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New nursing qualification announced

The Nursing Council today announced the establishment of a new Diploma of Enrolled Nursing.

Chief Executive Carolyn Reed says the new diploma will enable second level nurses to better meet the needs of patients and ensure New Zealand has the range of nurses it needs to protect public health and safety.

The announcement follows an extensive review of the role and education of second level nurses who work under the direction of registered nurses, who have a three year Bachelor Degree in Nursing.

The 'scope of practice' which describes the health services provided by nurses will require enrolled nurses to have a wider range of skills. Hence the need, Carolyn Reed says, to raise the qualification from certificate to diploma level. The new 18 month Diploma will sit at Level 5 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

Ms Reed says Council's role is to provide a framework for nursing to ensure nurses are well-prepared and competent to provide the nursing care New Zealanders need in a range of settings from home to community to hospital.

"We have consulted widely on this issue and believe that this change will be welcomed across the sector to expand the contribution enrolled nurses can make to health services."

The new programmes of study for enrolled nurses will begin next year. Transition arrangements for existing enrolled nurses and nurse assistants will be confirmed in the next few weeks.

For more information:

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