

Media release

November 2011

First national nursing and midwifery data released

The first ever national data on nursing and midwifery is now available with the release of Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia information in the AHPRA and National Boards' annual report

The nursing profession has both the youngest and oldest practitioners of the 10 regulated professions proportional to registrant numbers, with the typical nurse being female, the largest cohort being aged between 50 to 54 years and the largest number of nurses practising in New South Wales. Midwifery was the most female-dominated of the regulated professions, with the largest group of midwives aged 40 to 44 years and practising in Victoria.

These and other insights to the nursing and midwifery professions are now available in the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and National Boards' annual report.

The release of the 2010-11 annual report gives an important, first-ever insight into Australia's 530,115 health practitioners across 10 professions regulated under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme). One in 44 Australians is a registered health practitioner.

As well as profiling the professions and practitioners, the report provides the first national data on notifications* (formerly known as complaints) involving health practitioners and the actions taken by National Boards to protect public safety.

Chair of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, Ms Anne Copeland said the annual report demonstrated transparent and accountable reporting by AHPRA and the National Boards about their work in regulating the professions and protecting the public.

"The introduction of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010 (18 October 2010 in Western Australia) represents an unparalleled reform of health practitioner regulation. This annual report provides comprehensive data about the first year of operation of the national scheme, across all areas of responsibility of AHPRA and the National Boards," Ms Copeland said.

"There is now clear evidence that the national scheme is sound, robust and a great asset for the Australian community," she said.

Under the National Scheme, AHPRA works in partnership with the National Boards to protect the public and facilitate access to health services, consistent with the *Health Practitioner National Law Act*, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Important information for the nursing and midwifery professions in the report includes:

- On 30 June 2011, there were 332,185 nurses and midwives registered to practise in Australia, with nursing and midwifery representing 63% of the total group of registered health practitioners

- Of these, 1,789 practitioners held midwifery registration only, 290,072 nursing registration only, and 40,324 held dual nursing and midwifery registration
- There were 59,901 enrolled nurses 228,114 registered nurses and 2,057 registered and enrolled nurses
- New South Wales was nominated as the principal place of practice by the largest cohort of nursing and midwifery registrants
- Of all nurses and midwives, the largest group was aged 50 to 54 years (51,998 or almost 18% of the profession)
- 83% (274,228) of the total number of registered and enrolled nurses and dual nursing midwifery registrants are female; and 99.67% (1,783) of midwives are female
- There were 1,466 nursing and midwifery practitioners in Australia with an endorsement on registration: 624 nurse practitioners; 744 endorsed for scheduled medicines; one midwife practitioner and 97 eligible midwives
- There were 61,416 students of nursing and 2,483 students of midwifery registered from April 2011, representing 62% and 2.5% of registered students across all regulated professions
- As a result of criminal record checks, the Board imposed conditions or undertakings on the registration of 16 nursing and midwifery applicants for registration, and one nursing and midwifery practitioner had conditions imposed on their registration at renewal
- There were 8,139 notifications received about health practitioners in 2010-11, including 1,300 about nurses and midwives. This means between 0.1% and 0.3% of Australia's 332,185 nursing and midwifery practitioners were subject to a notification relating to either health, performance and/or conduct of the nurse or midwife
- The Board took immediate action in relation to 115 nursing and midwifery practitioners after receiving a notification about the practitioner's health, performance and/or conduct. As a result, the Board took no further action in 24 cases, imposed conditions on the registration of 26 practitioners suspended the registration of 36 practitioners; noted four practitioners surrendered their registration and accepted undertakings from 26 practitioners
- There were 254 mandatory notifications about nurses and midwives in 2010-11, representing just over 58% of all mandatory notifications received across the 10 professions

The annual report is an important source of information about the Board's activities in 2010-11. Achievements for the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia during the year included consultation on English language skills and professional indemnity insurance arrangements for nurses and midwives; publishing new registration standards, guidelines and policies on matters including English language skills, nurse practitioner endorsement, concurrent registration and midwife practitioners; and incorporating the Safety and Quality Framework into all new documents relating to midwifery practice.

Ms Copeland encouraged nursing and midwifery practitioners, patients and clients, employers, educators and the Australian community to read the 2010-11 annual report, published at www.ahpra.gov.au under *Legislation and publications > AHPRA publications*.

More information about the National Scheme

More summaries of annual report data are published on the AHPRA website:

- [registrations](#)
- [criminal records checks](#)
- [notifications](#)
- [state and territory roundup](#)
- [breakdown by profession](#) and
- [national information about other regulated health practitioner professions.](#)

For more information

- Refer to the [AHPRA Annual Report](#)
- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200

**AHPRA and the National Boards are responsible for the management of notifications against practitioners across Australia, except in NSW, where the Health Professional Councils, supported by the Health Professions Council Authority (HPCA), are responsible.*