

CoNNMO Member Meeting Minutes

Friday 6 October 2023, 1:30pm to 5:00pm by Zoom

1. Welcome, acknowledgement of country and introductions

Members were welcomed to the meeting by Joanne Perks, the new Chair of the Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations (CoNNMO). Jo acknowledged the traditional owners and custodians of the land where member representatives, invited guests and observers were participating in the meeting.

A video presentation was given by the Honourable Ged Kearney MP Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care. Ged was not able to be present, but she pre-recorded a short video for CoNNMO members.

The video can be viewed here: <https://share.viostream.com/bfxgwogd99i8ui?t=t-d417yzw>

2. Attendance

Catherine McGrory	ACT Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
Tracy Hawes	Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia Inc.
Phil Russo	Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control
Jaclyn Tate Baker	Australasian Hepatology Association
Leigh Bruce	Australasian Neuroscience Nurses Association
Alison New	Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association
Joanne Perks	Australasian Sexual Health and HIV Nurses Association & CoNNMO Chair
Sandra Code	Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine
Sally Sara	Australian and New Zealand Urological Nursing Society & CoNNMO Councillor
Louise Walker	Australian Association of Stomal Therapy Nurses
Blake Mulraney	Australian College of Critical Care Nurses
Alison Weatherstone	Australian College of Midwives
Margaret Broom	Australian College of Neonatal Nurses
Leanne Boase	Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
Karen Grace	Australian College of Nursing
Rebecca East	Australian College of Perioperative Nurses & CoNNMO Councillor
Jessica Pougnault	Australian College of Perioperative Nurses
Deryn Thompson	Australian Dermatology Nurses Association
Anne van Loon	Australian Faith Community Nurses Association
Yun-Hee Jeon	Australian Hartford Consortium of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
Susan Slatyer	Australian Hartford Consortium of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
Greg Cantwell	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council
Annie Butler	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Julianne Bryce	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation & CoNNMO Secretariat/Councillor
Julie Reeves	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Samantha Moses	Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association & CoNNMO Councillor
Roslyn Hollis	Australian Women's Health Nurses Association
Meredith Cummins	Cancer Nurses Society of Australia & CoNNMO Councillor
Aletha Ward	Climate Action Nurses
Alison McMillan	Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
Frances Rice	Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office
Kellie Wilton	Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office
Natalie Bekis	Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
Nicole Welch	Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
Maria Shaw	Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
Lucy Firth	Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
Nicole Schmid-Sanele	Cosmetic Nurses Association
Karen-leigh Edward	Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery
Naomi Malouf	CRAN <i>plus</i>
Lea Wiggins	Gastroenterological Nurses College of Australia
Victoria Traynor	Gerontological Alliance of Nurses Australia
Louise Wightman	Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses Association
Meaghan Osborne	Multiple Sclerosis Nurses Australasia
Gabrielle Koutoukidis	National Enrolled Nursing Advisory Council
Kelda Gilmore	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia

Leah Bradley	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Sarah Fagan	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Jen Bichel-Findlay	Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Network
Marian Linnane	Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Network
Tracey Nicholls	Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Nurses Group
Gail Tomsic	Professional Association of Nurses in Developmental Disability Australia
Sharon Paley	Professional Association of Nurses in Developmental Disability Australia
Matthew Carew	Refugee Nurses Australia
Edward Zimbudzi	Renal Society of Australasia
Kerri Kellett	Scope of Practice Review
Francine Douce	TAS Chief Nurse & Midwife
Catherine Buchan	Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
John Harrington	Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
Hayley Ryan	Wounds Australia

3. Apologies

Lesley Thomas	Australian and New Zealand Orthopaedic Nurses Alliance
Anita Taylor	Australian and New Zealand Orthopaedic Nurses Alliance
Sally Kane	Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine
Sue Monaro	Australian and New Zealand Society of Vascular Nurses
Jacqui Burton	Australian College of Children and Young People's Nurses
Kylie Ward	Australian College of Nursing
Vera Meeusen	Australian College of Perianaesthesia Nurses
Sonia Jones	Australian Day Surgery Nurses Association
Jacqui Cross	Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer NSW
Julia Morphett	College of Emergency Nursing Australasia
Tanya Vogt	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Petrina Halloran	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
Sue Easton	Professional Association of Nurses in Developmental Disability Australia
Shelley Nowlan	QLD Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
Deb Blow	National Enrolled Nursing Advisory Council

4. Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer update

Alison McMillan CCNMO provide an update.

Alison's role is at the strategic level, both providing advice to Government on issues associated with the nursing and midwifery professions, including aged care, primary care and a whole range of other aspects of care. This Government has an ambitious agenda with extensive reforms and advice required to Government. The introduction of registered nurses 24/7 in aged care was a critical outcome of the Royal Commission. Work is continuing on that program. The Department is working closely with providers and the ANMF to ensure that those in residential aged care get the best possible care.

