

Corporate plan 2014–2017
Moving towards better regulation



Protecting patients and
the public through efficient
and effective regulation

Contents

Chair and Chief Executive's foreword	4
Introduction	6
Our mission	6
Our values	6
A summary of our corporate goals and objectives	7
Goal 1: Protecting the public	
Objective 1	9
Objective 2	10
Objective 3	11
Goal 2: Open and effective relationships	
Objective 4	13
Objective 5	14
Objective 6	15
Goal 3: Services, systems and staff	
Objective 7	17
Objective 8	18
Objective 9	19

Chair and Chief Executive's foreword

Moving towards better regulation

The corporate plan sets out what we intend to achieve over the next three years and provides a benchmark by which our success may be measured. Underlying the plan is our aim to make continuous improvement in our core business of public protection, including better performance against the Professional Standards Authority's (PSA) Standards of Good Regulation.

Both the PSA's 2012 strategic review and the Francis inquiry report continue to inform our work and this plan.

As we approach the end of the two-year programme of change in response to the PSA's strategic review recommendations, the focus of our Change programme will shift to the delivery of our emerging long-term corporate strategy for 2015–2020, which will be published in late 2014.

We published our own considered response to the Francis report in July 2013. The government response came in November, and we particularly welcomed the commitment to legislate at the earliest opportunity to provide all healthcare regulators with a modern and efficient legal framework. We believe changes to our legislation are essential for us to make all our processes faster, more efficient and more effective, especially our fitness to practise processes. Revisions to EU legislation will also affect our registrations and fitness to practise processes, education standards and ICT.

We also welcomed the Francis report's emphasis on duty of candour, which we are now developing with the General Medical Council. Our Code already sets out clear commitments to be open with patients and their families about their care, to respond

appropriately to complaints, and to escalate concerns in a timely way. Our updated guidance on raising concerns for nurses and midwives was published in September 2013, becoming our first publication to gain a crystal mark for plain English. We are also developing materials that will clearly explain to patients how they can voice concerns, as well as working more closely with employers on complaints procedures.

Through spring 2014 we are consulting with stakeholders to help us shape a revised Code, which will be published towards the end of 2014. We are also consulting on guidance for revalidation, the model for which was approved by our Council last September.

“We are committed to regulating on the basis of sound evidence, being transparent about our regulatory outcomes and taking a proportionate approach to risk...”

Our new Council first met in May 2013 and has been focusing on setting our strategic direction. In January, the Council announced a review of midwifery regulation. This came in response to a report from the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman (PHSO), which questioned whether the current system of midwifery regulation provides sufficient public protection in England.



We are committed to regulating on the basis of sound evidence, being transparent about our regulatory outcomes and taking a proportionate approach to risk, as well as evaluating the effect of our work. We are also developing a programme of closer collaborative work with other regulators to enhance intelligence sharing. Through 2014, we will continue to improve our registration policies and processes, including expanding our online registration services.

Our workstreams over the next three years include:

- Continuing improvements to fitness to practise processes.
- Achieving financial stability.
- Improving and strengthening our registration policies and services.

- Implementing a model for ensuring nurses and midwives continue to be fit to practise.
- Delivering a robust engagement strategy, including developing links with employers, nurses and midwives, and bodies representing patients and the public.
- Modernising our HR and ICT systems.

Setting clear priorities and our ambition to be a better regulator are consistent themes in this plan. We have made real improvements over the last two years but there is still more we can do, on top of all the work we are already doing.

Mark Addison

Mark Addison
Chair



Jackie Smith

Jackie Smith
Chief Executive
and Registrar



Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Council is the professional regulatory body for nurses and midwives in the UK. Our role is to protect patients and the public through efficient and effective regulation.

We aspire to deliver excellent patient and public-focused regulation and in doing this we strive to meet the Standards of Good Regulation developed by the Professional Standards Authority.¹

Our mission

Our primary purpose is to protect patients and the public in the UK through effective and proportionate regulation of nurses and midwives. We set and promote standards of education and practice, maintain a register of those who meet these standards and take action when a nurse's or midwife's fitness to practise is called into question. By doing this well we promote public confidence in nurses and midwives and regulation.

