

The Code
**Professional
staff, quality
services**

prioritise people

practise effectively

preserve safety

promote professionalism and trust

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) regulates the 690,000 nurses and midwives who are registered to practise in the UK and nursing associates registered to practise in England. The Code governs the professional standards that your nursing and midwifery staff must uphold.

The Code was updated to reflect the regulation of nursing associates on 10 October 2018.

This leaflet provides an overview of the main changes to the Code and aims to give you an understanding of your role and responsibility as an employer of a registered professional.

The Code

Why it matters to employers

You are responsible for the safety and quality of the care provided by your staff. The Code supports this objective by ensuring that every contact, action and decision made by a nurse, midwife or nursing associate is governed by core professional standards and principles.

The standards by which nurses, midwives and nursing associate practise are key to the quality of the services you provide.

The benefits of the revised Code

The revised Code has been developed in consultation with nurses and midwives, employers, the public and educators, among others. There are many synergies with Codes that other registered professionals uphold, and this should support multi-disciplinary teamwork. Nurses, midwives and nursing associates who uphold the Code will help you meet your quality and safety goals and the revised Code aligns more easily with these.

The Code emphasises the need for professionals to:

- ✓ **Prioritise people**
- ✓ **Practise effectively**
- ✓ **Preserve safety**
- ✓ **Promote professionalism and trust**





The updated Code has important implications for frontline nurses, midwives and nursing associates, management teams and employing organisations.

Key changes to the Code

The Code is periodically updated to ensure it is relevant to current nursing and midwifery practice. This revision provides a set of standards that reflect changes in contemporary professional nursing and midwifery practice, as well as wider expectations of health and social care. Its focus is to drive continuous improvements in the quality and safety of care.

The standards have been expanded to include:

- ✓ A professional duty of candour
- ✓ A requirement to offer help if an emergency arises outside a nurse or midwife's normal area of practice
- ✓ Ensuring the fundamentals of care are delivered effectively during all stages of life
- ✓ New standards on dealing with complaints
- ✓ Use of all forms of communication, including social media
- ✓ More detail about raising concerns and whistleblowing
- ✓ Guidance on effective record keeping
- ✓ Greater clarity on delegation and decision-making
- ✓ Guidance on prescribing and medicines management.

The Code provides the basis for how we assess the fitness to practise of people who are referred to us if there are concerns about their practice.



Revalidation

Every three years, registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates have to revalidate to remain on our register.

Understanding and reflecting on the Code is central to revalidation. The Code will be a useful point of reference for embedding professional values and principles in appraisal.

Nursing and midwifery staff will value their employers' support when they come to demonstrate their continuing fitness to practise.

[revalidation.nmc.org.uk](https://www.revalidation.nmc.org.uk)

Next steps...

- 1** Embrace the Code, and embed it within your organisation. This will help you to support the professionalism of your staff, and improve quality and safety. We recommend you bring the revised Code to the attention of your board or governing body.
- 2** Understand what the Code means for your organisation's nurses, midwives and nursing associates and what they will be expected to uphold. You can download the Code from the NMC website at www.nmc.org.uk/code.
- 3** Incorporate the new Code content into your induction, training and professional development programmes.
- 4** Ensure you have policies in place to support your staff to uphold the Code.

There are more resources on the NMC website to help you promote the Code. You can find them at www.nmc.org.uk/code.

**Thank you
for your support**

www.nmc.org.uk

