

## **Welsh language scheme**

### **A Welsh language scheme prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993**

This scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board in accordance with section 14(1) of the Welsh Language Act 1993 on 19 January 2011.

### **Principle of equality**

The Nursing and Midwifery Council is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality.

This scheme sets out how the Health Nursing and Midwifery Council will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales.

# Introduction

## About this scheme

- 1 The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) has adopted the principle that it will treat the Welsh and English languages equally when conducting public business in Wales. The scheme identifies how we will implement that principle in providing public services in Wales.

## About the Nursing and Midwifery Council

- 2 We are the nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Islands.
  - 2.1 We exist to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public.
  - 2.2 We set the standards of education, training and conduct that nurses and midwives need to deliver high quality healthcare consistently throughout their careers.
  - 2.3 We ensure that nurses and midwives keep their skills and knowledge up to date and uphold the standards of their professional code.
  - 2.4 We ensure that midwives are safe to practise by setting rules for their practice and supervision.
  - 2.5 We have fair processes to investigate allegations made against nurses and midwives who may not have followed the code.
- 3 The NMC was established under the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 and came into being on 1 April 2002. We are accountable, through the Privy Council, to Parliament and members of the public.
- 4 The Council makes the decisions that set the strategic agenda for the NMC. The Council ensures that the NMC complies with the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 and the Charities Act 1993. Membership comprises 14 lay and registrant members appointed by the Privy Council, including one member from each of the four UK countries.
- 5 There are around 660,000 nurses and midwives on our register, of whom around 30,000 live in Wales.
- 6 We are based in two offices in London: 23 Portland Place, W1B 1PZ and 61 Aldwych, WC2B 4AE. We do not anticipate that we will have an office in Wales in the near future; however we are a UK wide regulator.

## **Service planning and delivery**

- 7 The NMC acknowledges the importance of providing a service in the preferred language of the customer as part of a quality service and recognises the culture and linguistic needs of the Welsh speaking public. The NMC is fully committed to the principle that the English and Welsh languages will be treated on the basis of equality.

## **New policies and initiatives**

- 8 The NMC is committed to ensuring that nurses and midwives meet the needs of the Welsh speaking community and to working with partners in Wales to ensure this occurs.
- 9 When we plan and formulate new policies or initiatives, or update existing policies, we will assess the language consequences to make sure that they meet with the commitments given in this scheme. This will be conducted as part of the NMC's equality impact assessment (EqIA) process.
- 10 In addition:
  - 10.1 employees involved in developing NMC policy will be made aware of the Welsh language scheme through EqIA training
  - 10.2 all staff will be made aware of the scheme through internal awareness raising activities
  - 10.3 all new employees will be made aware of the scheme and their responsibilities through induction packs
  - 10.4 the Council will ensure that new policies and initiatives will be consistent with the scheme and do not undermine it.
- 11 We will develop internal guidelines describing the arrangements made to implement these measures.
- 12 We will consult the Welsh Language Board in advance regarding proposal which will affect the scheme.
- 13 The scheme will not be altered without prior approval of the Welsh Language Board.

## **Delivery of service**

- 14 We are committed to the delivery of a bilingual service in accordance with the contents of the scheme.

## **The standards of service in Welsh**

- 15 We are committed to providing an equally high quality service in both English and Welsh. This will be stated in key documents such as our annual report and Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) performance review response.
- 16 We will:
  - 16.1 provide details of the standards of services offered on our website
  - 16.2 monitor the standard of service and its implementation
  - 16.3 investigate future Welsh language services.

## **Communicating with the Welsh speaking public**

- 17 The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Council is to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public.
- 18 We are committed to offering services to the public in the language or format of their choice.

## **Written and telephone communication the Welsh speaking public**

- 19 The NMC welcomes written enquiries from members of the public in either Welsh or English. Letters or emails in Welsh will be answered in Welsh within the same service levels as correspondence in English.
- 20 The NMC does not have any Welsh speaking staff at present. Greetings to callers will therefore be offered in English. If a caller wishes to proceed in Welsh, they will be given the option of continuing the call in English or putting the query to us in writing. We will review the option of being able to receive and deal with calls in Welsh from the outset.
- 21 The NMC will publish clear internal procedures on dealing with written and telephone communications in Welsh and ensure that all employees are aware of the relevant protocols.
- 22 We do not currently have any email newsletters and other circulars that are directed specifically at the public in Wales. However we will review this provision over time.
- 23 Services offered in Welsh will be stated clearly in Welsh on our website.
- 24 The development of Welsh language services for nurses and midwives will be monitored and reviewed.

## **Public meetings**

- 25 Members of the public who intent to attend our public meetings in Wales are welcome to speak in Welsh or English. Public notices, invitations and other papers setting out the arrangements for these meetings will make it clear that this is possible. We request that prior notice is given to assist us in arranging this.
- 26 Notices of public meetings in Wales will be bilingual.
- 27 Any agendas and minutes of meetings for the general public in Wales will be available bilingually.

## **Our public face**

### **Corporate identity**

- 28 We are committed to developing a bilingual corporate identity in Wales.
- 29 The official name of the Nursing and Midwifery Council in Welsh is Cyngor Nyrsio a Bydwreigiaeth.
- 30 We have Welsh versions of our logo and corporate identity which will be used for the NMC's presence in Wales, such as at events, conferences, bilingual publications and advertisements.
- 31 We have Welsh versions of official stationery which will be used when corresponding in Welsh.

