

Safeguarding the public:

the Nursing & Midwifery Council
business plan 2009-2012

Nursing & Midwifery
Council

NMC



The Nursing & Midwifery Council exists to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public.

- We register all nurses and midwives and ensure that they are properly qualified and competent to work in the UK.
- We set the standards of education, training and conduct that nurses and midwives need to deliver high quality healthcare consistently throughout their careers.
- We ensure that nurses and midwives keep their skills and knowledge up to date and uphold the standards of their professional Code.
- We ensure that midwives are safe to practise by setting rules for their practice and supervision.
- We have fair processes to investigate allegations made against nurses and midwives who may not have followed the Code.

Introduction

Nurses and midwives care for people when they are at their most vulnerable; people must have complete trust in the professionals who care for them. Whether they are women giving birth, children visiting school nurses, mental health service users being treated in secure units, or older people being nursed at the end of their lives, people should receive high quality care, be treated as individuals and be given the respect and dignity they deserve. These are our primary concerns. Wherever and however people are cared for by nurses and midwives, we exist to safeguard their health and wellbeing.

The challenges facing the Nursing & Midwifery Council are as varied as the settings in which nurses and midwives deliver care. The drive to ensure that healthcare professionals are fit to practise throughout their working lives means that we are fundamentally reviewing our approach to revalidation, as well as completing our review of pre registration education. Services are being delivered closer to people's homes, and we need to ensure the nursing and midwifery workforce is fit for purpose. There are agreements to be reached on subjects as varied as professional indemnity insurance, the registration of public health nurses and the impact of devolution on UK-wide regulation. While we do not underestimate the scale of the challenges we face, we are confident that, working with partners and

stakeholders internationally, across Europe and here in the UK, we are ready to meet them.

We are looking to the future, confident in the knowledge that we have overcome the difficulties of recent years. We were the first healthcare regulator to change its governance arrangements and introduce a leaner and fitter Council. We introduced a new case management system, allowing us to handle fitness to practise allegations more quickly and efficiently. And by early 2010, we will have completed our financial recovery plan and achieved stability to deliver our work in the future.

We know that we cannot afford to be complacent, and so this document sets out our plans for the next three years. It also explains the values that motivate us and shape the way we work. And as a constant reminder of our core purpose, it sets out our vision to safeguard the public by ensuring nurses and midwives consistently deliver high quality healthcare.

Professor Tony Hazell
Chair

Kathy George CBE RRC
Chief Executive and Registrar

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Our vision

To safeguard the public by ensuring nurses and midwives consistently deliver high quality healthcare.

Our mission

The Nursing & Midwifery Council exists to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public. We do this by maintaining a register of nurses and midwives, setting standards for education and practice, and giving guidance and advice to the professions. We aim to inspire confidence by ensuring that the nurses and midwives on our register are fit to practise and by dealing swiftly and fairly with those who are not.

Our values

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.

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.



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Our work

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.

We are inclusive

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

We are committed to delivering our work based on the best available evidence and best practice. For the next three years, we have organised our work into five key areas. Our core work is **safeguarding** the health and wellbeing of people using or needing the services of nurses and midwives. This central priority is supported by our activity in developing **standards** and engaging with **stakeholders**. None of this work is possible without high quality **staff** and the necessary supporting **systems**, which together form the last two parts of this plan.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of people using the services of nurses and midwives is the heart of our work. As custodians of the world's largest register of healthcare professionals, we aim for the highest standards in regulation. We do this not only through maintaining a register of over 670,000 nurses and midwives, but also through dealing with professionals whose fitness to practise is called into question. Over the next three years we will significantly improve the quality and quantity of the data we hold about nurses and midwives, and with increased capacity to hold hearings in our new dedicated fitness to practise centre, we will reduce waiting times and clear historic backlogs.

Across the UK, we set education standards for aspiring nurses and midwives, and over the next three years we will collaborate with other healthcare regulators to share our best practice in quality assurance. We will also develop and implement a comprehensive online library of educational standards.

Thanks to their distinct regulatory history, today's midwives, and the women they care for, benefit from the support and safety providing by statutory supervision. Over the next three years we will strengthen supervision across the UK and build essential links between supervision and fitness to practise processes.