The development of the National Nursing Workforce Strategy is a partnership between the Commonwealth and Victoria. A plan has been signed off by Health Ministers. The Strategy is particularly looking at the future of the profession and how we can sustain and build the profession into the future. Nurses are 40 per cent of the health workforce in Australia and are the ones that have the greatest contact with people in our health system. The Strategy will consider workforce sustainability, the diversity of the profession, and challenges in rural and remote nursing. The Department is almost ready to share the supply and demand work that has been undertaken. This work hasn't been done since Health Workforce Australia last completed it in 2014. There is a website for the Strategy and will be forums and webinars and the opportunity to provide submissions to get involved and contribute.

The Nurse Practitioner Strategic Workforce Plan was released by Assistant Minister Kearney in May. Some critical elements have already been actioned. The Government will be removing the legislative requirements for collaborative arrangements for nurse practitioners and eligible midwives. The 30 percent increase in the Medicare rebate for NP items is due to commence on 1 July 2024. These are the first steps, and the Department will look at further mechanisms to review MBS access for NPs and eligible midwives. The

Department is working with the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners and the Australian College of Midwives to look at the PBS.

There are many challenges in the provision of maternity services for women across the country. The NMBA will be providing an update on the midwifery workforce project and discussions have commenced on a national maternity workforce action plan. That work is being led by the ACT and QLD. Birthing on country programs have significant outcomes for First Nations women and babies and the Department is working with CATSINaM to look at ways of increasing the number of First Nations nurses and midwives.

It's recently been announced that Professor Mark Cormack is leading an independent review of Scope of Practice. The first round of consultation is currently open with the submission survey open until 16 October.

5. Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care update

Nicole Welch, Director of the Nursing and First Nations Health Workforce Section provided an update.

Nicole is standing in today for Assistant Secretary Natalie Bekis. The Health Workforce Section works closely with Alison McMillan and her team. Late last year, National Cabinet announced the independent review of Australia's regulatory settings, known as the Kruk review. The review covers health practitioner registration, skills and qualification recognition for overseas trained health professionals and international students studying in Australia. The National Cabinet is reviewing the final report. The report contains about 28 recommendations across the following themes:

1. Improved applicant experience by removing unnecessary barriers and reducing the cost of time and complexity of regulatory processes while maintaining quality of the workforce and patient safety.
2. Expand fast track pathways by using risk-based methods to ensure the fastest pathway to registration.
3. Better workforce planning, developing strategies and better planning tools to support policies and programs that identify and address workforce demand and supply and enable the health system to work to full scope with a skilled and experienced workforce.
4. Increase flexibility while ensuring safety and quality of care by supporting improved access to assessment processes by enabling online and offshore assessments, addressing maldistribution, and supporting applicants with appropriate training.
5. Enhanced regulator performance and stewardship, to ensure the health system is sufficiently agile to maintain fitness for purpose and adapt to workforce needs.

The Health Workforce Taskforce is developing an implementation plan which includes an indicative budget, timeframes, and lead agencies to progress the recommendations. This will be considered by Health Ministers in November. The Commonwealth lead reforms will be a joint exercise between the Department of Health and Aged Care and the Department of Home Affairs. As part of the Federal Election commitment from the budget, the Government announced programs, in particular the National Nurse and Midwife Health Service. Delivery should be operational by around March/April next year. The Department is looking forward to having that program in place to support nurses, midwives, student nurses and student midwives. In the recent budget, a couple of relevant budget measures were announced. The national nurse clinical placements program, which is looking to place up to 6000 students in clinical placements over 4 years. This program is currently in the planning and implementation phase. The other program which will be delivered through the Primary Health Care Networks is the re-entry program for 500 nurses. The program provides grant incentives to eligible general practices to provide training and support for registered nurses and enrolled nurses returning to the workforce as well as upskilling nurse practitioners to work in primary care. This program is also currently in the planning and implementation phase. The Department is hoping to have both of these programs up and running in the new year.

6. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia update

Kelda Gilmore, Leah Bradley and Sarah Fagan, Senior Project and Policy Officers provided an update on the current NMBA projects. Presenting on behalf of Tanya Vogt, the Executive Officer, who was not able to attend.

Projects include:

- Improving nursing and midwifery understanding of health and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in partnership with CATSINaM and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner Board;
- Review into the approach of re-entry to practice;
- Enhancing the services of the Nurse and Midwife Support Program;
- Stakeholder engagement – employers of nurses and midwives;
- Registered Nurse (RN) Designated prescriber with additional education, experience, and appropriate authorisation to be able to prescribe in a relationship with an authorised health practitioner;
- Review of the RN and EN Standards for practice;
- Cosmetic Position Statement: *Guidelines for nurses who perform non-surgical cosmetic procedures*;
- Midwifery workforce review project – *Midwifery Futures*, working in partnership with the Burnet Institute;
- Midwife scheduled medicines endorsement review - including a literature review;
- Maternal, child and family health practitioner's project.

