

# AN BORD ALTRANAIS

# NEWS

PUBLICATION OF THE IRISH NURSING BOARD

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# An Bord Altranais Moves to New Premises

On 27 July 2007 An Bord Altranais moved from Fitzwilliam Square to its new home at 18/20 Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin. The fitting out of the premises, which was purchased in November 2006, commenced in mid April.

The scale of work undertaken by the Board has increased significantly over the last number of years, the number of staff employed has increased to over 50 and the new offices provide much needed space. The new offices contain a dedicated suite of meeting rooms which will accommodate the meetings of the Board and Committees of the Board which in recent years had to take place outside the premises of An Bord again due to lack of space.

The building is located just off the main street in Blackrock. It is well serviced by public transport. The DART and mainline train station is very close to Carysfort Avenue. Bus routes from the city stop outside An Bord, as well as services from Rialto and Sandyford.



## Contacting An Bord Altranais

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**Main Email: [admin@nursingboard.ie](mailto:admin@nursingboard.ie)**

### Accounts Dept.

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Email: [library@nursingboard.ie](mailto:library@nursingboard.ie) Fax: 01 639 8596

# Updates on Nurse and Midwife Prescribing and Medication Management

## Prescriptive Authority for Nurses and Midwives

An Bord Altranais Project Implementation Plan for Prescriptive Authority for Nurses and Midwives, in partnership with the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery, continues to progress alongside the national work of the Department of Health and Children (DoHC) and the Health Service Executive (HSE) Resource and Implementation Group (RIG). The first group of nurses and midwives undertaking the education programme for prescribing are due to complete their studies at the end of September 2007. Successful completion of the certificate Level 8 programme is an eligibility requirement for registration as a Registered Nurse Prescriber on the Register of Nurses maintained by An Bord Altranais. In October 2007 a second cohort of students will be enrolled in the programme currently provided by Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and University College Cork. Detailed information about the Certificate in Nursing for Nurse/Midwife Prescribing is available from the course coordinators of the schools.

In conjunction with the individual registration process for the nurse prescriber there is the ongoing development of the health service provider organisational and practice setting specific policies to support the national initiative of nurse and midwife prescribing. The clinical governance structures for this have been building over the recent months.

An Bord Altranais has contributed to the clinical governance structures with its professional guidance in the recently published *Practice Standards for Nurse and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority, Decision-Making Framework for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority, Collaborative Practice Agreement and the Requirements and Standards for Education Programmes for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority*. (All are available for viewing and downloading via [www.nursingboard.ie](http://www.nursingboard.ie) and can be ordered in print copy by contacting An Bord Altranais).

At a national level the DoHC/HSE Resource and Implementation Group (RIG) continue to oversee the implementation with the Director of Nursing Services for the Prescribing Project. Ms. Elizabeth Adams is responsible for managing this process. Four regional assistant directors of nursing are to be in post shortly to assist her. The RIG continue to meet regularly, and plans for the evaluation of the implementation and monitoring of prescriptive authority are advancing.

Communication and collaboration amongst key stakeholders (e.g. the individual Registered Nurse Prescriber; staff nurses and midwives, medical practitioners, pharmacists and health service management) is paramount at this stage of implementation. The Project Officer of An Bord Altranais with representatives of the National Council and the HSE have been meeting and communicating with the profession and health service management to provide guidance and direction for the implementation of prescriptive authority. Information sessions have

taken place across the country at each of the regional Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units to enable individuals and organisations to learn more and plan for their own areas.

## Medication Management

*Guidance to Nurses and Midwives on Medication Management, 2007* has been published. The expanded practices of nurses and midwives involving medications,

(e.g. prescriptive authority, use of medication protocols for the supply and administration of medications etc.) along with changes in medicines legislation and the increasing professional responsibilities for medication competency and safety is addressed in the document. The publication details the medication standards expected by An Bord Altranais, supporting guidance for the standards and resources are provided. The analysis of the Education Department Enquiries Database established the need to include new medication management topics such as conscious sedation and greater information about other subjects presented in the previous 2003 edition (e.g. compliance aids).

