



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**

# Assistant in Nursing Duties (Nursing setting)

January 2022

## **1.0 Introduction**

This document is mandatory for the interpretation and application of MP 0080/18 *Assistant in Nursing Policy* (the Policy) in a general health care facility setting.

Assistants in Nursing (AIN) are a category of non-regulated healthcare workforce. The role of the AIN is to assist in the delivery of patient care in the acute care or aged care environment; AIN work under the direction of a nurse or midwife. They are a complementary workforce and not a substitute for the number of nurses or midwives employed under current workplace arrangements.

There are two AIN pre-requisite pathways to facilitate employment – AIN (student) and AIN (non-student) as outlined in the Policy. Employment as an AIN (Student) must cease following the completion of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) approved program.

## **2.0 AINs in General Hospital/Health Care Facility Setting**

All duties and tasks are to be delegated and performed under the Nurse's supervision and direction with adherence to local policy and guidelines.

AINs will be provided with a copy of this Assistant in Nursing Duties document on commencement of their employment.

AINs must not perform duties that are not listed within the Assistant in Nursing Duties document.

The Health Service Provider may establish limitations on the duties its AINs may perform, and this will be clarified through local policy.

### 3.0 Assistant in Nursing Duties (Nursing)

The following duties are applicable to all AINs employed by WA Health.

AIN (non-student) with a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance – Acute Care and AIN (student) can perform all duties listed below. AIN (non-student) with a Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) are **excluded** from performing specific duties as noted against the relevant duty\*\*.

| Duties                                           | Description of Duties                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| <b>Patient Meals</b>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Safe positioning of patients to receive meals</li><li>▪ Preparation of table over bed or chair</li><li>▪ Assist with cutting up food and opening packages on meal tray</li><li>▪ Physically feeding patients who are unable to do so themselves under the direction of the Nurse</li><li>▪ Refilling of water jugs, or making drinks (outside of food service times &amp; routine drink rounds) and always ensuring water is within reach (unless contraindicated)</li><li>▪ Record fluid intake on fluid balance chart – Nurse to countersign</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Patient Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Respects the rights and dignity of patients</li><li>▪ Assist patient with showering, bathing and bed washes</li><li>▪ Assist patient with oral hygiene, brushing teeth, and cleaning of dentures</li><li>▪ Assist with dressing and grooming of patients</li><li>▪ Observation of basic skin integrity &amp; reporting skin condition to the Nurse</li><li>▪ Facial shaves of male patients (exclusion: all pre-operative shaving)</li><li>▪ Hair care (exclusion: no prescribed treatments are to be used by the AIN)</li><li>▪ Nail care (exclusion: cutting or trimming of nails)</li><li>▪ Washing patients' face – including the corners of patients eyes, to remove usual accumulated crusted exudate or discharge</li><li>▪ Assistance with glasses and hearing aids</li><li>▪ Last offices to be undertaken with a Nurse</li></ul> |
| <b>Patient Mobility</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Uses safe manual handling technique</li><li>▪ Assist patients to transfer from bed to chair</li><li>▪ Assists patients to change position in bed</li><li>▪ Assists Nurses with patient transfers and manual handling</li><li>▪ Re-application of anti-embolic stockings to patient (exclusion: initial measurement &amp; fitting of stockings)</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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| <b>Patient Toileting</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assists patients to toilet</li> <li>▪ Provides bedpan / urinal</li> <li>▪ Catheter care – securing of leg bags, ensure tubing patency (exclusion: does not include insertion or removal)</li> <li>▪ Emptying, measuring and recording urine from urine collecting drainage bags</li> <li>▪ Reports any abnormalities to the Nurse, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased frequency in passing urine</li> <li>- offensive odour of urine</li> <li>- unusual colouring of urine</li> <li>- unusual consistency of urine</li> <li>- constipation and consistency of excreta, as per Bristol Stool Chart</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Specimen collection of faeces and/ or urine (exclusion: midstream urine specimen collection)</li> <li>▪ Records urine output on fluid balance chart – Nurse to countersign</li> <li>▪ Performs routine urinalysis and reports findings to the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Assist with continence aids – apply incontinence pads and uridomes</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Communication</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain confidentiality, privacy and dignity of patients</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate empathy towards patients and relatives</li> <li>▪ Act tactfully and diplomatically with sensitive situations</li> <li>▪ Seek advice on dealing with conflict within the workplace</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate safety awareness and report unsafe issues and potential/actual workplace hazards to the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Encourage patient independence in respect to ADL assistance</li> <li>▪ Communicate effectively and accurately to the Nurse when reporting and acquiring clinical information and data, for example, stating the amount of drainage from an indwelling urinary catheter (IDC) or amount of fluids consumed by patient</li> <li>▪ Relay messages to patients (exclusion: matters regarding clinical status or condition of the patient)</li> <li>▪ Refer patient and relative/significant other inquiries to the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Answer call bells in a timely manner</li> <li>▪ Assist with telephone calls as required</li> </ul> <p>Immediately report any change in patient's physical &amp; mental condition to the Nurse</p> |

