



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

Annual Report
2020



**“We must ensure we can adapt
to the evolving global healthcare
environment and regulate
effectively, while upholding
the highest standards.”**

Essene Cassidy
President NMBI

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President's Address

This year 2020 was a very challenging one, in which we as nurses and midwives worked collaboratively to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic, in the best interests of patients. As the year began, we could not have anticipated the many challenges that lay ahead, but we collectively faced Covid-19 head on.

Nurses and midwives stepped up to the challenges and played a vital role in treating patients and containing the virus, while also maintaining ongoing healthcare services. We were joined by over 1,000 professionals who returned to the Register of Nurses and Midwives to lend their support to colleagues during this time.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge our appreciation for the valuable contribution our registered nurses and registered midwives have made.

As the regulator for nurses and midwives in Ireland, our mission is to protect the public and the integrity of the professions through the promotion of high standards of education, training and professional conduct. We have continued to do this through 2020, but we are also more aware than ever of the need to provide leadership and to evolve in line with the realities we are all facing.

We must ensure we can adapt to the evolving global healthcare environment and regulate effectively, while upholding the highest standards. Changes in our workforce, demographics and new technologies means our regulatory model must evolve to ensure the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) is appropriately equipped for the years to come.

In this context, we launched our *Statement of Strategy 2020-2022*, which outlines our goals for the next three years of being relevant, research based and ensuring right-touch regulation. It has five key pillars:

- Evolving our model of regulation
- Digitising and improving the efficiency of our services
- Leveraging data and research
- Communicating more frequently and effectively with our stakeholders, and
- Further developing our organisation.

Our new strategy can be found in the publications section of our website and I would encourage you to read it.

This year 2020 also marked the 200th year anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, and the World Health Organization designated 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. It has never been a more poignant time to acknowledge the role of our nurses and midwives, and the entire healthcare sector, than during the current Covid-19 pandemic. Their work during this time will be recognised for generations to come and they will be remembered for the skills, commitment and care they have brought to so many lives.

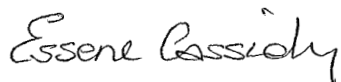
I would also like to thank my Board and committee colleagues for their dedication and commitment throughout the year. Despite Covid-19 restrictions, the Board continued its crucial work in delivering on our organisation's responsibilities. An election was held for Board member positions in September, and we are delighted to welcome back Lorraine Clarke-Bishop who was elected for a second term and extend a warm welcome to newly elected representatives Joseph Shalbin Kallarakkal and Marian Vaughan. We would also like to welcome newly appointed Board Members, Anne Marie Duffy, Conan McKenna, Cyril Sullivan, Louise Collins, Siobhán McArdle and Áine Lynch and to welcome the re-appointments of Louise Kavanagh McBride and Laura Sahm for second terms.

I also wish to sincerely thank our outgoing Board members Pat Dolan, Martin Higgins, Dermot Manning, Breda Liston, Karen Canning, Liam Minihan and Karen Greene for their time and considerable efforts over the course of their tenure.

Throughout the year we have worked closely with the Government, the Minister for Health, the Department of Health and especially the Chief Nurse and her team, the HSE, staff organisations, higher education institutions (HEIs) and other regulator colleagues. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank them for their continued cooperation and assistance.

I would like to acknowledge our CEO, Sheila McClelland and the NMBI team for their hard work and professionalism in ensuring that NMBI continued to operate as normal during a difficult and challenging year. I would also like to wish Colm O'Leary, Nadia Dagash and Dr Aoibhín de Búrca well in their new positions as part of the senior management team and to sincerely thank Ursula Byrne who retired in 2020, after 14 years as Director of Regulation with NMBI and over 20 years with the organisation.

Finally, to all my colleagues around the country, I would like to thank you for the incredible dedication and resilience you have shown in response to the pandemic. It is my sincere hope that as vaccines are rolled out in 2021 nurses and midwives can begin to look forward to brighter times ahead.



Essene Cassidy

President

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland



Chief Executive Officer's Foreword

This year 2020 was one of change and challenge, for the country and for the NMBI. As an organisation we responded quickly and effectively to the many demands brought about by Covid-19. We also broke new ground with the launch of our digital platform MyNMBI, allowing registrants to avail of a range of services online for the first time ever. The dedication of all my NMBI colleagues throughout 2020 meant that even in the face of a global pandemic we were able to continue our important work as a regulator. We also adapted to the evolving needs of a health sector under tremendous pressure. I am very proud of all my colleagues and I would like to thank them for their unwavering commitment and hard work.

From the beginning of the pandemic, we worked quickly with our partners to introduce new methods of registering and restoring nurses and midwives. In 2020 1,385 nurses and midwives were restored to the Register. The vast majority were restored in March and our staff worked quickly and tirelessly, processing up to 80 applications daily. The implementation of the Emergency Measures in the Public Interest (Covid-19) Act 2020 meant that previous registrants could be restored to the Register without incurring any restoration fees.