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▼ Objective 1.1

We will maintain our register of nurses and midwives who are fit to practise, so that they can work to provide high quality healthcare.

Activities

- ▶ Continue to deal with fraudulent and forged applications to join the register.
- ▶ Review existing policy and process for EU and international registrations.
- ▶ Undertake data collection on the diversity of the register.

▼ Objective 1.2

We will safeguard the public's health and wellbeing by taking swift and fair action to deal with individuals who fitness to practise is questioned.

Activities

- ▶ Conduct fitness to practise investigations and hold hearings.
- ▶ Develop fitness to practise audit processes to inform standards development.
- ▶ Review our fitness to practise rules in collaboration with other regulators.

▼ Objective 1.3

We will monitor and enhance the quality of education programmes for nurses and midwives.

Activities

- ▶ Collaborate with other regulators in quality assurance.
- ▶ Review and retender for quality assurance contracts.
- ▶ Develop and implement a new library of standards for education.

▼ Objective 1.4

We will assure safety of women and families using maternity services through monitoring the statutory supervision of midwives.

Activities

- ▶ Implement the local supervising authority framework.
- ▶ Develop UK wide consistency of statutory supervision of midwives.
- ▶ Improve links between supervision of midwives and fitness to practise processes.

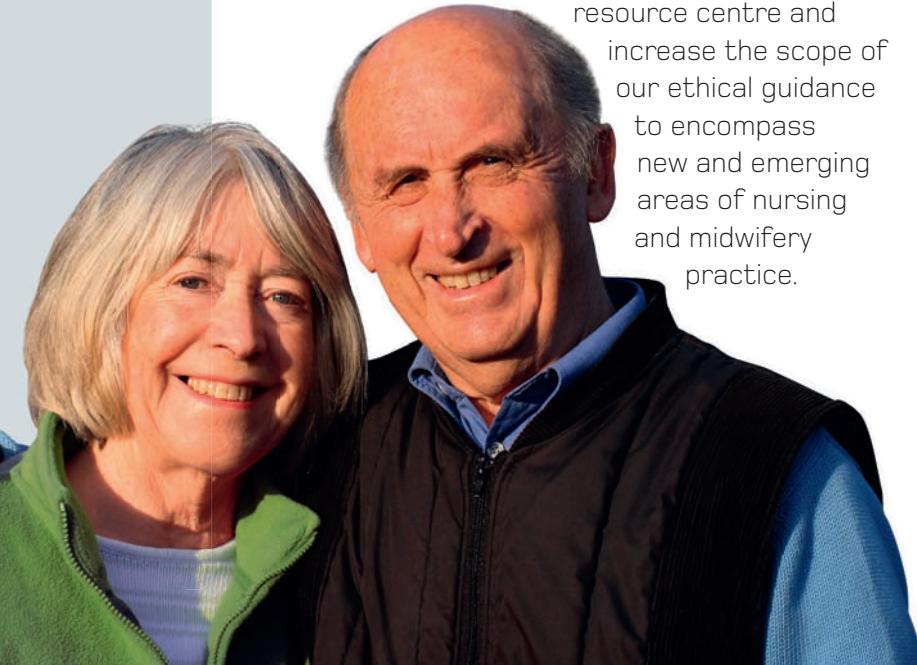


Standards

Setting clear standards for education and practice is an essential part of effective regulation. Even as the world of healthcare changes and the roles of nurses and midwives evolve, our priorities remain consistent. The public must be confident of receiving safe and effective care from the healthcare professionals we register and regulate.

Revalidation presents a challenge for all healthcare regulators, and it is a challenge we are ready to face. Starting with an interim review of Prep, our standard for post registration education and practice, we will develop new models to identify high risk areas of healthcare delivery and ensure that people on our register remain fit to practise throughout their careers. We will consult on and publish new rules and standards to govern midwifery practice and statutory supervision, and we will conduct a thorough review of our policy on professional indemnity insurance. And we will target our resources to provide new guidance to midwives on the care of vulnerable women using maternity services.