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| <b>Environmental Maintenance</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implements the Five Moments of Hand Hygiene at all times in the workplace</li> <li>▪ Implements infection control standards with all work undertaken</li> <li>▪ Maintains patients' surroundings and sink area in a clean and tidy manner</li> <li>▪ Keeps the treatment and pan rooms tidy</li> <li>▪ Assists in restocking of the treatment room &amp; linen room/trolley as directed by the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the process of cleaning washbowls, urinals, and bedpans</li> <li>▪ Mops up spills and notifies the Nurse if further cleaning is required</li> <li>▪ Simple patient errands (excludes dealing with money, handling patients' money and valuables, or errands outside hospital grounds)</li> <li>▪ Arrangement and management of flowers</li> <li>▪ <b>** Prepares post-operative beds</b> and arranges bed linen as required<br/>(*AIN with Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) must not perform this duty)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>General</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensures that organisational policies and procedures are adhered to at all times</li> <li>▪ Assist the Nurse to settle patients for sleep and rest periods</li> <li>▪ Bed making – independently and/or assisted</li> <li>▪ Prepares 'discharge beds' in circumstances where a Nurse would otherwise undertake the task</li> <li>▪ Provides patient escort if deemed appropriate by the Nurse (exclusion: patients with oxygen therapy and intravenous therapy)</li> <li>▪ Provides patient companionship if deemed appropriate by the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Provides patient surveillance if deemed appropriate by the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Applies practical intervention procedures for dementia or behavioural problems</li> <li>▪ Uses diversional therapy as deemed appropriate by a Nurse</li> <li>▪ Assistance with breathing devices under direct supervision of the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Recognises a deviation from the patient's norm, and reports to the Nurse immediately</li> <li>▪ Tissue or fluid specimen collection: including (but not limited to) sputum, intranasal swab, faeces and urine (exclusion: midstream urine specimen collection)</li> <li>▪ <b>** Intravenous Infusion pump alarming</b> – notify Nurse immediately and must not silence the pump alarms<br/>(*AIN with Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) must not perform this duty)</li> </ul> |

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| <b>General<br/>(continued)</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>** Wound Care:</b> Attends to simple dressings as explicitly directed, on a case-by-case basis, by the Nurse. Shallow wound care that requires cleansing (only with saline) and does not require packing. For example, covering a break in skin integrity for site protection, recovering a non-infected, stapled or sutured incision after the incision has been inspected by the Nurse<br/>(*AIN with Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) must not perform this duty)</li> <li>▪ <b>** Observations:</b> Takes and records patients' observations, temperature, pulse rate, respiratory rate, blood glucose level, blood pressure, and pulse oximetry. All information must be recorded on appropriate charts and reported to the Nurse immediately<br/>(*AIN with Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) must not perform this duty)</li> <li>▪ Patient weight and height</li> </ul> |
| <b>Documentation</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensures accurate labelling of pathology specimens collected</li> <li>▪ Ensures all information and data regarding patients is recorded on appropriate charts and reported to the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Completes patient documentation. AIN may write in the patients' progress notes, however, the Nurse must countersign all entries</li> <li>▪ Reports and completes Hazard/Incident Form with assistance from the Nurse, as per organisational policy</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Reporting</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reports all incidents immediately to the Nurse, for example, verbal/physical aggression, personal injury, hazards and complaints from patients/relatives</li> <li>▪ Reports and refers any patient concerns/complaints to the Nurse</li> <li>▪ Report conflict/s to a Nurse immediately</li> <li>▪ Report wandering or confused patient to the Nurse</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>COVID-19<br/>Related Tasks</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ COVID-19 screening of patients, visitors and staff including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ epidemiological questions regarding exposure risk to COVID-19</li> <li>○ symptom questions</li> <li>○ temperature checking</li> <li>○ vaccination status</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Rapid antigen testing (RAT) – collection of intranasal or saliva swabs and perform point of care (POC) testing<br/>[Sites to provide training on POC testing policy and procedure]</li> <li>▪ Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) checks and spotting</li> <li>▪ Applies Infection Prevention and Management (IP&amp;M) principles including donning and doffing</li> <li>▪ Other related COVID-19 tasks as directed by the Nurse and Health Service Provider.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |

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