



anf policy

australian nursing federation

nurses and midwives and hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs and other substances

It is the policy of the Australian Nursing Federation that:

1. Nurses and midwives practise nursing and midwifery in accordance with relevant legislation, codes of ethics and conduct, and local policies and guidelines and protocols, to ensure they meet their duty of care responsibilities.
2. Hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs has the potential to compromise performance at work and adversely affect the health and safety of self and others, including people receiving nursing and midwifery care and co-workers.
3. Where the hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs and other substances is identified, nurses and midwives should be assisted to participate in programs of assistance, support, education and/or rehabilitation.
4. Each workplace should provide accessible, non-punitive and confidential assistance and support programs for nursing and midwifery employees when necessary.
5. Where the hazardous and harmful use of alcohol and other drugs is identified, nurses and midwives have a right to confidentiality and advocacy, as well as grievance and conflict resolution procedures as necessary.
6. Employers should, in conjunction with nurses and midwives and relevant experts, develop, implement and review policies and protocols relating to the management of nurses and midwives known to have alcohol, drug and other substance misuse issues.
7. The random or regular testing of employees for alcohol and other drug use is opposed.
8. Nurses and midwives have a responsibility to report, to their relevant manager, staff who are reasonably suspected of being affected by hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs and other substances. Any reporting should not be malicious but supported by a description of the concerning behaviours.
9. Nurses and midwives who report unsafe or inappropriate clinical practice or occupational health and safety hazards which they have reasonable grounds to suspect are related to the hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs and other substances by other employees should be provided with appropriate support and must not be subject to victimisation or reprisal.
10. Nurses and midwives have a responsibility to advocate on behalf of individuals and groups whose care and safety may be compromised through the suspected hazardous and harmful use of alcohol, drugs and other substances by another employee or contractor.

endorsed june 1998

reviewed and re-endorsed june 2000

reviewed and re-endorsed february 2005

reviewed and re-endorsed november 2008