

SUMMARY

This briefing paper reflects discussions held with the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (CDNM) in October 2015 and summarises the key points and outcomes of that session.

The CDNM is the voice of higher education for nurses and midwives, and aims to provide leadership on health policy, education standards and research as applied to nurses and midwives within Australia and New Zealand and as such considers the following points critical to its aims:

- Representation of nurses and midwives on high level government and industry advisory and decision-making groups/committees
- Clinical placements – quality and pricing
- Transition to practice – graduate job opportunities

Cross-party political support is crucial in assisting the CDNM to deliver these outcomes. Further details on the points raised can be found in the following sections:

Representation of Nurses on relevant advisory groups/committees

Nurses and midwives comprise more than 50% of the health care workforce, however there is little or no representation of nurses/midwives on relevant high level national committees/advisory groups.

The CDNM proposes that a minimum number of three (3) nurse/midwifery representatives be included all groups and particularly on the groups/committees listed below to promote nursing and midwifery interests and to ensure that both disciplines have an appropriate voice.

- Medical Research Future Fund
- Primary Health Care Advisory Group
- Mental Health Expert Advisory Group
- National Health & Medical Research Council
- Cancer Australia

Clinical placements – quality and pricing

Hospitals have many different pricing models; this hinders universities to budget forecast with regard to cost of clinical education. Furthermore, there is no standard of quality for clinical education supervision on placements.

The CDNM proposes national standardisation and transparency of costs across all public health services.

Additionally, clinical education supervision models differ between health services as well as between states. As a result there is no minimum education standard required for supervisors who are responsible for assessing the outcomes of a student's placement. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) Standard 8 requires the students of nursing and midwifery must be supervised by appropriately qualified and prepared clinical supervisors.

The CDNM proposes a Federal minimum level of education for all supervisors of students in the health care field to be based on the Health Workforce Australia (HWA) Clinical Supervision Support Program (CSSP).

Transition to practice – graduate job opportunities

Despite the growth in demand for health care now and into the future, there is currently a lack of graduate positions available. These positions are vital to enable students to transition from education to the health care environment.

Quality graduate positions are a further learning source which encourages graduates to remain in the health care sector, capitalising on the investment made in them.

The CDNM proposes that health services are incentivised and assessed using measurable KPIs to provide ample graduate positions of suitable quality to encourage the retention of recently graduated students beyond their transition year into the health care workforce.

Conclusions / What Can You DO?

As detailed above, the CDNM is raising the profile of nursing and midwifery through the implementation of the points detailed in this paper. The areas listed for consultation will ensure that the predicted shortfall for nurses and midwives will be significantly reduced by harnessing our students and graduates.

**For further information
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The CDNM

The Council of Deans for Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand) CDNM is the peak organisation that represents the Deans, Leaders and Heads of Higher Education courses for Nursing and Midwifery throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The Council is the voice of higher education for nurses and midwives, and provides leadership on health policy, education standards and research as applied to nurses and midwives.

Our members are experts in the field of health care and educating the future and current health professional. Many members also carry out research in their areas of expertise that benefits patients, nurses and the health care profession.