episodes of care in collaboration and under supervision to provide patient-centred healthcare services. The ability to provide advanced clinical knowledge in assessment, diagnosis and treatment increases ED resources, assists in reduction of patient waiting times and ED length of stay, and improves access to quality care.

Background

Emergency nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand provide acute and emergent care to patients, whānau and communities through a range of clinical settings. This includes hospital EDs, rural healthcare facilities, and urgent care clinics. The CNS and NPI roles are well established and recognised as an effective advanced practice role.

The CNS role sits within the senior nursing level of the Knowledge and Skills Framework (CENNZ-NZNO, 2024). The CNS and NPI role reflect the advanced nursing practice domains of direct care, support of systems, education, research, and professional leadership (Carryer, et al., 2018).

Emergency CNS and NPI role descriptions vary depending on the models of care and resources of the practice setting, however all roles use expertise and integration of advanced knowledge to improve patient outcomes and influence nursing practice. In some departments, CNS and NPI roles have been established to increase the resource capacity to provide direct clinical care (King, 2013).

Key Recommendations

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand that the CNS and NPI roles:

- Are advanced nursing roles within the Registered Nurse scope of practice.
- Are a designated senior nursing role, which has developed independently to that of the Nurse Practitioner (NP); both CNS and NPI fulfil meaningful roles within different scopes of practice.
- Are to be undertaking or have post-graduate education.
- May form part of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) pathway.
- Illustrate expert evidence-based emergency care knowledge, clinical skills, comprehensive assessment and complex decision-making skills.
- Integrate the principles of Te Tiriti of Waitangi into practice to address health inequities.
- Provide coaching, mentoring, leadership and educational opportunities to colleagues and members of the multidisciplinary team.

- Work collaboratively with clinical and professional support that includes clinical supervision, mentoring, research and professional development.

Further Rationale

- Innovative solutions are required to meet demands for quality emergency care.
- The CNS and NPI roles are well established and recognised as an effective advanced nursing practice role.
- There is strong evidence supporting the role of CNS and NPI engaging in clinical aspects of emergency care by improving patient outcomes and reducing inequities in health.

References

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Position statement next due for review	May 2027
Position statement last reviewed	May 2024