

# Kangaroo Island Community Outreach Nurse Practitioner



The Australian Government has provided funding to deliver a Kangaroo Island Community Outreach Program, including a Nurse Practitioner.

## Frequently asked questions

### What is a Nurse Practitioner?

A Nurse Practitioner is a Registered Nurse with the experience, expertise and authority to diagnose and treat people of all ages with a variety of health conditions.

Nurse Practitioners have completed additional university study at master's level and are the most senior and independent clinical nurses in our health system.

### How is a Nurse Practitioner different to other Registered Nurses?

- While Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners both focus on patient observation and care, the main difference between the two roles is that Nurse Practitioners are permitted to prescribe treatments, order tests, and diagnose patients — duties normally performed by medical staff and General Practitioners (GPs).
- Registered Nurses usually work under a GP who determines patient care, diagnoses, and plans follow-up care. However, a Nurse Practitioner can work independently.
- This means that the main difference between Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners, from a responsibility perspective, is that Nurse Practitioners have greater autonomy and responsibility because of their advanced education, training, and experience.

### Who will Nurse Practitioners see?

The Nurse Practitioner will assess and/or manage:

- People with complex chronic health conditions requiring further assessment and follow-up.
- People in the community who do not currently access services, for example Aboriginal consumers.
- People with barriers to accessing health services, for example barriers such as transport and/or mobility.
- People unable to get timely access to a GPs and who are likely to present to the Emergency Department.

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## Can the Nurse Practitioner prescribe medications and order tests?

Yes, a Nurse Practitioner can prescribe certain medications according to their knowledge and education, as well as order blood tests and most X-rays and ultrasounds.

## Do I need a referral to see the Nurse Practitioner?

- Yes, you will need a referral from either a GP or other health professional, such as a community nurse, physiotherapist, hospital or other health related service, such as Junction Australia.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander consumers can self-refer by contacting the Nurse Practitioner.

## I don't have transport, so how do I get seen by the Nurse Practitioner?

The Nurse Practitioner will provide outreach clinics in Parndana and Penneshaw and will also be able to provide home visiting if required (on a case-by-case basis).

## Can I see the Nurse Practitioner if I am sick?

Yes, the Nurse Practitioner will provide advanced clinical assessment and either provide treatment or may refer you on if you require more extensive treatment or need follow-up. Referrals may include to a GP, other specialist or presentation to the Emergency Department.

## How often will the Nurse Practitioner be available?

- They will be available during business hours, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.
- Regular scheduled outreach clinics, such as Penneshaw and Parndana, will be offered on a weekly basis.
- Frequency of appointments will be determined on a case-by-case basis as discussed between the patient and Nurse Practitioner.

## How much will it cost me to see the Nurse Practitioner?

It will be a free service as they are employed by SA Health and funded by the Australian Government.

## What if I have questions or feedback?

Contact our Nursing and Midwifery Advisor, Alice Steeb, on 0466 944 067 or via email at [alice.steeb@sa.gov.au](mailto:alice.steeb@sa.gov.au).