COURSE DESCRIPTOR

Medication Management — Australian Standards

PBS, Schedule 8, APINCHS Medications & TGA Requirements

MODULE CODE: PD-A **PRIORITY: HIGH** HOURS: 12 DELIVERY: SELF-DIRECTED (SDL)

COURSE OVERVIEW

This module provides internationally qualified Registered Nurses with a comprehensive understanding of Australia's medication management framework. It covers the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), Australia's drug scheduling system under the Poisons Standard, Schedule 8 controlled drug protocols, the APINCHS high-alert medication framework, medication calculation to Australian clinical standards, medication administration rights and documentation, adverse drug reaction reporting, and the regulatory role of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

Completion of this module is considered mandatory by most Australian healthcare employers prior to clinical commencement. It is designed to be completed within four weeks of enrolment and is delivered entirely through self-directed learning via the Learning Management System (LMS).

CLINICAL RATIONALE

Australian medication legislation, drug scheduling, and clinical safety frameworks differ significantly from those used in other countries. Nurses unfamiliar with the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Schedule 8 controlled drug protocols, or the APINCHS high-alert medication framework present a patient safety risk in the Australian clinical environment.

This module ensures that internationally qualified nurses can practise safely and in compliance with Australian medication standards from day one of clinical commencement. It is aligned to the ACSQHC Medication Safety Standard (NSQHS Standard 4) and the NMBA Standards for Practice.

MODULE INFORMATION

Module Code	PD-A
Module Title	Medication Management — Australian Standards
Subtitle	PBS, Schedule 8, APINCHS Medications & TGA Requirements
Target Audience	Internationally qualified Registered Nurses

Delivery Mode	Self-Directed Learning (SDL) via LMS
Total Study Hours	12 hours
Recommended Completion	Within 4 weeks of enrolment
Priority	HIGH — required prior to clinical commencement
CPD Classification	NMBA Standard 3 — Maintains capability for practice
Prerequisites	Active nursing registration (NMC or equivalent); enrolment in program
Assessment	Online knowledge check (MCQ) + medication calculation quiz
Pass Mark	80% required in BOTH assessment components
Certification	Certificate of Completion issued via LMS upon successful completion

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS & REGULATORY ALIGNMENT

- ACSQHC National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards — Medication Safety Standard (Standard 4)
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) — Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (Cth)
- Australian Poisons Standard (Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons — SUSMP) 2023
- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Act 1990
- NMBA Registered Nurse Standards for Practice — Standard 3: Maintains capability for practice
- State and territory Drugs and Poisons legislation (Schedule 8 requirements vary by jurisdiction)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

#	Learning Outcome
1	Describe the structure and purpose of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and its role in medication access and cost for patients in Australia
2	Identify the eight drug schedules under the Australian Poisons Standard and the clinical implications of each for nursing practice
3	Apply the APINCHS framework to identify, prepare, and administer high-alert medications safely
4	Explain the Schedule 8 controlled drug requirements including documentation, storage, dual-nurse witness protocols, and discrepancy reporting in Australian health settings
5	Demonstrate accurate medication calculation skills using Australian dose calculation conventions, including weight-based dosing, infusion rates, and syringe driver calculations
6	Identify the role and regulatory authority of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in relation to medications used in clinical practice

7	Describe the process for recognising and reporting adverse drug reactions (ADRs) via the TGA MedEffect portal and internal incident reporting systems
8	Apply medication reconciliation principles consistent with the ACSQHC Medication Safety Standard (Standard 4) at admission, transfer, and discharge
9	Apply the 11 Rights of medication administration and document accurately using Australian charting systems including the National Inpatient Medication Chart
10	Recognise medications on the APINCHS list that require dual-nurse verification and apply appropriate safety checks prior to administration

