

Communiqué

Meeting of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
27 June 2013 in the AHPRA National office, Melbourne Victoria

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (the National Board or NMBA) is the national regulator for the nursing and midwifery professions in Australia. It is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory ([the National Law](#)).

The National Board meets monthly and considers a range of matters, the most important of which are published in this Communiqué.

In order to facilitate engagement with local stakeholders across states and territories, the National Board now holds its monthly meeting in a different state and territory every two to three months.

This helps the National Board to gain a better understanding of the jurisdictional matters relating to the regulation of nurses, midwives and students, and supports information sharing with the local representatives from the Australian College of Nursing, Australian College of Midwives and the Australian Nursing Federation; the Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer and education providers, among other stakeholders, on the National Board's strategic priorities, projects and regulatory functions.

[Amendment to National Law on PII exemption for privately practising midwives providing homebirths](#)

Midwives in private practice who provide services for women in a home birth setting have received an extension to their exemption from requiring professional indemnity insurance (PII) cover for intrapartum care.

The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council has extended a transitional provision under section 284 of the [National Law](#) to **30 June 2015** for privately practising midwives providing intrapartum care for women who choose to homebirth.

Read more in the [media release](#) on the National Board website.

[Review of the competency standards for registered nurses](#)

The National Board has approved a project to review the competency standards for registered nurses.

These competency standards are published on the National Board website under [Codes and guidelines](#).

The project to review the competency standards aligns with the National Board's key strategic priority for 2013 – 2015 to:

Ensure contemporary, relevant, well understood and used professional practice frameworks for nursing and midwifery.

The project, estimated to finish in the third quarter of 2014, will strive to see that the new standards:

- reflect current nursing practice and are contemporary, relevant and useful, and
- provide registered nurses, education providers, regulators and employers with contemporary standards for nursing practice.

More updates as the project progresses will be available in the National Board's quarterly newsletter, communiqués and news items on the [National Board website](#).

PII arrangements for enrolled nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners

The National Board has approved a guideline on *professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements for enrolled nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners*. This guideline complements the *PII arrangements* registration standard for nurses and midwives available under [Registration standards](#) on the National Board website.

The guideline gives direction about the requirements for professional indemnity insurance arrangements (PII) under the National Law, and is relevant to:

- enrolled nurses
- registered nurses
- nurse practitioners
- employers of nurses and nurse practitioners, and
- education providers.

Under section 129 of the National Law, enrolled nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners **must not practise** their profession unless they are covered in the conduct of their practice by appropriate professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements.

Section 129 (1) of the National Law states that:

A registered health practitioner must not practise the health profession in which the practitioner is registered unless appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements are in force in relation to the practitioner's practice of the profession.

Section 5 of the National Law defines appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements, in relation to a registered health practitioner as:

... professional indemnity insurance arrangements that comply with an approved registration standard for the health profession in which the practitioner is registered.

The National Board will soon publish the new guideline on its website with a related news item, and will also directly communicate it to key stakeholders.

National Board seeks approval for minor change to eligible midwife registration standard

The National Board is seeking approval from the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council) to extend an expiry date in the existing approved *Registration standard for eligible midwives*.

The registration standard came into effect on 1 July 2010 following Ministerial Council approval and requires that an applicant seeking to be identified as an eligible midwife under section 38(2) of the National Law meets the following requirements:

- current registration as a midwife in Australia
- documented evidence of an equivalent of three (3) years full-time post-registration experience as a midwife and evidence of current competence to provide pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care, through professional practice review, and
- hold an approved qualification, or **make a formal undertaking to complete an approved qualification within an 18 month period** to acquire the skills required to prescribe scheduled medicines.

The provision for acquiring an approved qualification had an expiry date of 30 June 2013 and the National Board seeks to see this date extended to 1 July 2015.

This will enable midwives to continue to apply for a notation as an eligible midwife and make a formal undertaking to complete an approved program of study for prescribing medicines within 18 months of the date of notation as an eligible midwife.

The National Board has published important information on applications for notation as an eligible midwife received from 1 July 2013. Read the [explanatory note](#) on the National Board website.

Registration renewal for nurses and midwives

This year's nursing and midwifery renewal period for registration opened with online renewal in late March. More than 340,000 nurses and midwives were due to renew their registration by 31 May.

With the onset of online renewal, a series of email renewal reminders went out to nurses and midwives with a registered email address with AHPRA. On behalf of the National Board, AHPRA also sent a hard copy renewal reminder to nurses and midwives without a known email address.

When the renewal period ended on 31 May, a one month late renewal period ran to 30 June 2013, followed by a fast track option for renewing registration that was available until 31 July 2013.

Below is a summary of registration renewal statistics by the end of the late renewal period in June this year:

- 97 per cent of nurses and midwives had renewed
- 1 per cent of nurses and midwives advised their intention not to renew
- 2 per cent of nurses and midwives who were due to renew had lapsed registrations
- Of those who applied to renew registration, 95.3 percent did so online.

Registration has now lapsed for those nurses and midwives who were eligible to register and have not yet done so, and their details may no longer be on the national register. For up to date information on the status of a nurse's or midwife's registration, visit the [national register](#) on the National Board website.

The National Board worked with AHPRA to make sure online registration renewal information was in plain English and that nurses and midwives could easily find what they are looking for.

A new [Registration Renewal page](#) on the National Board website contains FAQ for [nurses and midwives](#) and [employers](#).

Approved programs of study leading to registration and endorsement

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

- Canberra Institute of Technology, Diploma of Nursing at the Phillip, ACT campus.

The National Board approved with major modification the following nursing program of study:

- Charles Sturt University, Bachelor of Nursing major modification.

The National Board approved the following change in education provider name:

- Pilbara TAFE change of trading name to Pilbara Institute.

For more detailed information please go to the [approved program of study lists](#) on the National Board website.

National Board July newsletter now available

The latest issue of the National Board July newsletter is now available on the National website. Nurses and midwives who have registered a current email address with the National Board will have received an email version of the July newsletter.

You can read the [National Board July newsletter](#) on the National Board website.

This issue contains a snapshot of the registered workforce as at 31 March 2013, our consultations update, the Nursing Council of New Zealand memorandum of understanding with the National Board, and much more.

Ms Anne Copeland

Chair, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

18 July 2013

For more information

- Keep up to date with regular news and updates on the National Board website www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au
- Visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.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