



Bord Altranais agus
Cnáimhseachais na hÉireann
Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

Section 3 of Consultation Questionnaire – Explanatory note for **Nurses and Midwives (Register of Nurses and Midwives) (Amendment) Rules 2020**

(This explanatory note is not part of the Instrument and does not purport to be a legal interpretation).

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) has reviewed the Nurses and Midwives Rules, 2018 and the following amendments to **S.I. No. 219/2018 of the Principal Rules** are being proposed.

Background

Rule 5

NMBI has a defined legal function in making statistical records available for research and/or to inform workforce planning as set out under section 46 (9) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 (as amended). We have however been unable to provide employment-related statistics as following initial registration our current system has not greatly facilitated a process that enables us to quickly review gaps or opportunities in the system. The recent COVID-19 pandemic made this more apparent as we worked to support those joining the Register and also those returning to practice. An increased ability to analyse statistics, will in the longer term better enable us to support the needs and skills of registered nurses and midwives in Ireland as we work to maintain standards, and associated public safety.

NMBI intends to implement a new online registration system in September 2020 which will provide a wide range of self-service options to applicants and registrants, including the option to update/correct or amend contact or employment details as they are recorded on the Register. The introduction of this new system provides the ideal opportunity to consider additional employment related fields being added to the Register.

While the proposed fields will enable NMBI to carry out its work as a regulator, it is important to note that the additional fields will also enable us to deliver required statistical data to the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Rule 5 of the Principal Rules refers to information to be contained in the Register of Nurses and Midwives. Our proposal extends the 2018 Rule 5 section (m) from: '5. The register of nurses and midwives shall contain, in respect of each nurse or midwife registered, the following particulars: (a)...**(m) if applicable, place of work and position held;**(n)...'

to "(m) **if applicable, details of current employment as follows:** employment sector; workplace name; workplace address; job title; employment status; whether working in direct patient care / patient facing; employment start date; employment end date; and divisions of register in which practising;".

It is anticipated that this will better support the growth of the sector, identifying gaps more easily in general and specialist areas. When demand is experienced in the healthcare sector (for example COVID-19 (2020)) this would be helpful in identifying and supporting need.

Under the OECD requirements, Ireland is also required to provide figures as to the number of practising nurses. For NMBI to meet this requirement it needs to request that all registered nurses provide the above. Further information is available at this link: <https://data.oecd.org/healthres/nurses.htm>.

The following section goes through the key proposed fields to explain the legal or other basis behind the capture of such information.

(i) employment sector

This field has been included to categorise the various sectors in which nurses and midwives are employed in Ireland. The potential values for this field include acute hospital, maternity hospital, private hospital, nursing home, higher education, or Community Health Organisation for example. The field selected will determine the list of relevant workplaces presented to a registrant from which s/he can select their current workplace or enter details of an unlisted workplace.

(ii) employment status

This field will allow an applicant to specify whether s/he is currently employed or otherwise. A number of the potential values for this field include – employed and working in nursing/midwifery, employed but not working in nursing midwifery, career break, retired etc.

(iii) whether working in direct patient care/patient facing;

In the OECD Publication of 'Health at a Glance 2019', attention is drawn to the varying definition of nurses in Ireland and other states where it is noted that "Data refer only to registered ("professional") nurses in Canada, Chile, Ireland and the United States, resulting in an over-estimation compared to other countries where lower-level ("associate professional") nurses are also included."

If the NMBI recorded where nurses are providing direct patient care, it would then be able to report under the definition of practising nurses in a similar (and more accurate) way to other European Member states and be compliant with OECD reporting requirements.

Further information is available at this link:

<https://data.oecd.org/healthres/nurses.htm>.

(iv) employment start date and employment end dates

These dates are being proposed to enable registrants to record new employment details. Section 53 (4) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 (as amended) requires that a nurse gives notice to the Board as to any change in their particulars on the Register. It is anticipated that our new system will enable registrants when logging on to update employment details, changing them if they move position or job.

(v) divisions of Register in which the nurse or midwife is practising

If a professional is registered in the nursing and midwifery divisions of the Register it is not always possible to determine if that person is practicing as a nurse or a midwife.

There are, for example, almost 11,000 professionals who have been registered in the midwives division however it is widely known, that the number of registrants actively practising as midwives in the State is approximately one third of that figure.

It is proposed that each registrant will be requested to specify the divisions in which s/he is currently practising. The list of divisions presented for selection will be those in which a nurse or midwife has been granted registration. This will allow NMBI to provide statistical information as to the number or proportion from a given division that are actively practising in that division.

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