When the HSE launched the 'On Call for Ireland' campaign the NMBI worked quickly to confirm the registration status of more than 500 nurses and midwives. Most were qualified nurses and midwives from across Ireland who were retired or on career breaks. We also worked with relevant bodies abroad to support faster processing of certificates of good standing and qualifications, for those coming from outside Ireland. All of this was possible because of the hard work and commitment of NMBI personnel, nurses and midwives engaging with us as a regulator, and our strong relationships with stakeholders.

Throughout the year we worked with the Department of Health, the HSE and the HEIs responsible for nursing and midwifery programmes, to better support students during Covid-19. Our aim was to ensure they could continue to achieve the competencies for registration while not compromising on the standards of the programmes. We also updated guidance to support nursing students and midwifery students to achieve clinical learning opportunities during the Covid-19 outbreak. The continuance of quality and safe education for all the student nurses and midwives in the system was a key objective for us in 2020. We also worked to continue to provide important careers information, attending the Irish Times

Higher Options fair, in partnership with the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Service Director (ONMSD), with the aim of inspiring Ireland's next generation of nurses and midwives.

Our fitness to practise team responded to the changes brought by the pandemic. We engaged with those involved in the inquiry process to assess and review our inquiry approaches during the restrictions. We also put in place new measures including safe environments for all parties to inquiries as well as remote access, remote meetings and additional meetings when required.

During 2020, we took a significant step forwards in terms of modernisation and digitisation. In September 2020 we launched our new digital platform MyNMBI, offering a range of registrant services online for registrants, HEIs, applicants, candidates and graduates.

In December, following extensive planning and the allocation of additional staffing and resources, this new system was used for the annual renewal process. While there were some user-experience issues at the outset of this new system, our teams worked hard to ensure we learned from them and addressed them. The annual renewal process now includes the collection of a range of data which will play a key role in workforce planning for the future of the health sector. This will be the most comprehensive data ever collected and will enable us to support the needs and skills of registered nurses and midwives in Ireland.

This year saw the recruitment of three senior management positions within our organisation. I would like to thank Ursula Byrne who retired after 14 years as our Director of Regulation. Her dedication and commitment have left a lasting impact on our complaints' processes. Replacing Ursula is Colm O'Leary who previously held the position of our Director of Registration and played a key role in the roll out of the MyNMBI project. Nadia Dagash, who led the launch of MyNMBI, took up the position of Director of Registration. Also, I would like to acknowledge Dr Aoibhín de Búrca who was appointed as Head of Operations. I wish them well in their new positions and look forward to working with them in the future.

I would like to say a special word of thanks to our IT team members for their great work in the early days of the pandemic, and since. They ensured that the NMBI was able to continue to operate as normal, with many of our colleagues working remotely. They also made it possible for our Board and Committees to continue their work throughout the year.

Important consultations took place throughout the year on updates proposed to improve education standards and processes. A gap analysis was also completed between the primary legislation and the current version of NMBI's nursing and midwifery education standards and requirements, rules, policies and procedures. An implementation plan and project team are in place to address these issues. NMBI also began a stakeholder engagement process to identify opportunities for improvement.

In 2020 we launched our new Statement of Strategy, which provides us with a clear direction on improving our core functions for the next three years. Our *Statement of Strategy 2020-2022* sets out our strategic goals to ensure we continue to strengthen our reputation as a modern, professional regulator. Our focus remains on effective and efficient regulation that upholds the standards that govern registered nurses and registered midwives in Ireland.

At the NMBI we are constantly striving to improve our organisation and prepare it for new and exciting challenges ahead. We have a Succession Plan in place, a new HR resource and new Quality Assurance and Policy and Standards roles. We have seen a reduction in staff leaving the organisation, an increase in applications for posts and have promoted in-house to fill key positions. We are also investing in training and upskilling.

Our Board and committees play a vital role in the successful operation of the NMBI and I would like to thank the Board and committee members who have continued to support and professionally challenge the senior management team and to deliver decisions that improve and enhance professional regulation.

I would also like to thank the Government, Minister for Health, Department of Health, the Chief Nurse's Office, HEIs, representative bodies, other relevant statutory bodies, and many more for their assistance throughout this difficult year.

The NMBI team members have carried out a great deal of work throughout 2020 and I am confident that in 2021 our team will again meet the challenges ahead and continue to improve all of our services, for the good of our professions, our stakeholders and the public.

Finally, I would like to thank all our registered nurses and midwives who have played a pivotal role in all healthcare settings throughout the country as we dealt with the Covid-19 pandemic, during what was in so many ways the *International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife*. They have shown remarkable bravery, care and compassion and I would like to acknowledge the positive impact they have made in responding to the challenges faced in this year.



