



NINTH MEETING OF THE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA

23 and 24 JUNE 2010

The ninth meeting of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia was held on the 23 and 24 June at the Airport Hilton, Melbourne. This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the decisions and actions of the Board arising from this meeting.

As this meeting was the last meeting of the Board before the national scheme commenced on the 1 July 2010, a significant number of issues were considered at the meeting. The Board acknowledges that there remains much work to continue after 1 July to meet the objectives of the national scheme. To this end, National Board members as well as Chairs of the new State and Territory Boards of the National Board will be attending a planning day on 30 July 2010 in order to develop a strategic plan and identify strategic priorities for the Board.

Transition Arrangements

Tasmania and South Australia

The Health Practitioner National Law has passed both houses of Parliament in these jurisdictions. These states both transitioned into the national scheme on 1 July 2010.

Western Australia

The legislation to enable the national scheme has been introduced into the lower house of Parliament in Western Australia but is yet to pass through the upper house in time for WA to enter the national scheme. All registrants should be aware that the current state regulatory processes and Board structures will remain until such time that the legislation is passed into law.

Registrants in Western Australia are asked to monitor the website of the Nurses and Midwives Board of Western Australia (NMBWA) and the NMBA for updates on the anticipated transition date.

Please note that any nurse or midwife wishing to practise in Western Australia, before the State enters the national scheme, must be registered with the NMBWA. Courses approved for registration and endorsement in WA will not be considered approved under the national scheme until such time as the WA enters the national scheme.

State and Territory Boards of the NMBA

As of 1 July 2010, the State and Territory Boards will continue to operate under the National Law as committees of the National Board (s.36). The Board has decided to maintain State and Territory Boards at their current size for the first year of the national registration scheme and then transition to Boards within each State and Territory each comprising eight members.



The National Board has delegated a number of functions to the State and Territory Boards to ensure timely processing of registration and notification issues.

Registration Transition Plan

An updated transition plan containing the registration transition rules is available on the Board's website. For clarification of any of the issues contained in the table, registrants are advised to contact AHPRA.

Advertising Guidelines

The Board considered the feedback from the consultation on the Advertising Guidelines. These guidelines are of relevance to any person who provides or operates a business that provides regulated health services, including practitioners registered under the National Law; employers of practitioners; and other persons who provide services through the agency of a registered health practitioner. The aim of the guidelines is to ensure any information provided in an advertisement for a service should be reliable and useful and assist consumers to make informed decisions about accessing services.

The Advertising Guidelines will be published soon under the Codes and Guidelines section of the Board's website.

Course Accreditation Standards for Registered Nurses, Midwives and Enrolled Nurses

The Board agreed that the accreditation standard requiring university based education for registered nurses remain in its current form and confirmed that it had based this decision on strong evidence that nursing education standard positively influence patient safety and quality care outcomes.

The Board agreed that all currently accredited undergraduate nursing programs (including those conducted by both Avondale College and Holmesglen TAFE) would transition into the new scheme and thus continue to provide undergraduate education whilst they meet the benchmark requirements.

With regard to enrolled nurse programs, the Board agreed that the transition period to the Diploma entry requirement will not apply until 1 July 2014 and that the standard will only apply to new graduates applying from that date.

In relation to the accreditation standards for postgraduate midwifery courses, the Board agreed to the accreditation standard being amended to stipulate a minimum requirement of 12 months of full-time study (or part-time equivalent) on the basis that there is no change to the course content.

Accreditation Authority for Nursing and Midwifery

The Board is continuing to work very closely with AHPRA and ANMC Ltd in the transition of the accreditation function to a restructured ANMC. A new Board has been appointed and a new constitution adopted for ANMC. Please review the ANMC website regularly for updates



on the appointment of key positions and documentation relating to the function of accreditation.

Registration Standards Eligible Midwives and Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines

The *Eligible Midwife Guidelines and Assessment Framework Guidelines and Assessment Framework for the Recognition and Endorsement of Eligible Midwives* has been approved by the Ministerial Council is published on the Board's website under the Codes and Guidelines section.

Enrolled Nurse Registration for Undergraduate Registered Nurse Students

The Board will commence a formal evaluation of the existing pathways in some jurisdictions for undergraduate registered nurse students to gain enrolment during their program. This evaluation will commence in July 2011 to allow implementation of any recommendations before the end of the two year period granted for current approved programs. No further, similar type programs will be approved until the evaluation is complete.

Insertion and removal of Nurse Practitioner Endorsement Categories (Victoria)

As a requirement of Victorian Drugs and Poisons legislation, nurse practitioners wishing prescribe as a part of their practice in Victoria must have a notation of a category against their name on the register. This provides the nurse practitioner with the authority to prescribe any of the drugs listed on approved formulary for the corresponding category within their scope of practice. These approved formularies will be published on the website of Drugs & Poisons Control in Victoria (<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/dpu/reqhealth.htm>)

Nurse practitioners endorsed in another State or Territory prior to the introduction of the National Scheme and who will be practising in Victoria, will need to apply to have a category notated against their name. To prescribe medications as a nurse practitioner in Victoria without this notation contravenes the requirements of the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act (Victoria)*.

The notation will be removed from a nurse practitioner's name on the register when the nurse practitioner is no longer practising in Victoria.

Medication Administration and Enrolled Nurses

Under the national scheme enrolled nurses who have not completed an approved qualification will have a notation against their name on the register stating '*Does not hold Board approved qualifications in administration of medicines*'.

It is recognised that several jurisdictions conduct enrolled nurse education programs for the administration of medicines. In some jurisdictions, ENs who completed these programs gained an endorsement on their registration, whilst in other jurisdictions there was no endorsement following successful completion of a medication administration program.



To address this variation between jurisdictions an explanatory statement and Frequently Asked Questions will be published on the NMBA website. A national consistent process will be developed to accommodate the addition and removal of the notation. This will be administered by the AHPRA office in each State and Territory.

Conclusion

The Board would like to reiterate the message from its previous communiqués wherein it encourages individual nurses and midwives to keep themselves informed of their obligations under the national scheme and information pertinent to them by checking the Board's website at regular intervals.

Finally, the Board wishes to acknowledge the hard work and contribution of the Board members and staff of the State and Territory Nursing and Midwifery Boards in the lead up to the transition to the national scheme.