An additional resource on medication management is the e-learning programme recently launched at An Bord Altranais conference – "Nursing and Midwifery Education – Enhancing Learning in Clinical Practice". The interactive programme, developed by An Bord Altranais in partnership with the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery, is being hosted by the HSE Learning Centre. It offers scenarios for common practice questions and exercises to allow the user to engage with medication management and to assess her/his knowledge. The e-learning programme encourages individual nurses and midwives to explore and build upon their knowledge and competency in medication management. The organisations are providing a full scheme for presenting the e-learning programme to the profession and train-the-trainer sessions are being planned.

Further details about any of these recent developments for nurse and midwife prescribing and medication management can be obtained by contacting the Project Team.

## Project Team Contact Details

Kathleen Walsh (Project Officer):  
Telephone: 01 639 8500; Email: [kwalsh@nursingboard.ie](mailto:kwalsh@nursingboard.ie)

Denise Carroll (Project Assistant):  
Telephone: 01 639 8500; Email: [dcarroll@nursingboard.ie](mailto:dcarroll@nursingboard.ie)

An Bord Altranais, 18-20 Carysfort Ave, Blackrock, Co Dublin.  
Website: [www.nursingboard.ie](http://www.nursingboard.ie)

In addition check out the HSE website [www.hse.ie/en/nurseprescribing](http://www.hse.ie/en/nurseprescribing)

## COURSE CO-ORDINATORS CONTACT DETAILS

### Rena Creedon

Catherine McAuley School of Nursing and Midwifery  
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An Bord Altranais



National Council for the  
Professional Development  
of Nursing and Midwifery

# Forthcoming Events

## ALCI Autumn Breastfeeding Conference and Workshop

Date: Friday 5th & Saturday 6th October 2007  
 Venue: Mullingar Park Hotel  
 Contact: Catriona Corcoran  
 Tel: 044-934377  
 e-mail: [alci@iol.ie](mailto:alci@iol.ie)

## Institute of Community Health Nursing Annual Conference/AGM

### "Governance in Community Nursing"

Date: Thursday 11th October 2007  
 Venue: Croke Park Conference Centre, Jones Road, Dublin 3  
 Tel: 01-6602689  
 e-mail: [admin@ichn.ie](mailto:admin@ichn.ie)  
 web: [www.ichn.ie](http://www.ichn.ie)  
 This conference is open to all nurses working in the community

## Pain Conference

Date: Wednesday 24th October 2007  
 Venue: South Court Hotel, Limerick  
 Contact: Lia Begley, Cancer Services, Mid Western Regional Hospital, Limerick  
 Tel: 061-482874  
 email: [lia.begley@mailh.hse.ie](mailto:lia.begley@mailh.hse.ie)

## Introduction to Billings/Ovulation Method

Dates: October 6th & 13th; November 3rd & 10th 2007  
 Venue: 11 Marlborough Court, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1  
 Contact: Mavis Kinery  
 Tel: 8786156  
 email: [inforequest@naomi.ie](mailto:inforequest@naomi.ie)  
 Cost: €80.00  
 Booking: Before 24th September 2007. Places limited.

## Clinical Audit Skills (2-day)

Dates: November 15th & 16th 2007  
 Venue: Stillorgan Park Hotel, Dublin  
 Contact: Tony Duffy, Clinical Quality Ireland  
 Tel: 087 298 2097  
 web: [www.cqi.ie](http://www.cqi.ie)  
 Cost: €325.00 per person (Includes course manual, tea/coffee, lunch and ongoing support from course facilitator)

## Caring for the Child with a Life-Limiting Condition

Dates: 8 – 26 October 2007 (15 day programme)  
 Venue: Lynch South Court Hotel, Limerick  
 Contact: Alice Ward / Margaret McManus, Nurse Education Centre Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin  
 Tel: 01 4096605 / 01 4096367  
 email: [alice.ward@olhsc.ie/margaret.mcmanus@olhsc.ie](mailto:alice.ward@olhsc.ie/margaret.mcmanus@olhsc.ie)

## Caring for the Child with a Life-Limiting Condition

Date: Wednesday 7 November 2007  
 Venue: Lynch South Court Hotel, Limerick  
 Contact: Alice Ward / Margaret McManus, Nurse Education Centre Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin  
 Tel: 01 4096605 / 01 4096367  
 email: [alice.ward@olhsc.ie/margaret.mcmanus@olhsc.ie](mailto:alice.ward@olhsc.ie/margaret.mcmanus@olhsc.ie)