UNIT STRUCTURE & CONTENT

Unit	Title	Key Content	Hours
1.1	**Australian Drug Regulation Framework**	TGA structure and function; Therapeutic Goods Act; Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG); role of the PBS; drug registration process in Australia	**1.5 hrs**
1.2	**Australian Poisons Standard — Drug Scheduling**	Schedule 2–8 explained; Schedule 4 (prescription only) and Schedule 8 (controlled drugs); Schedule 3 pharmacist-only; clinical implications of each schedule	**1.5 hrs**
1.3	**Schedule 8 Controlled Drug Protocols**	Legislative requirements by state; documentation standards; controlled drug register; dual-nurse checking; storage standards; waste disposal; reporting discrepancies	**2.0 hrs**
1.4	**APINCHS — High-Alert Medications**	APINCHS acronym (Anti-infectives, Potassium, Insulin, Narcotics/opioids, Chemotherapy, Heparin, Sedatives/neuromuscular blockers); safety checks; labelling; storage; preparation	**2.0 hrs**
1.5	**Medication Calculation — Australian Clinical Standards**	Weight-based dosing; infusion rate calculations; syringe driver calculations; unit conversion; Australian dose rounding conventions; worked examples	**1.5 hrs**
1.6	**Medication Administration — Rights, Routes and Documentation**	The 11 Rights of medication administration; oral, IV, subcutaneous, IM, topical, enteral routes; National Inpatient Medication Chart (NIMC); allergy documentation	**1.5 hrs**
1.7	**Adverse Drug Reactions and Incident Reporting**	Recognising ADRs; TGA MedEffect reporting portal; internal incident reporting (Riskman/QuantumRM); sentinel events; open disclosure obligations following medication error	**1.0 hr**
1.8	**Medication Reconciliation and Safety**	ACSQHC Standard 4 requirements; best possible medication history (BPMH); reconciliation at admission, transfer and discharge; high-risk transitions of care; patient and carer education	**1.0 hr**
Total Study Hours			**12 hrs**

ASSESSMENT

#	Assessment Task	Description	Weighting
1	**Medication Knowledge Check (MCQ)**	30-question online MCQ covering drug scheduling, APINCHS, TGA legislation, and Schedule 8 protocols. Delivered and auto-marked via LMS.	**50%**
2	**Medication Calculation Quiz**	15 calculation questions covering infusion rates, weight-based dosing, and syringe driver calculations. Numerical entry format via LMS. Calculator permitted.	**50%**
Pass Mark — 80% required in BOTH components for Certificate of Completion			**80%**

KEY CONCEPTS COVERED

Drug Regulation & Scheduling

- TGA — Therapeutic Goods Administration
- Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG)
- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- Poisons Standard — Schedules 2 through 8
- Schedule 8 controlled drug protocols
- State and territory Drugs and Poisons legislation

High-Alert Medications — APINCHS

- A — Anti-infectives (vancomycin, gentamicin)
- P — Potassium and concentrated electrolytes
- I — Insulin (types, units, dual checking)
- N — Narcotics and opioids (S8 obligations)
- C — Chemotherapy (cytotoxic handling)
- H — Heparin and anticoagulants
- S — Sedatives and neuromuscular blockers

Calculation & Administration

- Weight-based dosing calculations
- IV infusion rate calculations (mL/hr)
- Syringe driver rate calculations
- 11 Rights of medication administration
- National Inpatient Medication Chart (NIMC)
- Allergy documentation standards

Safety, Reporting & Reconciliation

- ADR recognition and TGA MedEffect reporting
- Internal incident reporting (Riskman/QuantumRM)
- Sentinel events and open disclosure
- Best Possible Medication History (BPMH)
- Medication reconciliation — admission, transfer, discharge
- ACSQHC NSQHS Standard 4 — Medication Safety

KEY REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) — Medication Safety Standard (NSQHS Standard 4): www.safetyandquality.gov.au
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA): www.tga.gov.au
- Australian Poisons Standard (SUSMP) — current edition: www.legislation.gov.au
- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS): www.pbs.gov.au
- NPS MedicineWise: www.nps.org.au
- Clinical Excellence Commission (NSW) — High-Risk Medications: www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) — Standards for Practice: www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au

Important Note for Learners

This module covers high-risk clinical content including Schedule 8 controlled drug management, APINCHS high-alert medications, and medication calculation. Learners must not rely solely on this module for clinical practice. Always follow your facility's policies, protocols, and the direction of your supervising clinical team.

Drug scheduling requirements — particularly Schedule 8 obligations — vary by state and territory. Always verify the specific requirements for the jurisdiction in which you are practising.

Issued By	Version	Review Due
[Organisation Name]	1.0 — April 2026	April 2027