

## Position statement

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November 2016

### The role of nurses and midwives in a national emergency

#### Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) carries out 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. This statement by the NMBA clarifies its position on nurses and midwives and their responsibilities in the time of a national emergency.

#### Guidance on the role of nurses and midwives in a national emergency

Nurses and midwives may be positioned to assist during a time of national emergency and disaster. The importance of nursing and midwifery roles in disaster response is underpinned by the application of knowledge, skills and professional decision making.

The NMBA provides [a range of information](#) on regulatory policy and professional advice for nurses and midwives. This information:

- supports the principles of professional practice and standards that guide an individual's practice, and
- provides framework for ethical, regulatory and legal considerations to be made in any context of practice

The NMBA also endorses the following position statements:

- [Nurses and disaster preparedness](#) published by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) in 2001 (reviewed and revised in 2006). In recognition of the global application of disaster preparedness, in 2009 the ICN released the [ICN Framework of Disaster Nursing Competencies](#) in collaboration with the World Health Organisation
- [Health of Women and Children in Disasters](#) published by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) in 2005 (reviewed and adopted in 2011). The ICM recognises the need for collaboration with other health care workers to ensure sufficient midwifery care for women at the time of disaster

#### For more information

- Visit [www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au) under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)

#### Document control

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