Our values

1

We are accountable

- We act in the best interests of people who use or need the services of nurses and midwives.
- We take responsibility for our actions and are open and transparent.

We are fair

- We act with integrity and can be trusted to use our powers responsibly.
- We are consistent in the way we deal with people and show consideration and understanding.

2

3

We are professional

- We are known for our expertise and work to high standards in all we do.
- We look for innovative solutions and learn from our mistakes.

We are progressive

- We provide strategic direction and lead the way in modern healthcare regulation.
- We build and maintain networks and work in partnership with others to fulfil our aims.

4

5

We are inclusive

- We respect and value everyone for their contribution, celebrate peoples' differences and provide equal opportunities for all.
- We consult, encourage feedback, listen, and respond to our stakeholders.

¹ www.professionalstandards.org.uk/regulators/overseeing-regulators/performance-reviews

A summary of our corporate goals and objectives

Goal 1: Protecting the public

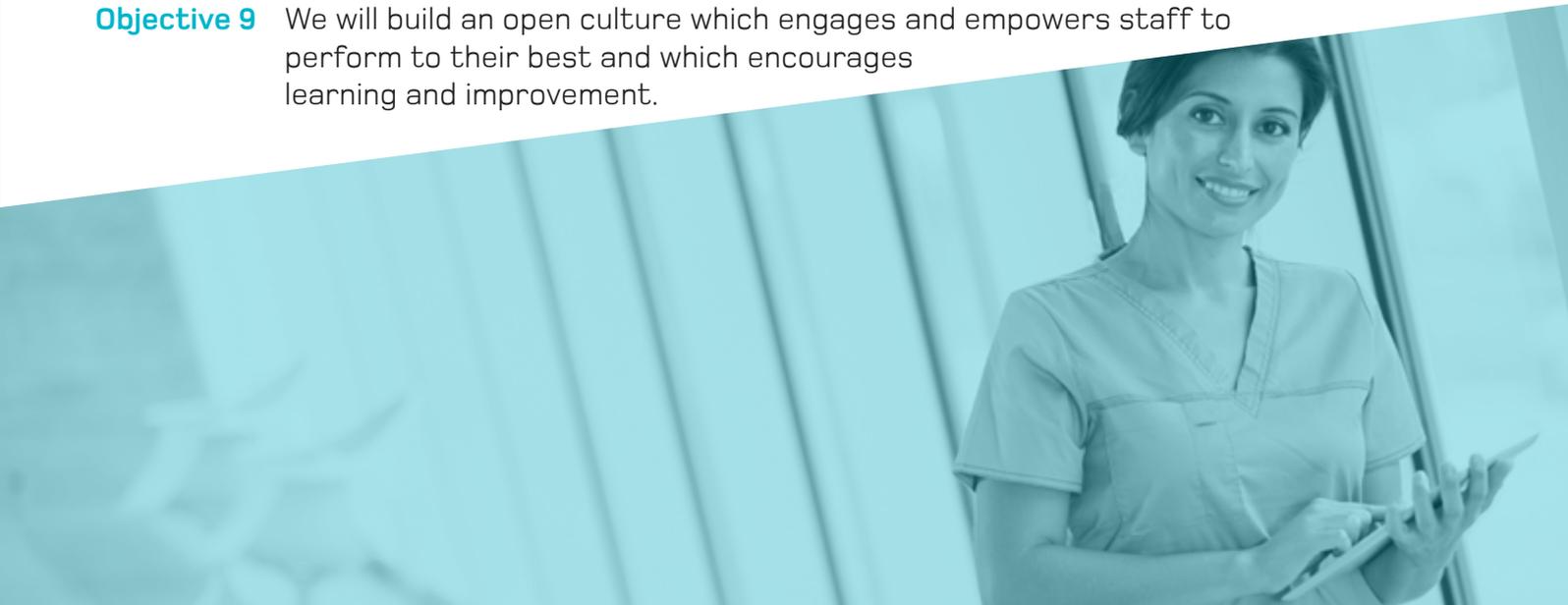
- Objective 1** We will protect the public's health and wellbeing by keeping an accessible accurate register of all nurses and midwives who meet the requirements for registration and who are required to demonstrate that they continue to be fit to practise.
- Objective 2** We will set evidence-based and accessible standards of education and practice. We will assure the quality of education programmes for nurses and midwives and the quality of supervision of midwives, so that we can be sure that everyone on our register is fit to practise.
- Objective 3** We will take swift and fair action to deal with individuals whose integrity or ability to provide safe care is questioned, so that the public can have confidence in the quality and standards of care provided by nurses and midwives.

