



anf guidelines

australian nursing federation

complementary therapies in nursing and midwifery practice

Where the term 'nurse' is used it includes all licensed classifications including, but not limited to: registered nurse, midwife, enrolled nurse, nurse practitioner.

Various forms of healing, such as massage, relaxation, meditation, visualisation, and environment manipulation (eg the use of colour, music, quiet, aroma) have always been a part of nursing practice. This is, and should continue to be, recognised and valued.

Other complementary therapies (eg reflexology, iridology, yoga, kinesiology) may be incorporated by nurses as part of their holistic approach to nursing practice.

The use of a range of therapeutic approaches may enhance the health and well being of individuals.

Individuals have the right, wherever possible, to the health care of their choice.

The Australian Nursing Federation recommends the adoption of the following guidelines:

1. The practice of complementary therapies should be supported by written policies and protocols endorsed by the employing facility.
2. Individuals receiving complementary therapies must provide informed consent.
3. Any practice of complementary therapies should be appropriately documented.
4. Medical practitioners involved in the care of the individual should, with the consent of the individual, be informed about any complementary therapies being used.
5. The use of complementary therapies should be supported by evidence based practice.
6. Nurses practising complementary therapies should have undertaken appropriate education in the complementary therapy in which they are practising, and be aware of the limits to their practice and refer to other health professionals as necessary.
7. Nurses should be encouraged to initiate and participate in research and evaluation in complementary therapies.

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