

Stakeholder information pack on our response to Covid-19

27 April 2020

Introduction	3
Our role	3
Our new strategy and organisational structure	3
Expanding the nursing and midwifery workforce during the Covid-19 outbreak.....	4
Future considerations for the temporary register.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Deployment of those on our temporary register	6
Arrangements for students and clinical placements.....	6
Guidance for employers.....	7
Supporting professionals on our permanent register	7
Availability of personal protective equipment for nursing and midwifery professionals.....	8
Advanced care planning / anticipatory care planning.....	8
Supporting registrants working in all settings.....	8
Frequently asked questions	9
Contact us.....	9
Social media and communications pack.....	10
Annexe 1 – FAQs	11
FAQs about professionals on our register	11
FAQs about returning to the temporary register	12
FAQs about students on placements	13

Introduction

This pack provides the latest information about the Nursing and Midwifery Council's response to the coronavirus pandemic. As the regulator of nurses and midwives across the UK and nursing associates in England we are playing an active role in expanding and supporting the nursing and midwifery workforce during this challenging time.

If you have any questions about the detail contained in this pack then please do contact us at stakeholders@nmc-uk.org. We are working in a rapidly changing environment and we will be reviewing and updating the information in this pack on a regular basis.

You can find the most up-to-date information on our coronavirus hub at the NMC's website at www.nmc.org.uk/news/coronavirus.

Our role

The NMC has made some operational changes during the Covid-19 pandemic, to prioritise its core regulatory functions and ensure it continues to regulate nurses, midwives and nursing associates effectively.

Our priorities in these unprecedented circumstances are:

- maintaining our important role in protecting the public and promoting public confidence in nursing and midwifery
- ensuring we continue to register the right people swiftly – the health and social care system needs nurses, midwives and nursing associates more than ever now
- playing our part in the actions needed to respond to the coronavirus pandemic
- looking after our colleagues to make sure people are safe and we can continue to operate effectively.

For further information about our regulatory functions [please read our statement](#) on how we are regulating in these unprecedented times, including information on changes to registration and revalidation and fitness to practice.

Our new strategy and organisational structure

On 29 April, we will launch our 2020-2025 strategy. While our focus will rightly remain on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic at this time, we will begin to embed some of the principles outlined in this new strategy, including our new values and behaviours, in order to respond in the best way to the current situation.

This includes making changes to our organisational structure. On 6 April we launched a new organisational structure to help us deliver our response to Covid-19 and our new strategy as effectively as possible, for the benefit of everyone's health and wellbeing.

The new structure will help our work keep pace with a rapidly developing health and social care sector, by helping us improve our work on strategy, insight and horizon scanning.

From 6 April we are organised in six directorates:

- A new **Professional Regulation** directorate which will combine our existing registration and revalidation and fitness to practise operational functions. This directorate will be led by Emma Broadbent.
- A new **Professional Practice** directorate, led by Dr Geraldine Walters CBE, responsible for shaping and supporting good professional practice on the part of people on our register, based upon our existing education and standards team.
- A new **Strategy and Insight** directorate, led by Matthew McClelland. This directorate will oversee high quality insight and analysis that will enable us to regulate well.
- Edward Welsh continues to lead the renamed **Communications and Engagement** Directorate and Andy Gillies remains the Director of **Resources and Technology Services**.
- In addition, we will shortly be advertising for a Director for the brand new **People and Organisational Effectiveness** directorate which will be focused on making sure our people, legal, governance and continuous improvement frameworks help us to deliver our core regulatory functions and new strategic aims.

These changes will support Andrea Sutcliffe to lead the NMC as Chief Executive and Registrar.

Expanding the nursing and midwifery workforce during the Covid-19 outbreak

As you will be aware, the Government has introduced emergency legislation that has allowed us to create a Covid-19 emergency temporary register. This means we can now temporarily register fit, proper and suitably experienced people, so that they can practise if they want to and feel able to do so.

On 20 March 2020, we invited around 50,000 nurses and midwives who left the permanent register within the last 3 years to return to practice and join the Covid-19 temporary register.

On 06 April 2020, we invited around 2,000 overseas applicants, including both nurses and midwives, who have completed all parts of their NMC registration process except the final clinical examination (OSCE), to join the Covid-19 temporary register. These individuals will have conditions of practice placed on them.

On 15 April 2020, we invited around 21,000 nurses and midwives who left the permanent register within the last 4 to 5 years to return to practice and join the Covid-19

temporary register. This included people who had started but not completed Return to Practice Programmes. These individuals will also have conditions of practice placed on them.

