

Fact Sheet 1

Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse (ASEN) Frequently Asked Questions and Role Examples

An ASEN is an Enrolled Nurse who is registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA). The ASEN supports the Registered Nurse/Midwife in the provision of patient-centred care. Employees at this level work under the direction and supervision of the Registered Nurse/Midwife. However at all times, the ASEN retains responsibility for their actions while remaining accountable to the Registered Nurse/Midwife for all delegated functions.

FAQ's about Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurses (ASEN):

What is the role of ASEN?

The ASEN role extends the scope of enrolled nursing practice. ASEN roles can enhance existing services and may provide a service where gaps presently exist. In addition to fulfilling the duties of an Enrolled Nurse, an ASEN has:

- > High level of specialisation in an area or field of practice;
- > A higher level of clinical knowledge and skills informed by further education and on the job experience;
- > A greater level of delegated responsibility in the delivery of client care which may include clinical and non-clinical roles; and
- > More indirect levels of supervision⁽¹⁾
- > A leadership role within the ASEN scope of practice
- > A commitment to lifelong learning and inquiry

Nursing and Midwifery Leaders should clearly and consistently communicate the ASEN:

- > Role definitions;
- > Working relationships;
- > Decision making tools to assist in role implementation.*

**Information to support role implementation can be sourced in ASEN – Toolkit for ASEN Role Implementation in South Australia.*

How does an Enrolled Nurse become an ASEN? Who will determine whether the EN has “advanced skills”?

The ASEN role is not available via reclassification, nor is it available to all Enrolled Nurses who hold an Advanced Diploma. The new ASEN role is an appointment based position and therefore a health service/unit must determine a need for the role, establish a position and then appoint a suitable Enrolled Nurse who meets the qualification/experience criteria listed in Appendix 7 of the 2010 Enterprise Agreement⁽¹⁾.

Is an Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse eligible for the additional qualification allowance based on their Advanced Diploma?

Enrolled Nurses with a Diploma qualification or employed within the Advanced Skills classification may be eligible for the additional qualification allowance in accordance with clause 6.9 the 2010 Enterprise Agreement⁽¹⁾.

What are the core domains of the ASEN role?

The ASEN role is defined in the 2010 Enterprise Agreement⁽¹⁾ as Enrolled Nurse who demonstrates advanced skills and knowledge within each of the 3 domains of:

- > **Client assessment**
- > **Care management**
- > **Leadership responsibilities⁽¹⁾**



What is the ASEN scope of practice?

The ASEN is able to undertake a variety of roles, functions, responsibilities, activities and decision-making capacities within which they have been educated, competent and are authorised to perform⁽³⁾. The ASEN scope of professional practice is affected by legislation, professional standards such as competency standards, codes of ethics, conduct and practice and public need, demand and expectation of all Enrolled Nurses⁽²⁾. The scope of practice is described in the J&PS for the role and agreed by the employing health service/unit.

For more information visit the NMBA website: www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au

Are Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse roles the same as those of Enrolled Nurses generally?

Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse roles are not the same as those of enrolled nurses. The enrolled nurse practice varies. The ASEN is able to demonstrate the capacity to use critical thinking, demonstrate advanced skills and knowledge in client assessment, care delivery and assume leadership responsibilities for other Enrolled nurses. An ASEN would have greater level of delegated responsibility in the delivery of client care which may include clinical and non-clinical roles; and will generally have more indirect forms and levels of supervision⁽¹⁾. The ASEN demonstrates a commitment to life long learning and inquiry.

Are ASENs a substitute for Registered Nurses?

The ASEN supports the Registered Nurse/Midwife in the provision of patient-centred care. Employees at this level work under the direction and supervision of the Registered Nurse/Midwife. However at all times, the ASEN retains responsibility for their actions while remaining accountable to the Registered Nurse/Midwife for all delegated functions.

ASENs are not substitutes for Registered Nurses. Staffing models proposed by the health service/unit should however be reviewed to consider the ASEN role.*

**All nurse vacancies provide an opportunity to consider the ASEN role in staffing models,*

and may provide for opportunity to explore using ASEN roles

What is the process for establishing and implementing of an ASEN role?

The implementation of an ASEN role within a team environment requires strong commitment and support from the relevant health service/unit and management team.

A Toolkit has been developed to assist the implementation of the ASEN role in South Australia. This Toolkit has been developed with consultation from stakeholders to assist in the establishment of consistent processes in the strategic planning, determination and implementation of the ASEN role across SA Health sites.

The Toolkit is designed as an interactive document to support and guide the ASEN role implementation process, providing an orderly process that considers the multiple facets of role implementation.

The Toolkit provides guiding principles for the implementation process, divided into the following 4 stages.

Stage 1 – Initiation – establishing a need

Stage 2 - Planning

Stage 3 – Implementation

Stage 4 – Evaluation

Each stage outlines crucial considerations for key stakeholders to enable the successful implementation of the ASEN role as determined by health service/units.