### **Publications**

- 32 We issue publications for a variety of purposes. Information aimed at patients and members of the public will be available in English and Welsh. At present this includes:
  - 32.1 Care and respect every time: What you can expect from nurses
  - 32.2 Support for parents: How supervision and supervisors of midwives can help you
  - 32.3 Making a complaint about a nurse or midwife
- 33 Information for members of the public who are witnesses in fitness to practise cases will also be available in Welsh.
- 34 Standards, guidance and other technical or specialised material aimed at professionals and not directly at the public will be in English. However we will offer a translation into Welsh on request.
- 35 All NMC documents are currently available free of charge. However, if in the future there is a cost attached to a publication, the English and Welsh copies or the bilingual copies of the publication will be the same price.

### **Public advertising**

- 36 Where we conduct public advertising and publicity campaigns in Wales we will treat the two languages on the basis of equality. Billboard and other advertising on physical sites in Wales will be presented bilingually, as will any magazine and newspaper advertising in publications distributed only in Wales.

## **Press releases**

- 37 The NMC will issue bilingual press releases and statements to the media in Wales where they relate to specific Welsh issues. Translations at press conferences in Wales will be provided for journalists on request.
- 38 There may be times when it is not possible to organise translation of an urgent press release before issuing it. Where this occurs a translation will be arranged within 24 hours on weekdays.

## **The NMC website**

- 39 The NMC website contains a section devoted to information for the general public, containing core details of our work. This section will be available in Welsh, along with online versions of our Welsh language publications.

## **Fitness to practise proceedings**

- 40 Article 22(7) of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 provides that fitness to practise hearings and related meetings must take place in the UK country in which the nurse or midwife is situated. Currently we hear around 100 cases in Wales a year.
- 41 To avoid doubt it should be noted that the arrangements set out in this scheme only apply to fitness to practise and appeal proceedings which take place in Wales.

## **Members of the public and fitness to practise**

- 42 We have fair processes to investigate allegations made against nurses and midwives who may not have followed the code. Referrals can come from employers, other healthcare professionals, other public bodies or members of the public.
- 43 Information for the public on how to make a complaint in Wales about a nurse or a midwife will be available in both English and Welsh. We welcome referrals from the public in English or Welsh.
- 44 When a member of the public writes to us in Welsh we will issue a reply in Welsh, if a reply is required. Our target time for replying will be the same as for replying to letters written in English. Enclosures sent with letters will be bilingual where possible.
- 45 The NMC will enable members of the public who are witnesses in Wales to give statements to investigators in English or Welsh through use of suitably qualified translators, where given sufficient prior notice,.

## **Hearings**

- 46 A person will be able to speak at a hearing in Welsh. When we are told that a registrant or someone connected with their case, wishes to speak Welsh we will enable them to do so through the use of suitably qualified translators. We require 28 days notice to enable us to do this effectively.
- 47 Where witnesses are called during hearings, the Councils officer administering the oath or affirmation will inform them that they may choose to be sworn or affirm in Welsh or English.

## **Implementing the scheme**

### **Employees and the responsibility**

- 48 The Director of External Affairs will oversee the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of the scheme.
- 49 All managers have a responsibility to implement those aspects of the scheme which are relevant to their departments.
- 50 All members of staff will have responsibility for carrying out their functions in relation to the scheme. All staff will be made aware of the scheme and the implications for their day-to-day activities.

### **Welsh vocational training**

- 51 We encourage and support any member of staff who wishes to learn Welsh to better interact with the public in Wales, in the context of their overall objectives and those of the organisation.

### **Recruitment in Wales**

- 52 The NMC will identify if there are any posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable, and identify the level of proficiency required. This will be reflected in the job descriptions and person specifications accordingly.
- 53 For those positions where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, recruitment notices will appear bilingually in English language publications principally circulating in Wales, and in Welsh in Welsh language publications. They will also appear bilingually on the NMC website.

### **Third party contractors**

- 54 Third party contractors with new or renewed contracts where the work will involve communicating in Wales will be made aware of the NMC's Welsh language scheme and any specific obligations. In particular their attention will be drawn to relevant parts of the scheme that they will be expected to implement.
- 55 Performance against contract will be monitored against compliance.

### **Timescales and targets**

- 56 Timescales and targets for implementing our scheme are identified in our action plan (appendix A).

### **Monitoring the scheme**

- 57 We will monitor the implementation of the scheme in accordance with the action plan and report back to the NMC's Council annually on progress. This report will also be submitted to the Welsh Language Board.

- 58 We will also review compliance with the scheme on an annual basis and submit a report to the Welsh Language Board. This will:
- 58.1 identify whether we are currently complying with the scheme
  - 58.2 identify whether the scheme is being appropriately managed
  - 58.3 analysis of performance on a departmental and corporate basis, in order to ensure consistency
  - 58.4 assess and consider key themes in scheme implementation
  - 58.5 recognise any fundamental weaknesses and develop an action plan, including timetable, to address them.
- 59 A summary of our performance will be included in our annual report.
- 60 In the third year of the scheme's implementation we will prepare an evaluation report assessing and evaluating our performance in implementing the scheme. At this time we will also revise and update the Welsh language scheme, as appropriate.
- 61 We welcome all complaints, comments and enquiries. Complaints about aspects of the scheme's implementation will be dealt with as part of the NMC's normal complaints procedures. Complaints can be presented in Welsh or English and should be addressed to the Chief Executives Office, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, 23 Portland Place, London, W1B 1PZ, or [ceoffice@nmc-uk.org](mailto:ceoffice@nmc-uk.org). Further information about our complaints process is available on our website.

## **Publicity of the scheme**

- 62 Upon launch of the scheme, we will issue a press release and publish the scheme on our website. Our key stakeholders in Wales will also be informed of the scheme.
- 63 The scheme will also be publicised to staff and included in our induction literature.