As a regulator, we believe our role must go beyond setting rules and standards to providing advice and guidance that helps professionals develop their own practice. To that end we will look to establish a learning resource centre and increase the scope of our ethical guidance to encompass new and emerging areas of nursing and midwifery practice.



▼ Objective 2.1

We will develop policies and set clear standards for education and practice so that the public can be confident of receiving safe and effective care.

Activities

- ▶ Review advanced nursing practice and consider introduction of mandatory preceptorship in the context of revalidation.
- ▶ Develop our approach to the regulation of new and emerging roles, considering distributed regulation and health care and maternity support workers.
- ▶ Develop the specialist community public health nursing part of the register.

▼ Objective 2.2

We will review and update standards for local supervising authorities and supervision of midwives.

Activities

- ▶ Review the midwives rules and standards.
- ▶ Review our policy relating to professional indemnity insurance.
- ▶ Develop guidance relating to care of vulnerable women in maternity services.

▼ Objective 2.3

We will keep our standards and advice under regular review, ensuring that they reflect contemporary practice and the best available evidence.

Activities

- ▶ Conduct an interim review of Prep as part of the development of revalidation.
- ▶ Develop guidelines for student conduct with other regulators.
- ▶ Scope the development of a learning resource centre.

Stakeholders

People, not policies, are at the heart of healthcare. Our priority continues to be involving patients and the public in developing effective nursing and midwifery standards. Over the next three years, we will also expand the scope of our communication activity, to talk directly with the public about the care they should expect from nurses and midwives, focusing first on the needs of older people and women using maternity services.

Putting the public's interests and needs first means that we must collaborate with others who influence healthcare delivery. We will develop strong and effective partnership with professional bodies, trade unions, health departments and others, not only so that our standards are embedded in day to day practice but also that we influence agendas that improve public health and wellbeing. We will also look to establish our presence across the four countries of the UK.

The demanding lives of nurses and midwives make them a uniquely challenging audience to engage. We will adopt new and innovative approaches across all our communications channels, ensuring we reach people where they are with the information they need.

▼ Objective 3.1

We will put the public's interests and needs first in all our communications and stakeholder relations.

Activities

- ▶ Develop new websites for both public and professional audiences.
- ▶ Develop relationships with others that help us communicate with the public.
- ▶ Implement social marketing campaigns.

▼ Objective 3.2

We will build strong and effective partnerships with our stakeholders, ensuring they are engaged in helping us develop nursing and midwifery standards.

Activities

- ▶ Implement a comprehensive stakeholder strategy.
- ▶ Consolidate our involvement with the Health Hotel.
- ▶ Establish a permanent presence in the four countries of the UK.

▼ Objective 3.3

We will build and continually develop our communications channels so that people, and in particular vulnerable groups, are well informed about nursing and midwifery standards.

Activities

- ▶ Strengthen our communication with employers and supervisors of midwives.
- ▶ Develop blogging and other use of social media.
- ▶ Build and maintain positive relationships with the media.

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Despite the size of our register and the scale of our activities, we rely on a small and committed staff group to deliver our work. Over the next three years, we will aspire to become an employer of choice, attracting talented people and building on the diversity of our staff group.

▼ Objective 4.1

We will attract, support, develop and retain a diverse staff group.

Activities

- ▶ Develop a reward and recognition strategy.
- ▶ Review our performance development review system.
- ▶ Implement a new human resources information system.

▼ Objective 4.2

We will invest in and value our staff, providing learning and development opportunities so that they are the best they can be.

Activities

- ▶ Develop a learning and development strategy.
- ▶ Develop and implement activities to support supervisors, managers and directors.
- ▶ Develop our approach to talent management.

▼ Objective 4.3

We will build a culture of excellence, motivating our staff to provide a high quality, professional service.

Activities

- ▶ Roll out new ways of working across the organisation.
- ▶ Retain our Investors in People status.
- ▶ Develop and implement policies that support staff health and wellbeing.



Systems

Our business support functions, financial systems and governance arrangements contribute to our ability to deliver a high quality, professional service. Our next three years will see a transformation of our approach to customer relationship management and the full implementation of our governance reforms, ensuring our effectiveness in safeguarding the health and wellbeing of the public.

