

## **Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand)**

### **Public consultation codes of conduct**

This document contains feedback that relates specifically to the current consultation on the Codes of Conduct for Nursing and Midwifery being conducted by the Nursing and Midwifery Board (NMBA) of Australia. The comments are based on consultation conducted by the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (CDNM) which is the peak organisation representing the Deans and Heads of the Schools of Nursing in Australian and New Zealand universities that offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in nursing and midwifery.

The CDNM recognizes that the primary mandate for the NMBA is protection of the public and that this is critical. The Board congratulates the NMBA on the work conducted, the communication and consultation related to the processes involved in providing a more contemporary document for consideration the professions and key stake holders.

The Council thanks the Board for the opportunity to provide comment from CDNM members who are ideally placed to comment.

**Please indicate the Code(s) of conduct on which you are providing feedback (select one or both)**

#### **Code of conduct for nurses and Code of conduct for midwives**

**1. Do the seven principles and the content of the Codes reflect the conduct required of nurses/midwives?**

Yes, the Council considers that the principles and the content reflect the conduct required for the nursing and midwifery professions. The Council would however prefer to see education as being more visible in the document and a priority. We refer particularly to page 4 in the section titled '*Using the code of conduct.*'

As well as the areas suggested in this section, the Code would also be used for educating consumers or people interacting with nurses and midwives to better inform them. It will also be highly visible and used in higher education for nurses and midwives in education relating to the nursing and midwifery professions in Australia, professional development and scope of practice. The Code will also be used to complement and guide the undergraduate professional practice experience. So we consider it will be utilised more widely and comprehensively.

**2. Is information in the Code/s presented clearly?**

Yes, the information is presented clearly and is easily understandable.

**3. Is information in the Code/s applicable to clinical and non-clinical practice settings?**

Yes information in the code is applicable particularly in higher education where much of the educational preparation of undergraduate nursing students focuses on preparation

for clinical practice in particular. This is an area with scope of practice where the Code would be heavily relied upon for education and guidance.

- 4. At this stage, the NMBA has developed separate codes for nursing and midwifery. What are your views on either a separate or a combined code of conduct for nurses and midwives?**

The Council has taken this matter under consideration and our view is that a combined code of conduct is appropriate for nurses and midwives.

- 5. The NMBA wants to get the language used in the codes right and use terms applicable to as many clinical and non-clinical settings as possible. The NMBA has adopted person or people to refer to individuals who enter into professional relationship with a nurse or midwife. Do you support this approach or is there an alternative?**

The Council considers the terms person and people inclusive terms and as being most appropriate.

- 6. Various terms have been used previously to capture the interaction between the nurse or midwife and the person receiving care. 'Professional relationship' is used in the draft Codes of conduct to capture this interaction, irrespective of the nurse or midwife's context of practice. Do you support the use of the term 'professional relationship' an appropriate description of the interaction between the nurse or midwife and the person receiving care or is there an alternative?**

Yes, the Council believes that the term 'professional relationship' captures the essence of the relationship between nurse or midwife and the person. We believe it is critical that the terminology utilised reflects the professional nature of nursing and midwifery and inherently acknowledges the educational preparation required to undertake the roles.

- 7. How should the NMBA promote awareness of the new Codes to nurses, midwives, other health professionals, employers, educators and the public? Select all that apply**

- In person at information forums at venues such as hospitals and universities.
- Via social media, e.g. Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- On posters and flyers in hospitals and other healthcare workplaces.
- In person at nursing and midwifery conferences and events.
- In print and online media, e.g. newspapers, nursing and midwifery journals and health magazines.
- In the NMBA newsletter. Public consultation: Code of conduct for nurses and Code of conduct for midwives
- In an email to all nurses and midwives.
- On a card that nurses and midwives can carry on their lanyards at work.

The Council believes that all avenues of communication should be utilised particularly social media so the Council would support all of these strategies as well as perhaps a YouTube link.

**8. Do you have any other comments on the public consultation draft Code/s?**

The Council is willing to assist the NMBA in dissemination of information and remains willing to assist the Board if further consultation is required.

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**On behalf of the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand)**

**10/03/2017**