

NMC Circular 30/2005
SAT/lp
17 October 2005

Dear Colleague

V100 Nurse Prescribers

Amendments to the definitions of both District Nurse/Health Visitor Prescriber and Extended Formulary Nurse Prescriber were made by the Health Care and Associated Professions Orders 1771/2004 and 1765/2004. In essence, that means that NMC registrants need only be a first level nurse in order to access training to become a nurse prescriber.

Nurses undertaking a Specialist Practice Qualification (community pathway) from this academic year 2005-6 will be able to access training to prescribe from the Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for Community Practitioners (formerly the Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for District Nurses and Health Visitors)) where prescribing would benefit the patients for whom they are responsible. This largely means school nurses, children's community nurses and, where there is a clinical need, occupational health nurses. Benefits to NHS patients and improved service delivery will need to be demonstrated.

Although the regulations technically allow all first level registered nurses to prescribe, the content of the training is predicated on specialist practitioner skills, knowledge and competence and is, therefore, not suitable in its present form for all registered nurses.

However, existing nurses with a Specialist Practitioner Qualification in community nursing may wish to access training. We understand that there is to be no diversion of resources to support this centrally and each Commissioner would therefore need to resource this from within their existing budget.

For further information about nurse prescribing, please contact Liz Plastow, Professional Advisor for specialist community public health nursing, on 020 7333 6509, or by e-mail at liz.plastow@nmc-uk.org.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Thewlis
Chief Executive and Registrar