▼ Objective 5.1

We will develop and maintain business services that support the fulfilment of our statutory functions.

Activities

- ▶ Embed equality impact assessments throughout the organisation.
- ▶ Implement a new organisation-wide customer relationship management approach.
- ▶ Develop and maintain our ICT infrastructure, support and applications.

▼ Objective 5.2

We will continually improve our processes and procedures, optimising our resources and providing best value.

Activities

- ▶ Strengthen project and programme management throughout the organisation.
- ▶ Ensure the organisation complies with procurement regulations and achieves best value.
- ▶ Maintain stewardship of assets and ensure propriety and regularity of expenditure.

▼ Objective 5.3

We will ensure we take clear and robust decisions and have transparent governance processes.

Activities

- ▶ Review the effectiveness of our governance reforms.
- ▶ Recruit new fitness to practise panellists and committee members.
- ▶ Appraise the performance of Council and committee members, fitness to practise chairs, panellists and local supervising authority reviewers.

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Our successes

We are committed to measuring our progress against our objectives, celebrating our successes and being honest with our stakeholders when we face difficulties. We value openness and transparency, and we will therefore regularly report to our Council, which meets in public, on a range of key performance indicators. We will also publish updates on the progress of different areas of work on our website and in our magazine, NMC News.

- Professor Mary Renfrew, registrant member, England.
- Ruth Sawtell, lay member, England.
- Professor Jane Tunstill, lay member, England.

As well as holding its own regular meetings, the work of Council is conducted through six committees:

- Appointments board.
- Audit, risk and assurance.
- Business planning and governance.
- Fitness to practise.
- Midwifery.
- Professional practice and registration.

The day to day work of the organisation is directed by our executive management board:

- Graeme Anderson, head of human resources and organisational development.
- Sharon Atkinson, director of communications and stakeholder relations.
- Sarah Bedwell, director of corporate governance and organisational development.
- Kathy George CBE RRC, chief executive and registrar.
- Christina McKenzie, head of midwifery.
- Roger Thompson, acting director of standards and registration.
- Ian Todd, director of fitness to practise.
- Stephen Williams, director of finance, ICT, procurement and facilities.

Our people

Our Council, chaired by Professor Tony Hazell, is responsible for our strategic direction, dealing with major policy issues, and holding our executive team to account. It has 14 members. Seven of these are registered with us as nurses and midwives, and seven are lay members. All our members are independently appointed, and they are drawn from all four countries of the UK.

Council members:

- Alison Aitken, registrant member, Scotland.
- Christina Baron, lay member, Wales.
- Dr Kuldip Bharj OBE, registrant member, England.
- Professor Judith Ellis MBE, registrant member, England.
- Joyce Fletcher, registrant member, England.
- Professor Tony Hazell, lay member, Wales.
- Lorna Jacobs, lay member, England.
- Gayle Nelson, registrant member, Northern Ireland.
- Grahame Owen, lay member, England.
- David Pyle, lay member, England.
- Carole Rees-Williams, registrant member, Wales.

Our finances

We are almost entirely reliant on registration fees from nurses and midwives, and we receive no statutory funding for our core work of safeguarding the public's health and wellbeing. Nurses and midwives pay an annual fee of £76. Our annual accounts are available on our website, independently audited, and are submitted to the Charity Commission and laid before Parliament.

Summary expenditure by directorate for 2009/10

| | £m | % |
|---|-------|-----|
| Chief executive and registrar's office | 0.65 | 2 |
| Finance, ICT and facilities | 8.86 | 21 |
| Standards and registrations | 5.32 | 13 |
| Communications and stakeholder relations | 3.05 | 7 |
| Midwifery | 0.68 | 2 |
| Fitness to practise | 13.91 | 34 |
| Corporate governance and organisational development | 4.32 | 10 |
| Other* | 4.43 | 11 |
| Total expenditure | 41.22 | 100 |

Notes

*This category includes spending on projects that are currently being scoped, capital investment and contingencies.

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The Nursing & Midwifery Council
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