## Decisions following Fitness to Practise Committee Inquiries

Following Inquiries held by the Fitness to Practise Committee pursuant to Part V of the Nurses Act, 1985, the following decisions of the Committee and of the Board are published in respect of the following nurses:

- Name:** Ms. Oonagh Mary Lawlor, P.I.N. 54581  
**Finding of the Fitness to Practise Committee:** Professional misconduct and unfit to engage in the practise of nursing by reason of a physical or mental disability.  
**Board Sanction:** Pursuant to Section 39 (1) of the Nurses Act, 1985, Ms. Lawlor's name was erased from the Register of Nurses. The decision to erase Ms. Lawlor's name from the Register was confirmed by the High Court on 22nd January, 2007.
- Name:** Ms. Anne Regina McDermott, P.I.N. 60056  
**Finding of the Fitness to Practise Committee:** Professional Misconduct  
**Board Sanction:** Pursuant to Section 41 (1) of the Nurses Act, 1985, Ms. McDermott was censured in relation to her professional conduct and pursuant to Section 40 (1) of the Act, conditions were attached to the retention of her name in the Register of Nurses. The decision to attach conditions to the retention of Ms. McDermott's name in the Register was confirmed by the High Court on 14th May, 2007.
- Name:** Ms. Jenet Guillermo Arellano, P.I.N. 81479  
**Finding of the Fitness to Practise Committee:** Professional Misconduct  
**Board Sanction:** Pursuant to Section 41 (1) of the Nurses Act, 1985, Ms. Arellano was censured in relation to her professional conduct and the Board further advises that she familiarise herself with An Bord Altranais "Guidance to Nurses and Midwives on Medication Management" June, 2003 edition.
- Name:** Ms. Anne Catherine Phillips, P.I.N. 40986  
**Finding of the Fitness to Practise Committee:** Professional Misconduct  
**Board Sanction:** Pursuant to Section 41 (1) of the Nurses Act, 1985, Ms. Phillips was advised in relation to her professional conduct.
- Name:** Ms. Ann Bernadette Goggin, P.I.N. 19508  
**Finding of the Fitness to Practise Committee:** Professional Misconduct  
**Board Sanction:** Pursuant to Section 41 (1) of the Nurses Act, 1985, Ms. Goggin was advised in relation to her professional conduct.

## DECISIONS FOLLOWING AN APPLICATION TO THE HIGH COURT PURSUANT TO SECTION 42 OF THE NURSES ACT, 1985

Section 42 (1) states that:

*"Where a Nurse is convicted in the State of an offence triable on indictment or is convicted outside the State of an offence consisting of acts or omissions which would constitute an offence triable on indictment if done or made in the State, the Board may decide that a name of such person should be erased from the register".*

- Name:** Noreen Mulholland, P.I.N. 88664  
 Pursuant to Section 42 of the Nurses Act, 1985, the name of Ms. Noreen Mulholland was erased from the Register of Nurses by the High Court on 11th June, 2007.
- Name:** Brendan Mary Joseph Cullen, P.I.N. 40357  
 Pursuant to Section 42 of the Nurses Act, 1985, the name of Mr. Brendan Mary Joseph Cullen was erased from the Register of Nurses by the High Court on 25th June, 2007.

# Research Abstracts



The following Research Abstracts are from research carried out by nurses and midwives, supported by a research award from An Bord Altranaís. A copy of the completed work is usually held in the library in An Bord Altranaís.

## Irish Women with Epilepsy: Are they receiving satisfactory pre-pregnancy counselling?



**Brenda Liggan** MSc PHC, BSc Nursing, H Dip Neuroscience Nursing, RGN. Epilepsy Research Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Research Centre, Smurfit Building, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin 9

**Background:** For women with epilepsy, the teratogenic potential of anti-epileptic drugs is a major concern when planning a pregnancy. Pre-conception counselling is vital for women with epilepsy to enable them to make informed choices and guide their decision-making abilities regarding pregnancy.

**Methodology:** A questionnaire focusing on pre-pregnancy issues was distributed to 150 women with epilepsy of childbearing age attending a weekly epilepsy clinic. Both descriptive and comparative analysis was applied to the data.

