

Public Voice Forum

Terms of Reference

The forum's role and purpose

The Public Voice Forum is an overarching strategic group set up and maintained by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The purpose of the group is to bring together a group of members of the public to share views, experiences and expertise, in order to inform and influence the work of the NMC..

The forum focuses on the most important strands of the NMC's work, in particular, those which directly impact the public. The forum provides a way for members to input into a range of issues and topics over an extended period of time.

The forum is not part of the NMC's formal governance and decision making structure, but it is part of a small number of strategic groups that discuss and provide input in this way. The forum supports our commitment to empower people to shape and influence our work, our plans, policies and standards. Input and perspectives from the group's discussions will be shared with relevant senior colleagues and used to inform our work.

The group will be hosted by the NMC's public engagement team.

Administrative support for the group will be provided by the NMC's public engagement team. The responsible director for the group will be the Executive Director of Communications and Engagement.

The group has no quorum (minimum number of members at a meeting).

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Membership of the forum

Members are expected to commit to the group for a minimum of one year and up to a maximum of three years. This means that as some members leave the forum, new members will be invited to join. This allows more opportunities for other members of the public to get involved and bring new perspectives to the forum.

Further information on membership of the group, including shared expectations about individuals' participation and ways of working, and on how people join and leave the forum, can be found in the membership policy and role description.

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Forum meetings

The group meets four times a year for a maximum of 3 hours each time.

Meeting dates will be confirmed at least 6 weeks in advance. The NMC will provide an annual forward schedule of meetings for the year ahead.

Members need to attend a minimum of 2 meetings per year to remain on the forum, although personal circumstances may be taken into consideration.

If members are unable to attend a meeting, they will provide the NMC with advance notice of at least one week, wherever possible.

Meeting agendas will be shared at least 1 week in advance.

Meeting agendas will include items relating to key NMC priorities and projects.

Members' views and ideas for agenda items will also be invited and agreed in discussion with NMC staff. Proposed agenda items must be relevant to the NMC's work, such as:

- professional regulation of nurses, midwives and nursing associates
- nursing and midwifery education and professional standards
- fitness to practise processes and support for people involved
- the health and social care environment

You can find out more in the [NMC's strategy](#) and the [2024-2026 Corporate Plan](#).

The forum will not receive information about or discuss individual Fitness to Practise cases or concerns.

Additional meetings may take place on occasion if forum members and the NMC agree they are necessary. These circumstances might include new and urgent matters for discussion or issues where additional meetings are required to allow enough time on important projects.

Meetings can take place online, in person, or hybrid (where some join people online and some in person). We'll observe any public health guidance in place and the group's preferences when planning meeting locations.

When meetings do take place in person, we will look at varying venues across different UK locations.

Members can claim an involvement payment and expenses for their attendance at meetings, subject to the NMC's payment and expenses policy.

Meeting notes will be produced by the public engagement team and shared with members of the forum within 10 working days.

Meeting notes and the terms of reference will be published on the [NMC's website](#).

How we work together – values and behaviours

Members of the Public Voice Forum agree to work in ways that reflect the [NMCs values](#) and behaviours by acting in a way that is kind, fair and courteous to other forum members and NMC employees.

We all also agree to the following principles for meetings:

- We'll listen to each other
- We're open to the views of others, even when these may differ from our own
- We all commit to sharing our views and taking part as fully as we can
- We show mutual respect
- Only one of us talks at a time
- We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion principles
- We want to actively participate in an environment that is safe and inclusive for everyone.
- We commit to continuous learning – we learn from subject experts and each other.
- We will respect each other's confidentiality – while we can share general information about the forum and discussions, we maintain people's confidentiality by not attributing comments to particular individuals or sharing private and/or sensitive information.

Communication in between meetings will generally be by email, and by phone where required or requested.

Commitment to anti-racism

Following the publication of the Independent Culture Review in 2024, the NMC is working to build a positive, empowering and inclusive culture for its people, registrants, the public and stakeholders, regardless of their background or characteristics. The new culture will be underpinned by a strong anti-racist ethos and a commitment to improve the experience for the public and nursing and midwifery professionals.

It's essential that all NMC strategic groups, including the Public Voice Forum, support this ambition. We'll provide regular updates about this work along with opportunities to input where appropriate.

Members are asked to take part in any development opportunities offered to support learning and understanding of anti-racism, and equality, diversity and inclusion more generally.

Sharing outcomes and impact

Members of the forum will be informed about the impact of our work together, with updates at meetings. Feedback and views heard at Public Voice Forum meetings will be

collated and shared with relevant senior colleagues at the NMC and used to shape and inform our work. You'll be regularly updated on how your input has been used and what has happened as a result.

We'll also give you regular opportunities to give feedback on your experience, and to tell us what is working well and what might need attention to improve your experience as a group member.

Safeguarding – protecting people from harm

As a professional regulator and registered charity, we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Safeguarding means protecting people from harm.

As a member of the public involved in our work, we aim to ensure that your interaction with members of NMC staff and with other members of the Forum is positive at all times. Members of the group have agreed to interact with NMC staff, and other members of the Public Voice Forum, following the values and behaviours listed in the *How we'll work together* section above.

Should any member of the Forum ever feel that this isn't the case or that their safety is at risk, they should get in touch with their Public Engagement contact in the first instance, or the Human Resources team hr@nmc-uk.org

To find out more, please read the NMC's [safeguarding policy](#), which outlines the approach we will take if any safeguarding matters arise within our meetings and joint activity.

Resolving issues

Should you have any concerns or issues as a result of your time in the forum, we ask that you inform either the group's named contact or the group's chair in the first instance. We will endeavour to resolve any issues informally, collaboratively and fairly. More information is available on request.

Further information

Please refer to the Role Description and Membership policy for more information about your role on the Public Voice Forum.

Your contacts at the NMC

Luis Perpetuo, Public Engagement Manager
Melissa McLean, Senior Public Engagement Officer

Contact email: PublicEngagement@nmc-uk.org

Effective from June 2025

These terms of reference will be reviewed and updated every 2 years.
Next review date: June 2027