

The Scope of Practice Decision Making-Framework

A simple way to think through decisions in practice ([Decision-Making Framework, Code](#))

The decision-making framework in the Code supports registered nurses and registered midwives to make safe, ethical, **professional judgements and decisions** in practice. It helps registrants respond to the needs of **individuals**, practise within their **scope of practice** and competence, and within the context of the practice environment.

Registered Nurses and Midwives are **accountable** for their professional judgements and decisions, actions, omissions. Registrants must ensure that their practice is safe, within their scope of practice and **competence**, and is compliant with relevant legislation at all times.

The following decision-making framework is designed to guide a registrant step by step using the Code through professional judgements and decision making in everyday practice.

1. PERSON - Identify the individual's needs

Professional decision making must always start with the individual receiving care and be informed by a comprehensive assessment.

Registrants should ask:

- Is this decision respectful of the individual's rights and dignity?
- Has there been appropriate consultation with the individual receiving care?
- Has the individual consented?
- Does the activity consider the will and preference of the individual receiving care?

2. PROFESSIONAL- Reflect on your scope of practice and competence

Professional decision making includes reflecting on practising within your scope of practice and competence.

Registrants should ask:

- Does your practice continue to comply with the Code?
- Do you have the necessary knowledge, skills and competence to carry out this activity?
- Have legislative requirements been met?
- Competence can change over time. If a skill has not been used or maintained, are you still safe to perform an activity?

3. PLACE- Is the role or activity supported in your practice setting?

Registrants must consider whether the care they plan to provide is supported by the environment in which they are working.

This includes asking:

- Is the activity/practice/delegation supported by the organisation?
- Is the activity supported by local or national **Policies, Procedures, Protocols and Guidelines** (PPPGs) or sources of evidence based guidance?
- If this is a new practice is there a system for ongoing education and maintenance of competence in place?

You may be responsible for many tasks, but you are always accountable for your professional decisions. You cannot pass that accountability to someone else.

Being part of a team, following instructions, or working in a busy environment does not remove individual accountability.

If you answered YES to all of the above

Take action

Proceed, provide care safely, and document your decision.

If you answered NO to any of the above

Take action

Do not proceed. Ensure the individual's needs are met, seek support or supervision, address any competence gaps, and escalate through appropriate governance where required.