**Findings:** One hundred and five questionnaires were returned yielding a 70% response rate. Eighty-five percent of the participants acknowledged that they were currently taking folic acid and a significant association was found between women having a previous pregnancy and currently taking folic acid ( $p = 0.0003$ ). Sixty-three percent of women said that they were given contraception advice while on anti-epileptic drugs. In addition a significant statistical association was found between women receiving advice on

contraception while taking anti-epileptic medication and satisfaction with pre-pregnancy advice received ( $p = 0.04$ ). Forty-one percent of participants admitted some level of satisfaction with pre-pregnancy advice given.

**Conclusions & Recommendations:** Women with epilepsy of childbearing potential require specific consideration due to the effects of epilepsy and anti-epileptic drugs on the menstrual cycle, fertility, contraception and pregnancy. Pre-conception counselling is therefore of vital importance to women with epilepsy of childbearing age. Worryingly, only 44% of Irish women with epilepsy in this study acknowledge a level of satisfaction with pre-conception advice. Therefore, it is evident that more needs to be achieved (additional neurologists, nurse specialists, walk in clinics and advice lines). Women with epilepsy want epilepsy services that deliver adequate information and pre-conception counselling about drug treatment during childbearing years and before pregnancy occurs.

## Rural Family Carers' Experiences of the Nursing Home Placement of an Older Relative: A Grounded Theory Approach



**Assumpta A. Ryan** PhD, MEd, BSc (Hons), RGN, RMN, RNT, PGCTHE. Lecturer in Nursing, University of Ulster, Coleraine.

**Background:** This quantitative study explored family carers' experiences of the nursing home placement of an older relative. The study was undertaken in a large Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland using a grounded theory approach, broadly consistent with the work of Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998).

**Methodology:** Purposive sampling was used to initiate data collection and thereafter theoretical sampling was employed. Semi structured interviews were conducted with 29 relatives of nursing home residents and the resultant data were recorded, transcribed and analysed using constant comparisons. The software package, QSR NVivo, was used to facilitate data management and retrieval.

**Findings:** The findings suggested that although family carers had a very strong commitment to their caring role, a deterioration in their relatives' condition or their own inability to cope, resulted in the nursing home placement. Decisions about entry to care were also

influenced by participants' experiences of acute care, thoughts and feelings about the placement, degree of support and nature of the caregiving relationship. The placement impacted on the older person, the family carer, the carer-relative relationship and the extended family. Positive and negative consequences were identified. Family carers had a strong sense of familiarity with the nursing homes in their area and this appeared to permeate all aspects of their experience. This familiarity, in turn, influenced the choice of nursing home, timing of the placement and responses of family carers.

**Conclusions:** The theory that emerged suggests that familiarity was the key factor influencing rural family carers' experiences of the nursing home placement of an older relative. The findings indicate that issues such as rurality and familiarity warrant a more detailed exploration in future research on entry to care.

# An Bord Altranais Archives

An Bord Altranais is very pleased to announce that it has entered into a partnership agreement with University College Dublin to transfer its archive material to UCD Archives. This will facilitate the cataloguing, preservation and storage of the material and ensure its availability for researchers into the future.

An Bord Altranais was founded in 1951 when its two predecessor organisations, the Central Midwives Board and the General Nursing Council, were amalgamated under the Nurses Act, 1950. The Central Midwives Board was founded in 1918, followed shortly thereafter by the General Nursing Council in 1919. These organisations laid the foundations for the education and regulation of nurses and midwives in Ireland and helped establish the very high reputation enjoyed by Irish nurses and midwives worldwide. That work has been continued and developed by An Bord Altranais.

With the development of nursing and midwifery education in Ireland and particularly the move to the higher education arena, there has been a growing interest in the study of nursing and midwifery history. A number of nurses and midwives have conducted research into nursing and midwifery history at Masters and Doctoral level. Interest has also been shown by researchers from the areas of sociology, women's studies and history. *The Irish Society for Nursing and Midwifery History* was established in 2000 and is growing in stature with the development of important international links.

An Bord Altranais was very conscious of its civic responsibility to preserve material of historic importance for future generations. The Board had in its possession material not only from the annals of its own history but that of its predecessor organisations and from organisations such as the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute for Nurses and the Queen's Nurses Irish Branch with some material dating back to the 1890s. The Board clearly recognised that it did not have the expertise or facilities needed to properly preserve this material and so looked to University College Dublin for this, recognising that the facilities and staff in UCD Archive enjoyed a very high reputation. In turn, UCD recognised the benefit to the University of having such material available within their institution for historians.