For more information about the work of the NMBA please visit www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au

7. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council update

Greg Cantwell, Acting Chief Executive Officer provided an update.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) is responsible for two different areas, one is accreditation, and the other is undertaking skilled migration assessments. ANMAC is the independent assessing authority for nurses and midwives applying for Australian migration. In recent times ANMAC has become the assessing agency for personal care assistants and nursing support workers to support the Australian Government aged care industry labour agreement. The number of nurses and midwives who are applying under the skilled migration program in last financial year increased by 95 per cent with 15,500 new applicants. Recent indications are that we are seeing an increase for this year too. A number of overseas born nurses and midwives are coming to Australia to work. Last year we assessed and accredited 44 new programs leading to registration or endorsement with 148 changes across 35 providers. Other areas of our work include Getting Em and Keepin Em (GENKI) as a focus and identified in the GENKI II Report which is progressing as planned. One of the areas of particular interest at the moment is AI. ANMAC has started some preliminary work on this issue. The current standards are fit for purpose. The other area of work for ANMAC is with education providers from university, RTOs, and the vocational education sector. In relation to universities there is the current interim report for the Australian Universities, the University Accord. ANMAC is also contributing to other consultations including one on Birthing on Country. The final area ANMAC is looking at is clinical placements for students.

For more information about the work of ANMAC please visit www.anmac.org.au

8. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation update

Annie Butler, Federal Secretary provided an update.

ANMF attended the International Council of Nursing Congress as a joint member with the Australian College of Nursing. There were 85 countries in attendance. The top six issues identified for nursing around the globe are: mass trauma, exodus from the profession, education disruption, infections and death, vaccine inequity, and increasing numbers of strikes and disputes. Many of our issues are shared not just around the country but

globally. ICN will focus on a program called recover, rebuild, retain, and sustain. Also identified as a significant issue were the health impacts of climate change.

Industrial relations reform is continuing with regards to Gender Equity in the Fair Work Act and secure work. These are positive moves for the health and care sectors. Legislative amendments include changes to the definition of casual employee, pathways to full-time and part-time employment, and delegates rights. Closing labour hire loopholes, which used to be referred to as same job same pay. Government migration strategy of labour agreement for personal care workers which also sets up a pathway to permanency and removing migrant worker exploitation. Jobs and Skills Australia will be managing this amongst the sectors, identifying skills shortages and forecasting the skills needs for the future. They are currently developing a work plan. Work is continuing with the Government on worker registration for people at a level for Certificate III qualification, personal care worker, AIN level.

The Work Value case for aged care included the interim 15 per cent pay increase from 1 July 2023. This has made a huge difference for RNs in the aged care sector. The ANMF will pursue the rest of the increase. The ANMF is also looking at the impact that may be permanent from COVID-19 on practice across the sector and how that has influenced work value. The impacts of chronic understaffing over many years and the classification structures. The ANMF has filed all our submissions and evidence which is due 27 October with the hearings in December and the outcomes from that sometime in the new year.

9. Scope of Practice Review

Kerri Kellett, Senior Advisor to Professor Mark Cormack, Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce Review.

The review was announced in July 2022 and the Taskforce Report was released in December 2022. In April this year, National Cabinet endorsed the Taskforce recommendations and in May the Scope of Practice Review was announced. The Scope of Practice review is focused on the long-term needs and sustainability of the health care system, and most importantly it will be underpinned by evidence and intensive consultation across a broad range of stakeholders including consumers, health practitioners, regulatory agencies, governments, peak bodies, education and training institutions, unions, and insurance providers. The review will run until the end of 2024 and be led by Professor Mark Cormack. The health professions that will be the focus of the review are medicine, nursing including registered nurses, enrolled nurses and nurse practitioners, pharmacy, midwifery, allied health, First Nations health practitioners and workers, and paramedicine. The review will begin by looking at the evidence around health practitioners working to their full scope of practice. This will include looking at the benefits, the risks but also the enablers. It will also identify barriers that prevent health practitioners from currently working to their full scope of practice. The review will focus on six domains: legislation and regulation; technology; education, training, and collaboration; funding mechanisms; employer practices and work context; leadership and culture. The review will identify priority recommendations for systemic reform and implementation by governments, regulators, health sector employers, professional bodies, educators and professionals that will enable health practitioners, particularly those working in primary care, to deliver better health outcomes by working to their full scope of practice. The review is currently in the first phase with public submissions opening on 11 September and closing on 16 October. Once closed the review team will be undertaking extensive stakeholder consultations in late October and November. The second phase of the review is where the research consultant will construct issues paper one which will be due in December. At the same time Professor Cormack will deliver an interim report to the Government. The review team will then undertake an intensive consultation phase in February on the first issue paper. The academic support will then develop another issues paper which will include the legal analysis of drugs and poisons legislation and other legislation and how that could be harmonised. The review team will then consult again and draft the final report with a further final consultation for stakeholder review. After that the final report will include recommendations and an implementation plan which will go to the Government.

