Media release

4 October 2016

Fake nurse Nicholas Crawford convicted and ordered to pay over $40,000

A 31-year-old Darwin man has been convicted and fined a total of $33,500 for falsely claiming to be a registered nurse and ordered to pay an additional $8,250 in costs.

The fines imposed against Nicholas Crawford follow two separate legal actions, one in Queensland and one in Western Australia, by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

The National Law[1] protects the public by ensuring that only registered health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified can use protected titles[2] such as nurse. Falsely claiming to be a registered health practitioner is an offence under the National Law.

Following an investigation by AHPRA on behalf of the NMBA, Mr Crawford was charged in July 2015 with 14 such offences.

Appearing in Cairns Magistrates Court on 29 September 2016, Mr Crawford pleaded guilty to 'holding himself out' as a registered nurse in Queensland and using the protected titles of 'nurse' and 'registered nurse.' Mr Crawford was convicted of breaching the National Law and fined $3,500.

In August 2015 in the Perth Magistrates Court, Mr Crawford was also convicted of claiming to be qualified to practise, unlawfully using the title or name 'acting clinical nurse', and 'holding himself out' as a registered nurse, and fined $30,000.

On both occasions he was ordered to pay costs.

Dr Lynette Cusack, Chair of the NMBA said, 'The NMBA's job is to manage risk to patients, including ensuring that only nurses and midwives who have the qualifications and skills to provide safe care are registered to practise and the public should expect nothing less. Under no circumstances should anyone pretend to be a registered nurse or midwife and this case demonstrates that anyone who does so will be taken to court and face the consequences.'

AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher added, 'This type of conduct is completely unacceptable to the public, and AHPRA, on behalf of National Boards, will continue to take legal action against individuals who impersonate or act falsely as a registered health practitioners. This outcome demonstrates our work is helping to protect patients across Australia from those who pose as registered health practitioners.'

The public can check the public register to see if their nurse or midwife is registered to practise in Australia. The current registration status of all of Australia's 373,593 registered nurses and midwives is

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[1] The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

[2] The National Law has clear restrictions on the use of protected titles and are addressed in Sections 113,116, 117, 119 and 120 of the National Law. Only people who have met the requirements of the National Law can use a protected title. It is an offence for anyone either knowingly or recklessly to use any of the protected titles to make another person believe that you are registered under the Act unless you are registered in the profession.

published on the [register of practitioners](). If a person's name does not appear on the register, they are not registered to practise as a nurse or midwife in Australia.

AHPRA has published '[Top Tips on using the register for public safety]()' to help the public use the public register including what to do if they cannot find their practitioners name when they carry out a search.

Anyone with concerns about the registration status of someone working as a registered health practitioner should contact AHPRA immediately on 1300 419 495.

For more information

For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200