Goal 2: Open and effective relationships

- Objective 4** We will maintain open and effective regulatory relationships with patients and the public, other regulators, employers, parliamentarians and the professions. This will help us positively influence the behaviour of nurses and midwives to make the care of people their first concern, treat them as individuals, and respect their dignity.
- Objective 5** We will develop and maintain constructive and responsive communications so that people are well informed about the standards of care they should expect from nurses and midwives, and our role when standards are not met.
- Objective 6** We will improve the collection and use of both our own data and intelligence from other sources, and share what we know with other regulators and relevant partner organisations to improve public protection.

Goal 3: Services, systems and staff

- Objective 7** We will promote equality and diversity in carrying out our functions and in delivering our services as a regulator and as an employer.
- Objective 8** We will develop effective policies, efficient services and governance processes that support our staff to fulfil all our functions.
- Objective 9** We will build an open culture which engages and empowers staff to perform to their best and which encourages learning and improvement.





Goal 1: Protecting the public will be at the centre of all our activities. Our work will be designed around and measured against the benefits we can bring to the public.

Objective 1

We will protect the public's health and wellbeing by keeping an accessible accurate register of all nurses and midwives who meet the requirements for registration and who are required to demonstrate that they continue to be fit to practise.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Continue to strengthen and improve our registration policies and processes.
- Provide secure and easy-to-use online services for nurses and midwives.
- Introduce a test of competence for overseas applicants who were trained outside the European Economic Area.
- Improve our customer service for everyone who seeks registration with us or relevant information about our register.
- Scope our business requirements and commence modernisation of the systems supporting registration activities.
- Enable nurses and midwives to self-declare that they have in place, or will have in place, an appropriate indemnity arrangement when they practise in the UK.
- Continue to implement and engage on changes to European legislation.

Outcomes

- Only nurses and midwives that are suitably qualified and meet our standards can join the register or have their registration renewed.
- Our systems and processes are documented, quality assured and compliant with legislation and Council policy.
- Our registration processes are fair, efficient, transparent, secure and continuously improving.
- Our register is accurate, easily accessible to the public and easy to understand.
- Everyone who seeks registration with us or relevant information about our register receives good customer service.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Implement a modernised system to support registration services, which will include a facility to provide phased fee payments for nurses and midwives.
- Improve our call centre operations, adopting a contact centre model to provide an improved service.
- Deliver an enhanced registration-renewal process, in accordance with the agreed model for revalidation.

Objective 2

We will set evidence-based and accessible standards of education and practice. We will assure the quality of education programmes for nurses and midwives and the quality of supervision of midwives, so that we can be sure that everyone on our register is fit to practise.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Consult on, refine and publish evidence about our model for revalidation of nurses and midwives.
- Develop and publish a revised Code and standards for practice supported by guidance on revalidation.
- Develop and publish guidance on the duty of candour.
- Review our current model of midwifery regulation to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Monitor and review our framework for the quality assurance of nursing and midwifery education to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Develop a new education strategy.
- Evaluate our pre-registration nursing and midwifery standards.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Test our revalidation model via early implementers.
- Implement a proportionate model of revalidation to ensure that nurses and midwives continue to be fit to practise (December 2015).
- Define and publish any additional guidance required to support the Code.
- Implement and evaluate our education strategy.

- Complete a review of our standards for prescribers and guidance on medicines management.
- Review our post-registration standards.

Outcomes

- Evidence-based and accessible regulatory standards for the education and practice of nurses and midwives that prioritise patient and public safety and patient-centred care.
- Nurses, midwives, employers and the public are clear about the need for nurses and midwives to continue to be fit to practise.
- Nurses and midwives understand their responsibilities in putting the patient at the heart of what they do and raise and escalate concerns about poor care appropriately.
- Our process for quality assuring education is proportionate and takes account of the views of patients, service users and students.
- Weak or failing education providers are targeted for improvement.

