

Communiqué

Meeting of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia 19 December 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 enrolled nurses, registered nurses, midwives and students.

It also supports information sharing on the National Board's strategic priorities, projects and regulatory functions with local representatives from the professional and industrial organisations, education providers and employers, health department and members of the local state or territory board of the NMBA.

Wishing a Happy New Year

This meeting was the last for 2013, a very busy 12 months. Thank you once more to all who have supported our work towards seeing that the Australian community has access to competent and suitably qualified nurses and midwives to provide safe, high quality care.

We look forward to 2014 and our continuing work in the review of registration standards and professional codes and guidelines for nurses and midwives, among other priorities.

We wish you and your family a prosperous New Year.

Midwifery

Safety and quality framework for midwives for public consultation

The National Board will soon go to public consultation on a revised *Safety and quality framework (SQF) for midwives*.

The public consultation follows preliminary consultation that ran from October – November 2013. This preliminary consultation to a target audience gave the National Board the opportunity to road-test proposed content to help identify any operational impacts, issues or concerns before release for an extended public consultation.

The revised SQF does not introduce additional or new regulatory requirements. This document brings together all of the current legislative and policy requirements for midwifery practice and is inclusive of all midwives regardless of place of practice. Through this 'one stop' comprehensive approach, the SQF is designed to help midwives shape their professional practice so they can provide safe, accountable, woman-centred care.

When the consultation process publicly opens for feedback from all stakeholders, the consultation paper will be available under [Current consultations](#) on the National Board website.

[Midwife standards for practice: review](#)

The National Board has approved funding for the review of *Midwifery standards for practice*, currently known as the *National competency standards for the midwife*.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC), in liaison with state and territory nursing and midwifery regulatory authorities, originally developed and published the competency standards in January 2006.

Since 1 July 2010 (18 October 2010 in Western Australia) the National Board became the regulatory body for midwives and the competency standards were subsequently rebranded to reflect new ownership.

These national competency standards are an integral component of the regulatory framework that guides midwives in providing safe and competent care. They are the core competency standards by which a midwife's performance is assessed to obtain and retain registration for practice in Australia.

The review of the standards aligns with the National Board's strategic priorities to drive consistency and ensure contemporary and relevant professional practice frameworks for midwifery and nursing. The project will incorporate:

- comprehensive literature review of nationally and internally published material
- consultation that includes focus groups and interviews of primary stakeholders
- observations of midwives in a variety of practice settings and geographical locations, and
- gap analysis between existing competency standards and revised versions

The aim is to make sure the new *Midwife standards for practice* are current, relevant and evidence based.

[Eligible midwife registration standards and guidelines: review](#)

The National Board has approved a review of the:

- *Eligible midwife registration standard*, and
- *Registration standard for endorsement of scheduled medicines for eligible midwives*, and
- associated guidelines and framework.

These registration standards came into effect with the start of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010 (18 October in WA).

Clause 38 of the [National Law](#) requires the National Board to develop, and recommend for approval by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council, relevant registration standards, which are then due for review for a period of at least every three years of operation.

The project will adopt a phased approach to first review the *Eligible midwife registration standard*, then the *Registration standard for endorsement for scheduled medicines for eligible midwives*, before reviewing associated documentation.

In reviewing the registration standards and guideline, the National Board will consider factors and issues relating to the registration standards developed as either two separate registration standards or one combined registration standard, depending on the outcomes of the research, feedback from stakeholder consultation and analysis of the most suitable approach.

The National Board will publish information on the registration standards and guideline review as the project progresses in its monthly [communiqué](#), quarterly [newsletter](#) and [media releases](#).

Response to the SA Restricted birthing Practices Amendment Bill

The National Board, in consultation with AHPRA and the Medical Board of Australia, will develop a response to a request from the South Australian (SA) Minister for Health to provide feedback on the SA Restricted birthing Practices Amendment Bill

The SA Parliament passed an amendment in November 2013 to restrict birthing practice in South Australia to registered midwives and medical practitioners, or midwifery students / medical students under the supervision of a midwife or medical practitioner.

The new legislation intends to protect the public by restricting birthing services in South Australia to those persons that hold the relevant education and training, and that will practise within the accepted standards of the profession. It includes a list of specific activities that comprise the management of the three stages of labour. This list of activities will serve as a guide to determine whether a person, other than a midwife or medical practitioner, has provided a restricted birthing practice.

Nursing and midwifery

New professional standards for nurses and midwives

The National Board is looking to publishing revised and new registration standards and professional, codes and guidelines in 2014.

The first three documents to be published in February 2014 are the:

- revised Advertising guidelines
- revised Mandatory reporting guidelines, and
- a new Social media policy.

