



NB: This guidance is NOT IN USE and was updated in June 2025

9.2 Standing orders - Foundation Standard 22 guidance

In general practice a standing order is a written instruction issued by a medical practitioner or NP (nurse practitioner) which authorises a specified person (usually a registered nurse) to administer or supply a particular medicine and some controlled drugs in certain situations.

Indicator 9.2 The practice ensures standing orders, where used, comply with the Ministry of Health's Standing Order Guidelines 2016.

Evidence to provide for assessment

- Documented standing orders policy and procedures.
- A list of standing orders used in the practice.
- Evidence of countersigning or auditing of standing orders.
- Annual review of the standing order(s) by the issuer.
- Evidence of annual training and review of each registered nurse working with standing order(s).

The intention of standing orders is to improve patients' timely access to medicines; for example, by authorising a registered nurse to administer medicines in a primary health care setting.

The issuer (GP or NP) is responsible as the prescriber. The Ministry of Health Standing Order Guidelines 2016, enable a medicine to be provided under a standing order in a way which safeguards all those involved, including the patient.

Standing orders are very documentation heavy and time consuming, therefore, when developing standing orders it is a good idea to consider whether they are really needed.

It is essential standing orders are done correctly and in order to get it right, practices need to adhere closely to the [Ministry of Health: Standing order guidelines August 2016](#).

Standing orders policy

Standing orders policy and procedures must include:

RNZCGP: 9.2 Original guidance for reference only.



- Adherence to the current Ministry of Health guidelines for standing orders
- Who administers and works under the standing order
- Why the standing order is required including context and scope
- A review of the competency/training annually for standing orders
- Methods of countersigning and auditing

A standing order must include:

- The condition being treated
- Rationale
- Practice details
- Scope
- Medicines(s)
- Route of administration
- Indication
- Precautions/exclusions
- Persons authorised
- Training requirements
- Countersigning or auditing
- Definition of terms
- Additional information (administration/supply info)
- Issuer authorisation

Each registered nurse working with standing order(s) is trained as per the Ministry of Health Standing Order Guidelines.

Links to resources

- [**RNZCGP: Standing orders in general practice \(Power Point slides\)**](#)



The Royal New Zealand
College of General Practitioners
Te Whare Tohu Rata o Aotearoa

- [Training template](#)
- [Ministry of Health: Standing order guidelines August 2016](#)
- [New Zealand Nurses Organisation: Medicines – Guidelines and Information](#)
- [Student nurses and standing orders](#)

NOT IN USE