The archive material was transferred in July 2007. Work on cataloguing



*Pictured at the signing of the archive agreement are seated Dr. Hugh Brady, President, UCD and Mrs Anne Carrigy, President of An Bord Altranais. Standing from the left are Mr Seamus Helferty, Principal Archivist, UCD; Prof. Mary Daly, Principal UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies; Dr. Anne-Marie Ryan, Chief Education Officer, An Bord Altranais; Ms Ursula Byrne, Acting Deputy CEO, An Bord Altranais; and Mr Eugene Donoghue, CEO, An Bord Altranais.*

and preserving the archive material will commence in September 2007 and is expected to take one year. Until that work is complete, there will be no access to the archive material. When the work is complete, a formal procedure for gaining access by written application to the Chief Executive Officer of An Bord Altranais will be put in place. Details of this will be published in the newsletter.

Further information on UCD Archive is available on <http://www.ucd.ie/archives/>

Further information on *The Irish Society for Nursing and Midwifery History* is available from

Dr. Therese Meehan at [therese.meehan@ucd.ie](mailto:therese.meehan@ucd.ie) or telephone 01 7166484.

Dr. Ann Wickham at [ann.wickham@dcu.ie](mailto:ann.wickham@dcu.ie) or telephone 01 7005518.

## New Public Health Nurse Registration Programmes

An Bord Altranais welcomes the commencement of the new public health nurse registration programmes commencing September 2007. Requirements and Standards for Public Health Nurse Registration Education Programmes have been published and are available from the website at [www.nursingboard.ie](http://www.nursingboard.ie) or from the offices of An Bord Altranais. These Requirements and Standards are developed by An Bord Altranais to embrace the skills and competencies to meet educational, health care policy and legislative changes facilitating the public health nurse to remain central to developments in public health nursing and primary care. The learning outcomes for the programmes will enable the student to contribute actively in the vision for primary care.

### The Higher Education Institutions offering the programme are:

University College Cork.

University College Dublin.

National University of Ireland Galway and St. Angela's College, Sligo.

For the first time application to the programme is welcomed from registered nurses who do not hold a midwifery registration. Candidates must be entered in the General Division of the Register of Nurses and must have two years clinical experience in nursing. The programme is no less than 32 weeks in

duration and can be delivered full time or as an equivalent part time course.

Unless the candidate's name is registered in the Midwives Division of the Register; the candidate must complete an additional An Bord Altranais approved module or unit of study on Maternal and Child Health as part of the programme. The purpose of this module is to prepare the student public health nurse to provide appropriate public health nursing care to monitor; protect and promote maternal and child health in a primary care context and within the nurse's scope of practice. This module will comprise of no less than 3 weeks of theoretical instruction and no less than 5 weeks of clinical instruction. During this time the student will be facilitated to gain an insight into the theories and concepts integral to assessing the health needs of a mother and child from the continuum of the pregnancy experience. On completion of the module the student will have developed competence to practice safely and effectively within his/her scope of practice, to appropriately assess and refer the health care needs of the mother and her family, in a primary health care context.

On successful completion of the programme the student public health nurse will be eligible for entry to the Public Health Nurse Division of the Register held by An Bord Altranais.





An Bord Altranais introduced this column to respond to queries from nurses and midwives with regard to their scope of practice. The queries will be addressed in a manner that protects the identity of the individual nurse, midwife or healthcare facility.

## QUESTION:

**I am registered as a nurse and as a midwife with An Bord Altranais. I am currently working as a staff nurse in a general hospital and have not worked as a midwife for many years. Occasionally I get asked to attend a woman in labour who has come in to the Accident and Emergency Department en-route to the maternity hospital several miles away. I am concerned I am working outside my scope of practice in this situation. As I intend to continue working as a staff nurse can I apply to An Bord Altranais to have my name erased from the midwives division of the register?**

## RESPONSE:

It is not possible for you to apply to An Bord Altranais to have your name erased from the midwives division of the register for the reason that you no longer wish to practice as a midwife. *The Nurses Act (1985)* states under sections 39, 42 and 44 the situations when An Bord Altranais may decide that the name of a person should be erased from the register:

### **Under Section 39 of the Nurses Act, 1985:**

When a nurse/midwife has been found, by the Fitness to Practise Committee, on the basis of an inquiry and report pursuant to section 38 of this Act, to be guilty of professional misconduct or to be unfit to engage in the practice of nursing because of physical or mental disability, or where a nurse/midwife has failed to pay a retention fee charged by the Board after the Board had, not less than two months previously by notice in writing sent by pre-paid post to the person, at his address as stated in the register, requested payment of the fee on more than one occasion.