When we opened the temporary register on 27 March, 7,510 nursing and midwifery professionals appeared on it. There are now over 12,000 professionals on the temporary register. We will keep you updated on the number and breakdown of those on our temporary register regularly.

The latest published breakdown of the temporary register (data as of 23 April):

	<i>Country of address</i>					
	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Not given*	UK
Midwife	598	11	65	25	0	699
Nurse	9,445	243	1,235	521	23	11,467
Midwife; Nurse	110	4	11	3	-	128
Total	10,153	258	1,311	549	23	12,294

**Our data team is working to clarify this information and provide a clearer picture of the data we hold.*

Those on our temporary register are not permanent registrants. They will no longer be registered with the NMC:

- when the Covid-19 temporary register ceases because the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care declares the emergency conditions no longer exist;
- if at any time they decide to opt out of the temporary register; or,
- if our Registrar decides to remove their name from the temporary register during this time.

We have also emailed those who are on the permanent register but not currently in clinical practice, encouraging them to consider moving into a clinical setting if it is appropriate for them to do so.

We are working closely with partners across the sector to support and encourage the nursing and midwifery workforce during this challenging time.

We continue to consider the temporary register and work with the Department of Health and Social Care and the Devolved Administrations to identify other groups who could join. We previously identified nursing students as a potential group to invite in future, but no decision has been made on this yet.

For further information on our work to expand the temporary register and the roles our partners are playing in supporting us to do this, [please read our joint statement](#).

Deployment of those on our temporary register

We are sharing details of those on our temporary register with the four countries in the UK, who are co-ordinating and planning how best to deploy the emergency health and social care workforce in their nation. They'll contact professionals directly on the email address that they have given us, to see if they want to work.

If you are aware of professionals who have joined the temporary register and have not yet been contacted for deployment, they should visit the below websites for further information:

[Click here for England](#) (or call NHS Employers on 03332 407 552)

[Click here for Scotland](#)

[Click here for Wales](#)

[Click here for Northern Ireland](#)

Arrangements for students and clinical placements

We recognise the important contribution that many of our nursing and midwifery students want to make to the national response to the Covid-19 outbreak and the impact that the outbreak will have on those who are studying.

As such we have set [temporary standards](#) for our Approved Education Institutions (AEIs) and their practice learning partners to support all of their nursing and midwifery students throughout this emergency period. These will no longer apply after the emergency period.

Our emergency standards will enable:

- student nurses and midwives in the final six months of their pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes to complete their training in appropriate placement settings
- students in the second year, first six months of their final year of pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes, and those in the first year of post-graduate nursing and midwifery programmes to spend up to 80% of their year in clinical placements
- first year undergraduate students to complete their first year with up to 100% of their year in theoretical learning – the required clinical hours will be met across the rest of their programme.

Our full joint statements and agreed actions with our partners across the health and care system are available:

- [here for nursing students in their final six months of study](#);
- [here for midwifery students in their final six months of study](#);
- [here for nursing and midwifery students not in their final six months](#).

Guidance for employers

We recognise that employers of health and social care services are working under enormous pressure at this time. We have developed dedicated pages on our website for employers, offering information on a range of areas including:

- Responsibilities as an employer of a Covid-19 temporary registrant
- Indemnity arrangements
- Raising concerns about a person on the Covid-19 temporary register.

There is also guidance for employers on how to support registrants on our permanent register, including on:

- Revalidation deadlines
- Fitness to practise and registration processes
- Returning to clinical practice
- Supporting students in clinical placements.

Our [Employer Link Service](#) run an advice line for employers and relevant stakeholders in health and social care. They are available to support employers with questions or concerns about fitness to practise and the NMC's work more broadly. Call 020 7462 8850 to speak to one of our regulation advisers, or email employerlinkservice@nmc-uk.org.

Supporting professionals on our permanent register

We know that nursing and midwifery professionals may be feeling anxious about Covid-19 and the impact that it will have on their role as a registered professional. We have a dedicated page on our website to support our registrants who are already practising. We have made a number of statements, some jointly with our partners across the health and care system, on key issues affecting professionals right now:

- Full joint statements and agreed actions with our partners across the health and care system for [nurses](#) and [midwives](#)

- [Joint Statement on developing immediate critical care nursing capacity](#)

If a registrant has any concerns about their practice then we urge them to speak to their employer who will be able to provide them with more information.

Availability of personal protective equipment for nursing and midwifery professionals

It is vital to ensure that frontline staff in health and social care are supported to carry out their roles by being provided with the right personal protective equipment (PPE). We have heard from registrants that they are worried about the risk involved in caring for people using services and patients without this equipment. We have also heard from a number of former nurses and midwives who wish to re-join the register that the lack of appropriate equipment is a barrier to re-joining.