The Toolkit incorporates:

- > Guiding principles for implementation
- > ASEN domains
- > Capability and development of the Enrolled Nurse
- > Appendix 1 - Strategic Service Planning Template
- > Appendix 2 - Links for Generic Business Change Template
- > Appendix 3 - Generic ASEN Job and Person Specification
- > Appendix 4 - Example ASEN interview panel questions

Where and when are the ASEN positions going to be available?

The Nursing/Midwifery (SA Public Sector) Enterprise Agreement 2010⁽¹⁾ provides for the implementation of the ASEN role into the South Australian nursing and midwifery career structure. Workforce planning is fundamental to determining where and when positions are available. The ASEN is a merit based appointment as determined and required by the health unit/service. The ASEN classification is operative from 1 December 2011⁽¹⁾.

What is meant by a merit based process?

The ASEN position is a merit based appointment as determined and required by health services/units. Merit according to the Public Sector Act ⁽⁴⁾ is “the extent to which each of the applicant has abilities, aptitude, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience (including community experience) and personal qualities relevant to the carrying out of the duties in question”. The advertising of a position is in accordance to the LHN Human Resource processes. Further information can be sourced in Appendix 3 and 4 of the *Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse – toolkit for ASEN role implementation in South Australia* located on the nursing and Midwifery Office Website at

www.nursingsa.com

Is the ASEN role transferable?

The appointment to the role of an ASEN is site determined and specific to the practice setting and position created. It is therefore, not a personal classification and cannot be automatically transferred to another practice setting. The ASEN is able to apply for another position in a merit based selection process in another setting if a position is advertised.

How is the ASEN role supported by health service/units?

The health service/units guidelines and procedures will be developed to support the ASEN role in the practice setting. The Job and Person specification (JPS) will represent the level at which the ASEN is working. The ASEN performance review and development (PR&D) will ensure the ASEN is supported in building the capacity to fulfil the role as

indicated in the JPS.

Nursing and Midwifery Leaders will be considering the impact of the role introduction across all relevant workforce groups (including but not limited to the nursing/midwifery workforce) as any new roles and/or new practice models under consideration cannot be implemented in isolation.

Advanced Skills Enrolled Nurse Role Examples

NOTE: The following ASEN roles are examples only. These examples should not exclude or be the basis for the development of ASEN roles across all practice settings.

Client Assessment

In addition to fulfilling all of the duties of an Enrolled Nurse, the ASEN will have a greater level of delegated responsibility in client care which may include clinical and non-clinical roles in the unit under the indirect supervision of the registered nurse. The ASEN is able to make reliable assessments for consideration by the registered nurse, knows when to refer if a client assessment deviates from the expected outcomes. The ASEN is able to demonstrate competency in client assessment at an advanced level for enrolled nurse practice.

For example, the ASEN in a Renal Unit is able to assess clients in their own home for renal replacement therapy under the indirect supervision of the registered nurse.

Contributing to delivery of care and care management

In addition to fulfilling duties expected of any Enrolled Nurse in a clinical area, the ASEN is able to use their advanced clinical knowledge and skills to contribute to the care management of a defined group of clients within their scope of practice. The registered nurse considers the clinical context including patient complexity and stability before delegating aspects of care management to the ASEN.

For example, if a client is stable and their outcomes are predicted to be normal, the ASEN in a Cardiac Intensive Care Unit may be able to undertake the pre and post care of patients who have undergone percutaneous cardiac interventions e.g. angiography, angioplasty, EP studies & ablation for stable clients (that is clients who have stable health conditions and are recovering consistent with the expected pathway for their procedure/condition). The ASEN will know when to refer client to the appropriate health professional if changes and deviations from normal occur. Policies and procedures will be in place to support the ASEN in care management in collaboration with the registered nurse.

Leadership responsibilities

In addition to fulfilling the duties of an Enrolled Nurse, the ASEN has a greater and/or broader knowledge base and clinical experience relevant to the clinical area, enabling the ASEN to undertake a leadership role of other Enrolled Nurses, Assistants in Nursing/Midwifery and nursing and midwifery students within the health service/unit. The ASEN is able to mentor and participate in PR&D of enrolled nurses developing the capacity of the enrolled nursing team. The ASEN is able to network with other health professionals.

For example the ASEN who undertakes discharge planning is able to attend vulnerable client meetings with health professionals from other teams and service providers e.g. Aboriginal Health, community health and recommend Rapid Brokerage Packages, Transitional Care Packages with the health care team in collaboration with the registered nurse and with the objective of improving the patients journey.

Where else can I get information about the ASEN?

For further information regarding ASENs please visit the following websites:

SA Health Nursing and Midwifery Office
www.nursingsa.com

References

1. *Nursing and Midwifery (South Australian Public Sector) Enterprise Agreement 2010*. Government of South Australia. Department of the Premier and Cabinet. South Australia.
2. Bryant-Lukosius, D. & DiCenso, A. (2004). A framework for the introduction and evaluation of advanced practice nursing roles. *Nursing and Health Care Management and Policy*. Vol. 48(5), pp. 530-540.
3. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (2007). *Scope of Practice and Decision Making Framework*.
4. Public Sector Act 2009. South Australia. 1.7.2011.