### **Under Section 42 of the Nurses Act, 1985:**

Where a nurse is convicted in the State of an offence triable on indictment or is convicted

outside the State of an offence consisting of acts or omissions which would constitute an offence triable on indictment if done or made in the State, the Board may decide that the name of such person should be erased from the register.

### **Under Section 44 of the Nurses Act, 1985:**

Whenever the Board is satisfied that it is in the public interest so to do, the Board may apply to the High Court for an order in relation to any person registered in the register that, during the period specified in the order, registration of that person's name in the register shall not have effect.

*Guidelines for Midwives* (An Bord Altranais, 2001, p.10) provides guidance for midwives not in current practice. It states "A person employed as a nurse but with a midwifery qualification, may in an emergency be called upon to deal with an obstetric emergency situation or care for a woman in an advanced stage of labour. In such a situation, whilst calling for assistance the person should provide care to the woman to the best of her ability".

Ordinarily a nurse or midwife should not undertake any role or function she/he is not competent to undertake. However, the *Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework* (An Bord Altranais, 2000, p.9) states that "Nothing in this document will be construed as preventing a nurse or midwife from taking appropriate action in the case of an emergency. The best interests of the patient/client must be served by appropriate nursing or midwifery intervention in emergency situations." In the circumstance you describe your priority would be to provide care to the woman and her baby to the best of your ability.

You may find it beneficial to attend a refresher course to update your skills. This should be focused on your specific learning needs in relation to labour, birth and immediate postpartum care. You should discuss this with your manager who has a responsibility to assist facilitating your attendance at such a course. Your regional Nursing and Midwifery Planning and

Development Unit (NMPDU) should be able to provide details of such courses.

It may be appropriate to discuss with your manager the development of guidelines to manage such a situation. This should involve all key stakeholders including maternity hospital staff. The publication *Guidance to Nurses and Midwives on the Development of Policies, Guidelines and Protocols* (An Bord Altranais, 2000) may be useful.

## QUESTION:

**I am a registered nurse working in a service supporting people with intellectual disability. The supports offered to service users are all community based and are provided predominantly through non nursing personnel.**

**The service organisation promotes the concept and practice of Person Centred Medication Management systems to ensure that the individual service user has the optimum level of control over their medication in the context of maximising independence in their choice of lifestyle. Each individual therefore has his/her own Person Centred Medication Management Plan which is supported by a robust organisational policy. This policy is kept under constant review.**

**As part of my role (and to ensure optimum safety), I have assumed responsibility for ensuring that all prescriptions are both legible and "user friendly".**

**In this regard, I have:**

- a) obtained written consent from the individual (and/or where appropriate a significant other) to include the individual's photograph on the prescription sheet.**
- b) transcribed electronically all medications prescribed by the general practitioner onto the organisation's prescription sheet.**

**The general practitioner in turn will then "proof" the work I have**

**transcribed and sign off on same. This is the document from which the service user or his/her support staffs follows instructions for medication administration. My employing authority is very supportive of me in this regard. I am satisfied both personally and professionally that this practice is supportive of optimum safety whilst also facilitating the promotion of lifestyle choices for service users.**

**Although I feel totally competent in this regard, some of my colleagues have suggested that I am operating outside the scope of my practice. I will welcome your advice.**

## RESPONSE:

An Bord Altranais has recently published the 2007 edition of *Guidance to Nurses and Midwives on Medication Management*. Many new topics are presented in the publication along with expanded content from the 2003 edition. The matter of transcribing by a nurse or midwife is addressed within the standard and its supporting guidance. It states:

### Standard

Best practice would indicate that the responsibility for documenting the prescription/medication order is with the medical practitioner and or the registered nurse prescriber to prevent the possibility of error by another individual. The decision to transcribe a prescription should only be made in the best interests of the patient/service user.

A nurse/midwife who transcribes is professionally accountable for his/her decision to transcribe and the accuracy of the transcription.

