

Communiqué

Meeting of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia 24 May 2012 in the AHPRA National office, Melbourne Victoria

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the National Board or NMBA) is the national regulator for nursing and midwifery in Australia. It is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law*, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). The Board meets monthly and discusses a range of issues, the most important of which are published in this Communiqué.

National Board budget and workplan for 2012 - 2013

The National Board has focused its attention on determining the Health Profession Agreement between the NMBA and AHPRA, the budget for 2012-2013 and identification and prioritisation of the projects and initiatives in the National Board's work plan

In the coming year, the National Board will continue its work to embed the requirements of the National Scheme while undertaking major initiatives in accordance with the National Law, prior to the end of the first three years of the scheme. The initiatives include a wide-ranging review of the arrangements for the accreditation function for nursing and midwifery as well as the NMBA registration standards that are scheduled for 1 July 2013. This will include reviewing the registration standards for criminal history, recency of practice and continuing professional development as well as the registration standards for the notation of an eligible midwife and endorsement of an eligible midwife to prescribe scheduled medicines.

Research study into Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) for midwives

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia is seeking suitably qualified and experienced parties to undertake a study and selective international review of PII arrangements and claims specifically in relation to midwifery practice, and, where indicated in the brief, in relation to obstetric practice.

Under the National Scheme, all health practitioners are required to have professional indemnity insurance (PII) in accordance with their respective National Board's PII arrangements registration standard prior to being able to practise the profession.

The National Board's revised [Nursing and Midwifery Professional Indemnity Insurance Arrangements Registration Standard](#) came into effect on 10 January 2012 and sets out the minimum requirements for PII for nurses and midwives in Australia. In revising the standard, the National Board considered the issue of stating a minimum amount of insurance cover for nurses and midwives.

The National Board considered the risks and benefits of stating a quantum of cover and determined that there was insufficient evidence available for the National Board to determine a quantum of cover at this time. The National Board has also developed [Guidelines on PII for midwives](#). These guidelines provide information to midwives on their responsibilities regarding indemnity insurance.

This research is another significant project for the National Board and was advertised on Saturday 16 June 2012. The following documents are published on the National Board's website [Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia - PII Research](#)

[AHPRA contract for services consultants](#) (114 KB,PDF)
[Request for Tender midwifery PII](#) (626 KB,PDF)

The Request for Tender is required to be submitted by 5pm on Monday 30 July 2012.

AHPRA research into English Language

The National Boards have committed to reviewing their registration standards at least every three years or earlier if required. In response to stakeholder feedback, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

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undertook an early review of the available evidence and feedback from extensive consultation with the professions and the community during late 2010 and 2011 on the NMBA English Language skills registration standard. The outcome was the development and implementation of a revised English language skills registration standard for nurses and midwives from Monday 19 September 2011 after the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AHWMC) approved the revised standard recommended by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the Board or NMBA).

By mid 2013, the National Scheme will be three years old, which will trigger a review of those standards that remain in place since the start of the scheme (1 July 2010). In preparation, National Boards and AHPRA have commissioned research on English language skills testing, including the scope of exemptions from testing requirements. This research will be considered by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia to determine whether there is a need for a further review of the English Language Skills registration standard in 2013.

The research evidence and other information from this review will be shared with the four health professions joining the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme on 1 July 2012 so that they can also consider any implications for their registration standards. The National Boards will consult on any proposed changes to the English language skills registration standard in 2013.

Please note that the [NMBA English Language skills registration standard](#) effective from 19 September 2011 and the corresponding [Fact Sheet and FAQ for English Language Skills](#) remain in place until further notice.

Homebirth Position Statement

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia has removed the Australian College of Midwives' original *Position Statement on Homebirth* from the National Board's website. An [Explanatory Note](#) provides the reasons for this decision as well as outlines the National Board's midwifery professional practice framework that guides all midwives in their practice.

Supervision Guidelines for Re-entry to practice policy

The National Board will begin work on developing the *Supervision Guidelines* that support the *Re-entry to practice policy for nursing and midwifery*, which came in to effect from 29 March 2012

The purpose of these new *Supervision Guidelines* is to provide for an effective and nationally consistent implementation of the *Re-entry to Practice Policy for nursing and midwifery* for those persons assessed as being eligible for a period of supervised practice approved by the National Board.

Applicants seeking to re-enter the nursing or midwifery workforce following a lapse in practice of five years or more undergo an assessment based on the previously registered nurse's and/or midwife's:

- qualifications (includes both undergraduate and postgraduate nursing and/or midwifery studies)
- professional practice history, and
- length of time away from practising in the profession/s.