Objective 3

We will take swift and fair action to deal with individuals whose integrity or ability to provide safe care is questioned, so that the public can have confidence in the quality and standards of care provided by nurses and midwives.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Continue to review our fitness to practise processes to improve efficiency, speed, quality, proportionality, fairness and learning.
- Review and implement changes to our scheduling to ensure we are efficient with our resources.
- Deliver a new investigations model.
- Subject to legislative change, introduce case examiners to improve the timeliness, consistency and quality of early-stage decision making.
- Improve the quality of decision making by capturing learning points to inform guidance and training and to create a culture of continuous improvement.
- Implement changes to our case management system leading to greater efficiencies.
- Deliver a programme of customer service improvements based on feedback from our customers.
- Develop new and improved processes in accordance with changes to the legal framework.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Continue to develop new and improved processes in accordance with changes to the legal framework.
- Continue to review our processes to improve efficiency, speed, quality, proportionality, fairness and learning.

Outcomes

- We will meet our published investigation and adjudication key performance indicators.
- We will resolve 90 percent of cases within 15 months.
- All fitness to practise decisions are well reasoned, consistent, protect the public and maintain confidence in the professions.
- Our fitness to practise process is transparent, fair, proportionate and focused on public protection.
- Fitness to practise cases are dealt with as quickly as possible, taking into account the complexity and type of case.
- Efficient business practices that deliver value for money.





Goal 2: We will have open and effective relationships that will enable us to work in the public interest.

Objective 4

We will maintain open and effective regulatory relationships with patients and the public, other regulators, employers, parliamentarians and the professions. This will help us positively influence the behaviour of nurses and midwives to make the care of people their first concern, treat them as individuals, and respect their dignity.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Improve our UK-wide understanding and engagement.
- Strengthen our approach to patient and public engagement across the four countries of the UK.
- Learn through engagement about how senior nurses and senior midwives can contribute to our communications.
- Develop a model to provide improved regional employer liaison and advice.
- Engage proactively with developments and inquiries in the healthcare landscape and swiftly respond.
- Explore ways in which we can assess the impact and effectiveness of our activities to raise awareness and understanding of our role.
- Promote understanding of our case for legislative change.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Continue to develop information-sharing partnerships as our intelligence capacity improves.
- Implement regional liaison on the basis of the model we develop in 2014–2015.

Outcomes

- Patient and public protection is at the heart of everything we do.
- Our profile and public understanding of our role are improved.
- Timely and appropriate fitness to practise referrals.
- We demonstrate our ability to deliver effective and consistent regulation.
- Confidence in our professional regulation is increased.

Objective 5

We will develop and maintain constructive and responsive communications so that people are well informed about the standards of care they should expect from nurses and midwives, and our role when standards are not met.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Continue to keep stakeholders up to date on our progress and be honest about the improvements we still have to make.
- Launch our refreshed website to meet the needs of the public, and nurses and midwives.
- Improve materials which explain our role to the public.
- Promote the revised Code as a resource for patients and the public in understanding what they can expect from nurses and midwives.
- Enhance our digital presence through increased online services and extend our use of social media.
- Review and develop the content, promotion and distribution of our public e-newsletters.
- Use plain English in all our public-facing materials.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Promote our corporate strategy for 2015–2020.
- Continue to enhance our communications around key initiatives such as revalidation.
- Ensure stakeholder understanding of legislative changes.

Outcomes

- We are open with our stakeholders about the progress of our improvement activity.
- The public, employers and other stakeholders understand our role and how to engage with us.
- Confidence in our professional regulation is increased.



Objective 6

We will improve the collection and use of our both own data and intelligence from other sources, and share what we know with other regulators and relevant partner organisations to improve public protection.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Improve the quality and completeness of data available to enable evidence-based regulation.
- Build risk and intelligence capabilities, aligned with a research and evidence function, so that we can identify potential issues and risks to patients.
- Continue to develop a programme of collaborative work with other regulators and organisations so that we can improve our joint working and intelligence-sharing arrangements to help identify and act on risks to patients.
- Develop and deliver a robust evaluation model to support our understanding of the effects of our interventions and standards.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Further develop our analytical and intelligence-based assessments to help us identify trends and indicators to allow a more proactive approach to regulation.
- Improve public reporting of our data and related analysis for wider use by the sector.
- Develop the evidence base from revalidation into factors affecting risk in the practice of nursing and midwifery.