### Supporting Guidance

Transcribing is the act of transferring a medication order from the original prescription to the current medication administration record/prescription sheet. This

activity should be directed by local health service provider policy which must stipulate required systems (i.e. a second person checking the prescription transcribed) in order to minimise the risk of error.

Transcribed orders should be signed and dated by the transcribing nurse or midwife and co-signed by the prescribing doctor or registered nurse prescriber within a designated timeframe. If a nurse or midwife is unclear about a transcribed prescription/order she or he should verify or confirm the prescription with the prescriber or pharmacist before administering the medication to the patient/service user. The practice of transcribing should be the subject of audit. Your practice query regarding transcribing presents a number of points to consider for best practice. You note that you have an organisational policy to support the activity.

- Does this policy include a double check by another nurse upon completion of the transcribed prescriptions?
- Is the original prescription written by the doctor readily accessible to review by nursing staff?
- Is there a stated timeframe written in the policy in which the doctor must review and sign the medication administration record which details the prescribed medications?
- Does the "constant review" involve processes for specific quality assurance and audit measures regarding appropriate transcription and review by all designated staff?

It is important to realise the shared responsibilities of medication management between health care staff regardless of whether services are community or acute care based this includes the activity of transcribing. It is acknowledged that there is a risk of medication errors and/or near misses with transcribing therefore each nurse must be aware of his/her professional accountability and competence in this regard.

## **APOLOGY TO THE FORMER DIRECTOR OF NURSING NH INSPECTORATE.**

Further to An Bord Altranais News, Summer 2007, Volume 19, No. 2 and to the article entitled Leas Cross Review which appeared at pages 8-12 of that publication, the Editor of An Bord Altranais News and the Chief Executive Officer of An Bord Altranais would like to apologise for the incorrect reference to the Director of Nursing of the Nursing Home Inspectorate team of Leas Cross which appeared on page 9 of the article under the heading "Staffing Issues". The fifth sentence under that heading should instead have referred to the Director of Nursing of Leas Cross as is referred to at paragraph 4 of page 44 of the Leas Cross Review. The Editor of An Bord Altranais News and the Chief Executive Officer would like to express regret for this error.

## **APOLOGY TO THE DIRECTOR OF NURSING, ST. ITA'S HOSPITAL.**

Further to An Bord Altranais News, Summer, 2007, Volume 19, No. 2 and to the article entitled Leas Cross Review which appeared at pages 8-12 of that publication, the Editor of An Bord Altranais News and the Chief Executive Officer of An Bord Altranais would like to apologise for the incorrect reference to the Director of Nursing from St. Ita's Hospital which appeared on page 9 of the article under the heading 'Staffing Issues'. The sixth sentence under that heading should not have referred to the Director of Nursing from St. Ita's Hospital but should instead have simply referred to St. Ita's Hospital as is referred to at paragraph 2 of page 45 of the Leas Cross Review. The Editor of An Bord Altranais News and the Chief Executive Officer would like to express regret for this error.

# In Sympathy

## **MR SEAMUS HOYE**

It is with regret that An Bord Altranais learned of the untimely death of Mr Seamus Hoye. Mr Hoye, Clinical Nurse Specialist, St. Loman's Hospital, Mullingar, was an elected member of the Board and served two terms representing clinical practice – psychiatric nursing. He was Vice-Chairperson of the current Fitness to Practise Committee. In addition, he brought his expertise to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Registration Appeals Committee on which he served. His faithful attendance at Board meetings and his contributions have served to develop and promote the professions of nursing and midwifery.

The President, members and staff of An Bord Altranais extend their sympathy to his wife, Bridie, and his family.

## **Guidance to Nurses and Midwives Regarding Ethical Conduct of Nursing and Midwifery Research**

The **Research Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland** (Department of Health and Children, 2003), charged An Bord Altranais with developing a position statement concerning ethical conduct of nursing and midwifery research. Following consultation with a range of nurses and midwives, the Ethics Committee of An Bord Altranais has developed a guidance document entitled "*Guidance to Nurses and Midwives Regarding Ethical Conduct of Nursing and Midwifery Research*".

Its purpose is to provide nurses and midwives with general guidance on ethical matters relating to research and to ensure protection of the rights of all those involved in research.

This document may be accessed by clicking on Publications at [www.nursingboard.ie](http://www.nursingboard.ie)