We have recently published a statement on PPE to support our registrants to put the Code into practice and exercise their professional judgment during this unprecedented pandemic situation. You can read the statement [here](#).

Advanced care planning / anticipatory care planning

We know from people using services, patients, registrants and media reports that there are instances where advance care plans / anticipatory care plans, including those with or without 'do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation' (DNACPR) forms, have been applied to groups of people in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The nature of this pandemic means that practitioners are under great pressure to make urgent, clinically complex decisions. To make sure that peoples' wishes and preferences can be taken into account, the need for advanced care planning with individuals and their families is more important than ever.

We have published a joint statement with the General Medical Council on advance care planning, including guidance for our registrants. This can be found [here](#).

Supporting registrants working in all settings

We need to ensure that we are recognising the vital contribution that those working in social care and community settings are making in response to coronavirus, as well as the NHS.

We are hearing of more and more people who use social care services being affected by Covid-19 and this is like to increase as the pandemic continues. It is clear that social care nurses and their colleagues have a critical role to play and are just as much on the frontline in this pandemic as staff in the NHS.

We know from the experiences social care nurses have shared with us that action is needed to better support the social care workforce to that they can safely care for people at this time.

We have published a statement in response to the Government's adult social care action plan, which can be found [here](#).

Frequently asked questions

We are monitoring the queries we are regularly being asked by registrants and stakeholders and collating a list of responses to frequently asked questions. Please find them attached at annexe 1. A full list of our FAQs in relation to Covid-19 can be found on [our website](#).

Contact us

If people in your networks have any general queries about the NMC, they can contact us at 020 7333 9333. If they have questions about our temporary register they should email tempreg@nmc-uk.org or call 020 7637 7181.

As a key stakeholder of the NMC, our stakeholder relations team is also here to support with your queries and any feedback you have on our work. You can contact the team at stakeholders@nmc-uk.org.

Social media and communications pack

To help us spread the word about the temporary register, it would be great if you can share our messages on your own social media channels or in newsletters. Below are some suggested posts; however, feel free to create your own - just make sure you include [the link to our Covid-19 web hub](#) which contains all relevant information.

You can also retweet the information we share on our Twitter account [@nmcnews](#).

Suggested posts

Twitter

Over 12,000 professionals have joined the @nmcnews temporary register.

Let's say thank you to all the nursing and midwifery professionals supporting the response to #Covid19

www.nmc.org.uk/news/coronavirus #ThankYou

Twitter

Do you employ nurses, midwives or nursing associates?

Check out the @nmcnews guidance for you during the #Covid19 pandemic

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/news/coronavirus/information-for-employers/>

Newsletter

The Nursing and Midwifery Council has responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by establishing a temporary register of former nurses and midwives and professionals with overseas qualifications.

Find out more about the temporary register, information about how the NMC is regulating during this time, and FAQs on a wide range of topics on their [Covid-19 web hub](#).

Newsletter

Do you employ nurses, midwives or nursing associates? The Nursing and Midwifery Council has launched guidance to help you during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Find answers to your questions about employing temporary registrants, fitness to practise and registrations processes on their [Covid-19 web hub](#).

Annexe 1 – FAQs

A [full list of FAQs](#) can be found on our website. Below we have listed a number of the most frequently asked.

FAQs about professionals on our register

What about my revalidation deadline?

We have extended revalidation application dates by three months for anyone who is due to revalidate in March, April or May this year. This means they each have an additional three months from their revalidation application date to complete their application. All those affected by this should have received an email letting them know their new revalidation application date. However, in the coming weeks you might also receive reminder emails from us which refer to your old revalidation date. Please ignore the old application date on these automated reminder emails. We have also been working closely with the Government to seek further changes that will allow us to grant additional flexibility in relation to revalidation and we will clarify what this means for the professionals on our register as soon as possible.

Can I refuse to care for someone who may be infected if I feel I may be at risk?

We know that nurses, midwives and nursing associates are experienced in dealing with challenging health issues, including infected patients, on a daily basis. As part of planning preparations, it's our job to make sure you're aware that [the Code](#) continues to apply. Section 1 explains what you should do to make sure people's individual needs are recognised, assessed and responded to without undue delay. It's also important that you're supported to take account of your own safety and wellbeing. Your employer is there to help by managing resources effectively and dealing with risk so that the quality of care or service you provide for people can be maintained. If you have any concerns that you believe puts you or those you are caring for at increased risk in your workplace, please share these with your manager as soon as possible so they can make sure you're able to practise safely.