These guidelines and policy will come in to effect in March 2014, and all nurses and midwives will need to meet the new requirements.

Additional information will also be published in February 2014, explaining the similarities and differences between the current and new guidelines.

The National Board, along with all other National Boards consulted widely this year on the draft versions of these documents (and continues to consult on other important documents, see the [Current consultations](#) page on its website).

Much work has also gone into making sure that the format and language used in these documents meet plain language requirements, to make it easier to access and understand the important information. This month a series of focus groups will test the way the documents are presented, so that we can choose a design that supports ease of reading and understanding.

It is important that nurses and midwives understand these important revised and new documents and make changes to their current approach to practice where necessary, for example, in relation to advertising.

More information about the revised Advertising guidelines and Mandatory reporting guidelines, and the new *Social media policy* will be available on the National Board website in February 2014.

Nurse practitioner endorsement registration standard and guideline: review

The National Board has approved funding for the review of the *Endorsement as a nurse practitioner registration standard*. The nurse practitioner endorsement standard, related guidelines and portfolio guidelines for pathway 1 and 2 came into effect on 4 April 2011 and were due for review in March 2012, following 12 months of operation.

The review will happen in a phased approach that progressively looks at the:

- *Endorsement as a nurse practitioner registration standard*
- associated guidelines
- associated nurse practitioner requirements for portfolio – pathway 1 / pathway 2, and

- implementation planning, strategy approach and management of any process or document changes that may be required following the review.

Annual workforce survey for nursing and midwifery professions

The National Board has provided feedback and supported improvements to Health Workforce Australia (HWA) in relation to the revised nursing and midwifery workforce survey for 2014. The main improvements relate to questions regarding work as a primary midwife and two new questions relating to nurses caring for people with cancer.

As part of the registration renewal process, AHPRA and the National Boards make available a workforce survey for which each health practitioner is requested to complete at the time of applying for renewal of registration.

HWA, in collaboration with AHPRA and the relevant National Boards, is responsible for managing the content of the workforce surveys while the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is responsible for reporting the data from the surveys to inform HWA, the National Boards and other agencies interested in the detail of each health profession workforce in Australia.

HWA uses the workforce surveys for profession based workforce modelling and to inform planning and policy decisions. The data is also similarly used by the jurisdictions, who are consulted to ensure their main requirements are incorporated. Advice may also be sought from professional organisations and bodies to ensure the workforce surveys are appropriate.

Call for applications for appointment to state and territory boards of the NMBA

Applications are being sought for appointments to the state and territory boards of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA or National Board).

Public advertising is currently open for candidates who practice and reside in the following states and territories:

- ACT
- NSW
- NT
- SA
- TAS
- VIC, and
- QLD.

Applications close by **5.00pm AEDT on Monday 20 January 2014.**

Applications are sought for the following two categories:

- health practitioner members, and
- community members.

To be eligible for consideration for appointment as a community member on a state board, you must not:

- be a registered health practitioner in the health profession for which the board is established, and
- have previously been a registered health practitioner in this profession.

This means for vacancies on state and territory boards of the NMBA, a person would **not** be eligible to be appointed as a community member if the person is currently, or has at any time, been an enrolled nurse, a registered nurse and/or a midwife.

For:

- more information on the role and the application process, please download the application guide and application form from the [Board member recruitment](#) page on the AHPRA website, or
- general enquiries please contact boardappoint@ahpra.gov.au

Approved 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 as a registered nurse:

Education Provider	Program	Campus
La Trobe University	Bachelor of Nursing	Albury- Wodonga; Bendigo; Mildura; Shepparton and Bundoora
University of New England	Bachelor of Nursing	Armidale, NSW

The National Board approved for three years the following program of study as providing a qualification for the purposes of registration as a registered nurse:

Education Provider	Program	Campus
Hollywood Private Hospital	Registered Nurse Re-Entry Program	Nedlands, WA

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

Education Provider	Program	Campus
Charles Darwin University	Master of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner)	Darwin & Alice Spring, NT
Monash University	Master of Nursing Practice	Monash Clayton, Vic

The National Board approved the following to be moved into 'inactive' in the nursing list of approved programs of study (these programs are no longer approved for new enrolments):

Education Provider	Program
Charles Darwin University	Master of Health Practice (Nurse Practitioner)
Calvary Health Care Bethlehem	Return To Practice Program
Flinders University	Bachelor of Nursing (includes pathways for graduate entry and midwives)
Monash University	Master of Nursing Practice
La Trobe University	Bachelor of Nursing
University of New England	Bachelor of Nursing (Pre-Registration)

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

Dr Lynette Cusack, Registered Nurse

Presiding Member, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

13 January 2014

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