To have your say and take part in the survey until 16 October 2023 go to:

<https://consultations.health.gov.au/pccd-communication/scope-of-practice-review>

Email the review team to request regular updates on the progress of the review and details of future consultation processes at: scopeofpracticereview@health.gov.au

10. CoNNMO Chair and Secretariat update

Julianne Bryce provided an update on the CoNNMO Council and Secretariat activities. Council members include Joanne Perks, Samantha Moses, Meredith Cummins, Rebecca East, Sally Sara, and Julia Morphet. The council meets four times a year and has met twice since the last member meeting. The council plans the member meeting. At the recent meeting Council reviewed the CoNNMO Terms of Reference, the Strategic Plan and National Priorities documents. Members also discussed Council positions, CoNNMO funding, new applications for membership and the member meeting agenda. Council members use the CoNNMO member body reports as a guide to determine the agenda for the next meeting. The next Council meeting is scheduled to be held at the end of November.

Tracey Nicholls chaired our May meeting and then stepped down because she finished her six-year term on CoNNMO Council. Colleen Blums let us know that after five years she was retiring in August. The Secretariat and Council would like to sincerely thank them for their dedication and commitment. Council then elected Jo Perks as the new chair with Sam Moses remaining as Deputy Chair. The Secretariat then sought nominations from eligible member representatives and received two nominations, Alison Weatherstone from the Australian College of Midwives and Anita Taylor from the Australian and New Zealand Orthopaedic Nurses Association were elected unopposed. CoNNMO welcomes the new Councillors.

The CoNNMO Secretariat received one new member application from Multiple Sclerosis Nurses Australasia. CoNNMO Council considered the application and put forward a recommendation for acceptance by the CoNNMO membership at this meeting. CoNNMO members voted and the recommendation for membership was carried unanimously. CoNNMO Chair, Jo Perks, welcomed the new member and specifically the representative Meaghan Osborne who was in attendance as an observer.

CoNNMO was informed by the Psychogeriatric Nurses Association Australia (PGNA), that as of 31 August they will cease to exist. This takes the total number of CoNNMO member organisations to 63.

CoNNMO have been funded for another three years, we thank the Australian Government and the Department of Health and Aged Care for supporting the work and operations of CoNNMO. The agreement will take CoNNMO operations to June 2025.

As mentioned above, CoNNMO Council has reviewed the Terms of Reference, Strategic plan and National priorities. The Terms of Reference were accepted. Feedback was requested on the Strategic Plan and the National Priorities. Tracked changes on the documents clearly indicate the proposed changes.

Action: Members to send any feedback to the Secretariat on the revised Strategic Plan and National Priorities.

11. CoNNMO Member presentations

To gain a better understanding of CoNNMO member organisations structure and function in order to network and collaborate, Council determined that the Secretariat would invite three to four organisations to provide a brief presentation at each member meeting. Spotlight organisations for this meeting included:

- Australian College of Nurse Practitioners - Leanne Boase, President.
- Australian College of Perioperative Nurses - Rebecca East, past President.
- Australian Hartford Consortium of Gerontological Nursing Excellence - Professor Yun-Hee Jeon, Vice-President,

12. Member reports

Written reports were provided by the following CoNNMO member organisations:

Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia Inc

Australasian Hepatology Association

Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association

Australasian Sexual Health and HIV Nurses Association Inc

Australia and New Zealand Urological Nurses Society

Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine

Australian College of Neonatal Nurses

Australian College of Nursing
Australian College of Perianaesthesia Nurses
Australian Dermatology Nurses Association
Australian Faith Community Nurses Association
Australian Hartford Consortium of Gerontological Nursing Excellence
Australian New Zealand Orthopaedic Nurses Alliance
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
Australian Women's Health Nurses Australia
Cancer Nurses Society of Australia
Climate Action Nurses
Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery
Gastroenterological Nurses College of Australasia
Gerontological Alliance of Nurses Australia
Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses Australia
Professional Association of Nurses in Developmental Disability Nursing Australia Pty Ltd
Renal Society of Australasia
The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
Wounds Australia

13. Other business - nil

14. Next meeting – Friday 3 May 2024, face to face (tbc)