Collaborative Practice Agreement (CPA) for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority

Third Edition

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1. Overview of the purpose and extent of a written collaborative practice agreement (CPA)

The Practice Standards and Guidelines for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority (An Bord Altranais, 2010) are devised by An Bord Altranais to provide regulatory guidance for the professional practice of nurses and midwives engaged in prescribing medicinal products. Registered Nurse Prescribers (RNP) and health service employers should refer to the Practice Standards and Guidelines in the development of clinical governance structures at local and national level to support the implementation of nurse/midwife prescribing where it is considered necessary and can be appropriately supported.

The Decision-Making Framework for Nurse and Midwife Prescribing (An Bord Altranais, 2007) within the Practice Standards and Guidelines states that a nurse/midwife with prescriptive authority (recognised as a RNP) should have a written collaborative practice agreement (CPA) with a medical practitioner that is approved by the health service employer in order for the nurse/midwife to prescribe medications within her/his scope of practice at her/his place of employment.

This document provides standards and guidelines for developing CPAs for the implementation of nurse/midwife prescribing and provides nurses and midwives, medical practitioners and health service employers with a framework for the development (and approval) of CPAs. It also details the notification, renewal and termination processes for CPAs required by An Bord Altranais.

The underlying principles of the CPA include:

- The CPA is the standard that An Bord Altranais developed to ensure that the requirements as outlined in the medicines legislation are upheld and that clear lines of communication have been identified within the health care setting.

- The CPA serves as a tool to ensure that communication structures have been established between the RNP and the medical practitioner regarding the care of their patients/service users and agreed by the employer.

- The CPA defines the parameters of the RNP’s scope of practice. While recognising the responsibility of the medical practitioner to the patient/service user, the individual nurse/midwife is accountable for her/his practice. This means that she/he is professionally accountable as an individual for her/his prescribing decisions. This encompasses the consultation and referral arrangements when a patient’s/service user’s care extends beyond the RNP’s scope of practice.

- The CPA is drawn up with the agreement of the RNP, the medical practitioner and the health service employer outlining the parameters of the RNP’s prescribing authority (i.e. her/his scope of practice). The principles of professional accountability, responsibility, competence and clinical governance underpin the CPA.

- The CPA provides a template for the development, audit and evaluation of the RNP’s prescribing practices within the health care setting.

- The information provided in this document takes cognisance of the Practice Standards and Guidelines published by An Bord Altranais and the regulatory requirements of the medicines regulations of the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (Statutory Instrument SI No. 201 of 2007) and the Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI No. 200 of 2007). The medicines legislation provides the legal authority to nurses and midwives to prescribe. This authority is based upon the following conditions being satisfied:

  - The nurse/midwife is employed by a health service provider in a hospital, nursing home, clinic or other health service setting (including any case where the health service is provided in a private home).

  - The medicinal product is one that would be given in the usual course of the service provided in the health service setting in which the nurse/midwife is employed.

  - The prescription is issued in the usual course of the provision of that health service.

  - An Bord Altranais Personal Identification Number (PIN) of the registered nurse/midwife must also be stated on the prescription.

In addition, the 2007 Regulations allow a health service provider to determine further conditions for the prescriptive authority of the RNP.

The scope and context of practice for the RNP should be determined with reference to the competencies for prescriptive authority and practice standards that a nurse/midwife should possess and adhere to as part of their professional responsibilities. Guidance to Nurses and Midwives on Medication Management (An Bord Altranais, 2007) along with the relevant medicines legislation, national and health service provider health care and medicines policies must also inform the prescribing and medication management practices of the nurse/midwife.

The written CPA should be developed prior to the health service employer authorising the RNP to prescribe in the organisation. An Bord Altranais advises candidate RNPs in the education programme for prescriptive authority to
begin drafting the CPA while undertaking the programme. These guidelines should be used to support CPAs based upon the administrative processes and clinical governance structures of the health service employer. The CPA should contain at a minimum the detailed information as determined by the *Nurses Rules, 2010 Section 3.11b (SI No. 689 of 2010)* and the *Practice Standards and Guidelines for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority* (An Bord Altranais, 2010).

### 2. Criteria for a Collaborative Practice Agreement

In this document, An Bord Altranais provides the criteria for the components of the CPA. The criteria are based upon the review of the literature and international experiences. The national policies for the nurse/midwife prescribing initiative have also been considered.

The CPA should include the following:

- **Details of the applicant/RNP to include:**
  - An Bord Altranais registration number (PIN) of the registered nurse or midwife,
  - Full name as registered with An Bord Altranais,
  - Place of employment, work address, telephone number, email,
  - Clinical area (e.g. Acute Care – A & E, Diabetes, Community),
  - Job title (e.g. ANP – Urology, Respiratory Nurse Specialist, Community Midwife).

- **Details of the Collaborating Medical Practitioner(s) to include:**
  - Full name,
  - Area of medical specialty,
  - Place of employment,
  - Work address,
  - Confirmation of registration with the Medical Council of Ireland.

- **Details of the health service employer authorising the CPA:**
  - Full name,
  - Title/position of the individual (e.g. director of nursing/midwifery or service manager).

- **Attachment A which details the description of the practice setting and the specific clinical area of the RNP.** This should include the patient/service user population and health conditions for which the RNP has responsibility. This information should represent the scope of practice of the individual RNP.

