

Policy

June 2016

Exemptions from continuing professional development for nurses and midwives

Scope

This Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) policy applies to all nurses and midwives who hold general registration.

Nurses and/or midwives who hold non-practising registration do not need to complete continuing professional development (CPD) while they hold this type of registration.

Nurses and/or midwives who change their registration type during a registration period (such as moving from practising to non-practising) need to complete CPD for the period they hold general registration (that is, on a pro rata basis). This also applies to nurses and/or midwives who obtain general registration part way through a registration period.

Summary

The NMBA's [Registration standard: Continuing professional development](#) has been approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council in accordance with the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The *Registration standard: Continuing professional development* states that the NMBA reserves the right to grant exemptions in individual cases.

The NMBA delegates the responsibility for individual registrant matters to the state and territory boards of the NMBA.

Individual applications for exemptions from CPD requirements will be assessed by the state and territory offices of AHPRA and the state and territory boards of the NMBA, within the policy framework determined by the NMBA.

Exemptions

The NMBA considers the range of activities, and the time frame provided to meet the CPD requirements is broad and flexible enough for all nurses and/or midwives to meet the requirements. However, the NMBA also appreciates that there are times when exceptional circumstances may make this difficult. In this case a nurse and/or midwife can apply in writing to the NMBA for an exemption.

The **exceptional circumstances** for exemptions will be limited and is only considered where there is compelling evidence that the circumstances have created a significant obstacle to the nurse and/or midwife's ability to complete CPD requirements. Each case would be considered on its merits and, depending on the particular circumstances, the NMBA may decide upon a full, partial or complete exemption. The NMBA will also consider the requirements of its [Registration standard: Recency of practice](#) in any application made for an exemption.

As a general principle, financial hardship or remote location are not adequate grounds for a partial exemption as there are sufficient CPD activities in a range of formats available to overcome these

obstacles. Evidence of a history of carrying out CPD activities is taken into account by the NMBA when assessing applications for exemption.

The NMBA will only consider an exemption in one year of any four-year period. Where a nurse and/or midwife is able to practise the profession, they also need to complete the CPD requirements. More information on CPD requirements is available in the [Fact sheet: Continuing professional development](#).

Applying for a CPD exemption

Nurses and/or midwives seeking a CPD exemption due to exceptional circumstances must submit a request in writing to the AHPRA office in their state or territory. Evidence to support the request for an exemption may include a letter from a treating health practitioner.

Definitions

Exceptional circumstances: Consideration of exemptions from the NMBA's CPD requirements can include the following circumstances:

- Significant ill health of the practitioner. This may occur when a nurse and/or midwife has been unable to complete CPD due to a serious mental and/or physical illness.
- Providing care or support to a member of the immediate family or household, because of significant illness or injury affecting the immediate member of the family or household. This may occur where a nurse and/or midwife has had a significant and extended disruption to their ability to carry out CPD as a result of having to provide total care for, or total support to, an immediate family member or household member because of that person's serious injury or illness.

Pro rata: Pro rata CPD applies to nurses and/or midwives who hold general registration for part of the year only. Pro rata CPD is calculated according to the number of months that a nurse and/or midwife hold general registration during the registration period (1 June to 31 May).

Nurses and midwives who work part-time need to complete the total amount of CPD relevant to their registration. The NMBA does not grant exemptions due to reduced work hours, casual work or part-time work. For further information on pro rata CPD requirements, see the *Registration standard: Continuing professional development*.

For more information

- [Registration standard: Continuing professional development](#)
- [Fact sheet: Continuing professional development](#)
- [Audit](#) information on the NMBA website
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)