Depending on the outcome of this assessment, one of the pathways may be a period of supervised practice approved by the National Board. These *Supervision Guidelines* are intended to facilitate a consistent, educationally sound pathway that supports the applicant and ensures the safety of the public through an appropriate clinical experience placement, effective clinical supervision, quality teaching and learning and assessment of the person's competence against the National Board's competency standards.

Accredited programs of study leading to registration and endorsement

The National Board approved for five years the following program of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration or endorsement:

- The University of Newcastle – Master of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner) [NP] (Newcastle)
- The University of Newcastle – Master of Mental Health Nursing (Nurse Practitioner) [NP] (Newcastle)
- Avondale College of Higher Education – Bachelor of Nursing [RN] (Lake Macquarie Campus and Sydney Adventist Hospital)

- University of the Sunshine Coast – Bachelor of Nursing Science [RN] (Sippy Downs)
- University of the Sunshine Coast – Bachelor of Nursing Science (Graduate Entry) [RN] (Sippy Downs)
- University of Canberra – Bachelor of Nursing [RN] (Bruce Campus)

The National Board approved the following major change to campuses and partnership arrangements to be included in the existing Approved Programs of Study list:

- The University of Western Australia – Master of Science (Entry to Practice) [RN] (additional campus – Bethanie Campus- Joondana)
- University of Ballarat - Initial Registration for Overseas Nurses and Return to Practice Program [RN] (partnership with Australian Academy of Nursing)
- Central Queensland University - Bachelor of Nursing [RN] (additional campus- Noosa)

Out of Session Decision of the National Board - 30 April 2012

The National Board approved for five years the following programs of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration or endorsement:

- Flinders University, Graduate Certificate Midwifery (Leading to Endorsement for Schedules Medicines for Eligible Midwives)
- The University of Queensland, Bachelor of Midwifery (Ipswich, Mater Hospital and Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital)
- University of Notre Dame, Bachelor of Nursing (Fremantle and Broome)
- Sunraysia Institute of TAFE (SuniTAFE), Diploma of Nursing (Mildura and Swan Hill)

The National Board noted and approved the following major change to campuses and partnership arrangements to be included in the existing Approved Programs of Study list.

- Monash University, Master of Nursing Practice (additional campus- Churchill)

The National Board approved the Central Queensland University, Registered Nurse Re-entry Program for five years with the following condition:

- on completion of the upcoming review of the Accreditation Standards for Re-entry to Practice as Registered Nurses that Central Queensland University again review their Re-entry program against the updated Accreditation Standards; and that changes are made to the program if there are differences between the requirements of the updated Standards and the program.

The National Board approved the Kangan Institute, Diploma of Nursing for five years with the following conditions on the Board approved Certificate IV in Nursing and the Diploma of Nursing:

- Certificate IV in Nursing:
That students enrolled in the Certificate IV in Nursing program seeking to transition to the newly approved Diploma of Nursing program must have individually mapped transition pathways approved by ANMAC. The students who transition from the accredited Certificate IV in nursing program to the accredited Diploma of Nursing program are closely monitored to ensure that their education pathway to enrolled nurse registration is safe, comprehensive and robust. The progress of these students is reported upon by Kangan Institute to ANMAC at regular, frequent intervals during the accreditation period until all students originally enrolled in a Certificate IV in Nursing program have graduated from the Diploma of Nursing program.

- Diploma of Nursing

That any students enrolled in the Certificate IV in Nursing program seeking to transition to the newly approved Diploma of Nursing program must have individually mapped transition pathways approved by ANMAC. The students who transition from the accredited Certificate IV in Nursing program to the accredited Diploma of Nursing program are closely monitored to ensure that their education pathway to enrolled nurse registration is safe, comprehensive and robust. The progress of each of these students is reported upon by Kangan Institute to ANMAC at regular, frequent intervals during the accreditation period until all students originally enrolled in a Certificate IV in nursing program have graduated from the Diploma of Nursing program.

Website and receiving important information by email

Further information about the National Board can be found at: www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au. Nurses and midwives are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on Standards, Codes and Guidelines relating to their professions.

Nurses and midwives are also encouraged to provide their email address to AHPRA (by updating their contact details online). This will enable the National Board to send e-newsletters and other important information about the professions, and AHPRA to contact nurses and midwives about important registration or renewal information.

Ms Anne Copeland

Chair, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

19 June 2012

For more information

- Follow the Board on Twitter! Join us via www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au and keep up to date with regular Board news and updates.
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact Us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 7 3666 4911 (overseas callers)