  - **Attachment B which details the listing of specific medications (generic names) of the medications the RNP is competent to prescribe and authorised to prescribe as per the local Drugs and Therapeutics Committee. Off label prescribing of authorised medications outside the terms of its product authorisation should also be detailed within this attachment.**

  - **Attachment C which details:**
    1. the description of the conditions, if any, that the health service provider has placed on the RNP’s prescriptive authority.
    2. a description of the RNP’s review and audit of her/his prescriptive practices.

    If the local Drugs and Therapeutic Committee’s involvement is required for the criteria outlined in 1 and/or 2 of Attachment C above this should also be noted.

- **Commencement date of the CPA with the accompanying signatures of the RNP, collaborating medical practitioner(s) and individual within the health service organisation (e.g. director of nursing/midwifery or service manager) authorised to approve the CPA.**

- **A date must be stipulated for the regular review and renewal of the CPA. (See section 3 for detailed guidance for the review and renewal process of the CPA).**

- **The RNP is responsible for maintaining continued competence for her/his prescriptive authority as per An Bord Altranais and the health service employer’s policy.** An Bord Altranais provides a draft portfolio for the RNP to use in recording continued competence activities. The draft portfolio can be downloaded from the website, www.nursingboard.ie.

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1 An Bord Altranais supports the use of the HSE RNP Guidance Process for Off-label Medications (Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director, 2010) or similar tool which provides a detailed template for RNPs and health service employers as a guide for the governance structures required for the implementation of off-label prescribing by RNPs. The HSE document can be accessed at www. http://www.hse.ie/eng/about/WhosONMSD/practicedevelopment/NursePrescribing/.
3. Notification of the Collaborative Practice Agreement to An Bord Altranais

Initial Registration in the Registered Nurse Prescriber Division

The candidate RNP must complete and submit the Application Form for Registration in the Registered Nurse Prescriber Division with the appropriate fee to the Registration Department of An Bord Altranais. Part B of the Application Form requires the candidate to state specific information about her/his CPA. The CPA is to be completed in full, signed and dated by the candidate RNP. The collaborating medical practitioner(s) and the authorised representative of the health service employer approving the CPA must also sign and date the form. The form and its attachments should be retained by the health service employer. A copy of the form and attachments A, B and C should be retained by the candidate RNP for her/his own records.

The CPA status of a RNP will initially be entered as “Valid” when the application for registration in Nurse Prescribers Division of the Register of An Bord Altranais is complete. This information will be placed with the registrant’s information in the Check the Register section which is available for public viewing on An Bord Altranais website.

An Bord Altranais requires all newly RNPs to review and renew their initial CPA in one year’s time and thereafter every two years.

For example if a nurse/midwife registers her/his prescribing qualification in Year 2011, the RNP is next required to review and renew their CPA in 2012. They will then be required to do this in 2014, 2016 etc.

Biannual Review and Renewal

A registered nurse/midwife whose name is on the RNP Division of An Bord Altranais Register for two years or more is required to review and renew her/his CPA every two years. An Bord Altranais provides written notification to the RNP in advance of the renewal date.

The RNP must complete the CPA form in full, sign and date it. The collaborating medical practitioner(s) and the authorised representative of the health service employer approving the CPA renewal must also sign and date the form. If there are no changes to the criteria for Attachments A, B or C this should be noted on the form itself. If there are changes to any of these Attachments a new attachment should be drafted and included as part of the CPA renewal documentation to be approved by the health service employer.

All CPAs (initial and/or revised) are to be kept on file and stored locally by the RNP’s health service employer. The RNP should retain a copy of the approved CPA form and attachments A, B and C for her/his own records.

The RNP Notification Form for CPA Review and Renewal must be submitted to An Bord Altranais by the RNP as evidence of her/his and the health service employer’s review and approval of the CPA. Failure to submit the RNP Notification Form for CPA Renewal by the designated date will result in the CPA status becoming “Invalid”.

The RNP and health service employer will be informed of the status change and it will be placed on the registrant’s information on Check the Register section on An Bord Altranais website facility.

An Bord Altranais has the authority to review a CPA of a RNP if so required and may request and examine any CPA (current or previous ones) of a RNP. The RNP and the health service employer will be notified in writing of this.

The RNP will be in breach of An Bord Altranais regulatory framework for prescriptive authority if he/she prescribes medication without having a valid CPA on file and may be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Termination of the CPA

All CPAs are considered null and void on the termination/movement of employment for which the CPA is originally intended.

CPAs should terminate automatically if the RNP or medical practitioner no longer has an active unrestricted registration. The RNP shall notify An Bord Altranais in writing within five working days of any termination of a CPA. The Notification Form for Collaborative Practice Agreement Termination must be completed and sent to An Bord Altranais by the RNP. The RNP is obliged to notify the employer of this termination.

The registration information details of the RNP held by An Bord Altranais will be revised stating that the CPA status is invalid. The RNP and health service employer will be informed by An Bord Altranais of this status change.

The Collaborative Practice Agreement Form, RNP Notification Form for CPA Review and Renewal, Notification Form for Collaborative Practice Agreement Termination and Draft Portfolio are all available for downloading on the website www.nursingboard.ie