Outcomes

- Clear organisational understanding and identification of knowledge and intelligence needs.
- Information and data is consistent, with methodologies understood and replicable.
- We can make prompt decisions on the basis of accurate and consistent intelligence and data.
- More targeted and proportionate regulatory action.
- Risks to patient safety are identified and acted on quickly.
- Evidence-based standards and guidance.
- Enhanced ability to take a more proactive and preventative approach to ensure public protection.



Goal 3: Our staff will have the skills, knowledge and supporting systems needed to help us provide excellent services to the public and the people that we regulate.

Objective 7

We will promote equality and diversity in carrying out our functions and in delivering our services as a regulator and as an employer.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Implement a revised equality and diversity strategy across the organisation.
- Improve our methods of collecting and analysing data about the diversity of nurses and midwives on our register and fitness to practise outcomes.
- Analyse our activities, services and functions to see how they affect diverse groups.
- Deliver quality services relevant to the needs of diverse groups and communities.
- Ensure that our staff and partners are aware of their accountabilities and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.
- Continue to work in partnership with diverse groups and external diversity experts to inform our work.
- Improve our governance processes to support the delivery of equality and inclusion.
- Demonstrate a good reputation as a fair employer and regulator.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Publish data about the diversity of nurses and midwives on our register and fitness to practise outcomes.
- Further develop our equality and diversity strategy and action plan.

Outcomes

- A better understanding of how our activities, data collection and decision-making affect diverse groups.
- Our policies and procedures do not adversely affect any particular group.
- Compliance with equality and diversity legislation.

Objective 8

We will develop effective policies, efficient services and governance processes that support our staff to fulfil all our functions.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Set a budget and long-term financial plan that support business needs and achieve our reserves targets.
- Achieve efficiency savings through improved contracts management and procurement practice.
- Embed a culture of continuous learning and improvement which provides strong assurance and results in process improvements, risk reduction and efficiency savings.
- Improve the experience of all our customers when they interact with us.
- Ensure we are prepared for forthcoming legislative change.
- Redefine our Change programme to be one of transformation supporting our emerging corporate strategy.
- Continue to improve our information technology, security and governance arrangements.
- Develop our capacity regarding business analysis and project management.
- Manage the transition of our hearings facility at Old Bailey to new accommodation.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Develop a long-term accommodation strategy.
- Drive through a programme of efficiencies.
- Further transform the organisation.

Outcomes

- Clarity in our long-term financial needs, plans and fee requirements resulting in higher levels of accountability, transparency and demonstration of value for money.
- Effective delivery of our corporate goals and objectives.
- A culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- Timely, well-informed and transparent decisions made by the Council.
- Confidence that our business systems and processes are fit for purpose and are complied with.
- An enhanced reputation as a regulator with our stakeholders.

Objective 9

We will build an open culture which engages and empowers staff to perform to their best and which encourages learning and improvement.

What we plan to do 2014–2015

- Implement effective workforce planning, demonstrating a proactive and longer-term approach to decision making and resource planning.
- Improve performance management by implementing a new appraisal system.
- Further develop career progression pathways, a rewards system and our market position as an employer.
- Develop clear alignment between our workforce skills and behaviours and our emerging corporate strategy and transformation work.
- Foster a culture of openness in which staff feel able to raise concerns so we can learn from our mistakes.
- Conduct an annual staff survey, learn from what staff say and implement improvements in response.

What we plan to do 2015–2017

- Review the rewards system.
- Continue to evaluate our workforce planning and learning and development programmes to ensure close alignment to long-term needs.

Outcomes

- We have greater understanding and control over staff turnover.
- Public protection is enhanced through a high-performing workforce delivering efficient and effective regulation.
- Staff are motivated, feel valued and are fairly rewarded for the roles they perform, as evidenced by the way in which they work and their ongoing commitment to the organisation.
- An improved employer brand fostering a culture of pride.



NMC Nursing &
Midwifery
Council

23 Portland Place, London W1B 1PZ
T +44 20 7637 7181 F +44 20 7436 2924

www.nmc-uk.org

The nursing and midwifery regulator for England,
Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362)