

Fact sheet

Updated November 2019

Non-practising registration for nurses and midwives

Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) undertakes functions as set by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law). The NMBA regulates the practice of nursing and midwifery in Australia, and one of its key roles is to protect the public. The NMBA does this by developing registration standards, professional codes, guidelines and standards for practice which together establish the requirements for the professional and safe practice of nurses and midwives in Australia.

The types of registration available to nurses and midwives who apply to the NMBA to be registered are outlined in the [schedule of fees](#) on the NMBA website. These include general registration, provisional registration, student registration and non-practising registration.

This fact sheet addresses common queries that you might have about non-practising registration, eligibility and unsuitability, and what it means for nurses and midwives who choose this type of registration.

What is non-practising registration

Non-practising registration is a type of registration and is suitable for an individual who chooses to stop all nursing and/or midwifery practice but wishes – for personal rather than professional reasons – to retain a protected nursing and/or midwifery title.

Who should use non-practising registration?

Non-practising registration would apply to a person who wishes to retain a protected nursing and/or midwifery title but:

- has retired from nursing or midwifery practice
- is experiencing a period of prolonged illness, or
- is intending to take a long period of absence from practice.

As a matter of professional etiquette, the NMBA expects the non-practising registrant to make it clear that they hold non-practising registration.

If you are practising in the profession you must be on the [national register](#) with a registration type other than 'non-practising'.

Nurses and midwives wishing to take a period of leave (i.e. maternity leave) should consider whether non-practising registration is suitable for their circumstance. If you are able to maintain your CPD and recency of practice requirements, it may be more appropriate for you to retain general registration.

Am I eligible for non-practising registration?

Nurses and midwives are eligible to hold non-practising registration if you

- currently hold or have held general registration as a nurse and/or midwife with the NMBA, or
- held registration as a nurse and/or midwife under a previous Australian state or territory nursing or midwifery board, **and**

- are deemed suitable by the NMBA to hold registration in the profession (i.e. do not have criminal history to the extent that is relevant to your practice, and are a fit and proper person)

What must I do as a non-practising registrant?

All nurses and midwives must renew their registration each year regardless of the type of registration they hold. If you do not renew your registration, your registration will lapse and you will no longer be able to use any of the protected titles that apply for nurses and/or midwives. Your details will be removed from the Register of nurses and/or Register of midwives.

As a non-practising registrant, you are not required under the National Law to meet the registration standard requirements of continuing professional development, professional indemnity insurance or recency of practice.

How a person can move from the non-practising register to the practising register

If you hold non-practising registration and would like to become a practising registrant, you must lodge an [application form \(AGNP-40\) for general registration](#) and meet all the requirements of the following NMBA registration standards:

- criminal history
- professional indemnity insurance arrangements, and
- recency of practice.

If you do not meet the recency of practice registration standard requirement, the NMBA's information on [Re-entry to practice](#) applies.

I do not currently hold registration. Does that make me a non-practising registrant?

No. Non-practising registration is a registration type. Under the National Law, you can only apply for non-practising registration if you currently hold or have previously held general registration as a nurse or midwife.

Definition of practice

Practice is any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. For the purposes of the Board's standards, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

Restriction on use of protected titles

Section 113 of the National Law lists the following nursing and midwifery titles that are protected:

- nurse
- registered nurse
- nurse practitioner
- enrolled nurse
- midwife, and
- midwife practitioner.

While these titles are protected, the endorsements for 'nurse practitioner' and 'midwife practitioner' may only be used where a person is on the general register, i.e. **not** on the non-practising register.

A person on the non-practising register can use applicable protected titles of enrolled nurse, registered nurse and/or midwife as a matter of professional etiquette. However, the person must make clear that they are on the non-practising register.

A person who is not registered with the NMBA must not use any of the above protected titles. It is an offence for anyone either knowingly or recklessly to use any of the protected titles to make another person believe that they are registered under the National Law unless they are registered in the profession. However, they can use their academic qualification as a 'postnominal' title (e.g. *Bachelor of Nursing*)

placed after the name of a person to indicate their office or job position). Regardless of whether registration is practising or non-practising, academic postnominals describing a professional qualification must be carefully distinguished from professional registration.

For more information

- [Fact sheet: The use of health practitioner protected titles](#)
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)

Document control

Approved by	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Date approved	Revised version – December 2016
Date commenced	Revised version – December 2016
Date modified	March 2015, December 2016, November 2019