I'm worried that my PIN is at risk if I need to act outside my normal job. What should I do?

As mentioned in our recent [joint statement](#), we recognise that in highly challenging circumstances you may need to depart from established procedures in order to care for patients and people using health and social care services. Our regulatory standards are designed to be flexible and to provide a framework for decision-making in a wide range of situations. In-line with [the Code](#), use your professional judgment, working with other colleagues across all disciplines to assess risk, find the best way to provide care for people while recognising and working within the limits of your competence.

What does the Code tell me to do in this type of emergency situation?

Some professional standards and behaviours, as set out in [the Code](#), that may be particularly helpful to bear in mind at this time include:

- Acting in the best interests of people at all times within the limits of your knowledge and competence.
- Keeping to and promoting recommended practice and guidance in relation to controlling and preventing infection.

- As well as your own safety, taking account of the safety of others and the availability of other options for providing care.

How can I return to clinical practice?

We're encouraging those who are currently on the NMC register, but not working in clinical care, to consider coming into clinical practice during this time where it's appropriate to do so. The Department of Health in your country will be coordinating this. Follow the links below for more information:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

I'm on maternity leave. Should I go back to work?

This decision is for your employer who should be acting within the latest government guidance. Please contact them directly.

FAQs about returning to the temporary register

Are all nurses and midwives eligible to join the temporary register?

To ensure we build up the temporary register in a safe and measured way, we will be inviting groups of people that we determine to be fit, proper and suitably experienced to join the register in a certain order. Find out who can join the temporary register on our [Covid-19 temporary registration](#) page.

Who will you determine is fit, proper and suitably experienced?

We will not consider you as fit, proper and suitably experienced if:

- You were previously removed from our register through our fitness to practise or fraudulent entry processes, or
- You left the register through our voluntary removal process or we have any outstanding fitness to practise concerns about you.

If I am invited to join the temporary register, will I be working under conditions of practice?

If you left the permanent registrant in the last three years, you will not be working under conditions of practice. You will be working under conditions of practice if:

- you left the permanent register more than three years ago but up to five years ago, or
- you're an overseas candidate who meets the requirements for temporary registration

Read our [statement](#) for more information about conditions of practice.

Do I need to pay to join the Covid-19 temporary register?

No, you do not need to pay a registration fee to join the Covid-19 temporary register.

What indemnity cover / insurance do I need to have to work?

Please speak to your employer about what arrangements will be in place for indemnity cover. The government is ensuring that legal protections will be in place for those who take part in work as part of the Covid-19 response.

Where will I work?

Once you have completed our online temporary registration form, we will check this and let you know when we have added you to the Covid-19 temporary register. We will then make your details available to those leading the UK's health and care services who are co-ordinating and planning how best to deploy the emergency workforce. If they need your support, they'll contact you directly on the email address that you give us to see if you want to work. If you haven't done so already, please complete this [return to work survey](#) so that your skills can be matched to where they are most needed.

What if I want to join the temporary register, but I'm worried about my own health and wellbeing?

You must give due consideration to your health and well being before opting in to be on the temporary register. Please refer to the most [recent government guidance](#) when making your decision. It may be possible that there are support and advice roles that you could be involved in. Please speak with your employer.

Will my previous post-registration / SCPHN qualifications still stand?

No, your previous post-registration qualifications will not stand if you are on the temporary register. This includes any previous prescribing qualification you may have held.

What would happen to me if any questions were raised about my competency or fitness to practise, after I started work?

These would not be dealt with by way of any fitness to practise proceedings, but where there were justifiable concerns the Registrar would have the power to remove you from the temporary register.

FAQs about students on placements**What is happening with a potential student register?**

We have the powers to establish a specific nursing student part to the Covid-19 temporary register for nursing students in the final six months of their programme, should this be necessary. This will not apply to student midwives. If this step is taken, student nurses opting to join this register would be subject to specific conditions of practice, to ensure that they and the public are appropriately protected. These include appropriate supervision, and working within the boundaries of their competence. We will consider asking student nurses whether they would like to join this Covid-19 temporary register if we believe that this is necessary to further benefit our health and care services and the people who use them. If that decision is taken we will provide more information.

What will happen if I don't want to take part in a clinical placement?

If you don't want to take part in a clinical placement you don't have to. Your education institution will consider your personal circumstances to find a solution for you. You also have the option of deferring your placement during this time. You will need to discuss this with your education institution.

What if I do something wrong or make a mistake whilst on placement?

This will be addressed by your supervisor in practice as part of your learning process and/or as part of your normal university processes, depending on the severity of the mistake.