Sheila McClelland
Chief Executive
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland





01

**Who We Are
and What We Do**

We are
the regulatory
body for
the professions
of NURSING
and MIDWIFERY
in Ireland.

Our Vision
is to provide leadership
to registered nurses
and midwives in delivering
safe care through innovative
and proactive professional
regulation.

Our Mission
is to protect the public
and the integrity of the
professions of nursing and
midwifery through the
promotion of high standards
of education, training,
and professional
conduct.



Who we are

NMBI is the regulator for the professions of nursing and midwifery in Ireland. We have a statutory obligation to protect the public and the integrity of the practice of the professions of nursing and midwifery. We perform our functions in the public interest under the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 and in some areas under the Nurses Act, 1985

Our vision

Our vision is to provide leadership to registered nurses and midwives to deliver safe care through innovative and proactive professional regulation.

Our mission

Our mission is to protect the public and the integrity of the professions of nursing and midwifery through the promotion of high standards of education, training and professional conduct.

What we do

In our role as the regulator for the professions of nursing and midwifery and in fulfilling our mission we:

- maintain the Register of Nurses and Midwives and a Candidate Register for student nurses and midwives
- set the standards for the education and training of nurses and midwives
- approve programmes of education necessary for registration and monitor these programmes on an ongoing basis
- support our registrants by providing appropriate guidance on professional conduct and ethics for both registered nurses and midwives
- inquire into complaints about our registrants; we make decisions relating to the imposition of sanctions on registered nurses and midwives who have findings made against them
- advise the Minister for Health and the public on all matters of relevance relating to our functions.

Our role in setting standards and providing guidance for approximately 80,000 registered nurses and midwives in Ireland focuses on public safety. We work collaboratively with the Department of Health, employers, managers, unions, educators, other regulatory bodies and our registrants.



Our proactive nursing and midwifery regulation model

Integrity of nursing and midwifery practice

Pre-Registration



- Information on careers in nursing and midwifery
- Information on pre-registration programmes
- Setting standards and requirements for education programmes
- Monitoring adherence to standards and requirements for education programmes
- Conducting site inspections for programmes and practice placements
- Providing professional advice and support to nurses, midwives and other stakeholders

Registration



- Maintaining the Register of Nurses and Midwives and the Candidate Register
- Assessing eligibility of applicants for entry on the Register of Nurses and Midwives
- Providing guidance to nurses and midwives on matters relating to professional conduct and ethics

Standards

- Defining the scope of practice for nurses and midwives
- Setting out in The Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives the standards of practice and behaviours expected of nurses and midwives

Review



Complaints

- Investigating complaints against registered nurses and midwives
- Responding to concerns and taking action to protect the public where necessary

Fitness to Practise

- Ensuring a robust complaints process through Preliminary Proceedings Committee and Fitness to Practise Committee
- Imposing sanctions proportionately and where appropriate
- Monitoring conditions

Restoration



- The Board evaluates applications for restoration to the Register of former registrants under the grounds set out in legislation



Our Board and committees

The Board of NMBI is made up of 23 members set out as follows:

- 2 members of the academic staff, one at a University and the other at an Institute of Technology, and of whom one is a registered nurse and one a registered midwife
- one Director of Nursing or Director of Midwifery
- 8 registered nurses or registered midwives elected by registered nurses and registered midwives
- 7 persons put forward by the following: the Medical Council, the Health Service Executive, the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, the Health Information and Quality Authority and a third-level educational establishment which is involved in the education and training of nurses or midwives
- one person who is experienced in the provision of health or personal social care in the voluntary sector
- 5 persons selected by the Minister for Health using the PAS process for State bodies. (These people are not and never have been registered nurses or registered midwives in the State or in another jurisdiction.)

All Board members act in a non-executive capacity.

For details on our Board members, the Board meeting schedule and attendance during 2020, please refer to the Appendices.

We have eight committees. Four are statutory committees and four are advisory committees with specific responsibilities to support the activities of the Board in governing NMBI..

Statutory committees

- ***Fitness to Practise Committee (2011)***

The role of the Fitness to Practise Committee is to inquire into complaints referred by the Preliminary Proceedings Committee under Section 61 of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011. On completion of an inquiry, the Fitness to Practise Committee submits its report to the Board.

- ***Fitness to Practise Committee (1985)***

Work by this committee is nearing completion and is based on the Nurses Act, 1985.

- ***Midwives Committee***

The role of the Midwives Committee is to advise the Board in relation to all areas pertaining to midwifery practice.

- ***Preliminary Proceedings Committee***

The role of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee is to give initial consideration to complaints. It can refer complaints to the Fitness to Practise Committee or make recommendations to the Board that no further action be taken; or that the matter should be referred to another body or authority, or to mediation.

Advisory committees

- **Audit and Risk Committee**

The Audit and Risk Committee provides an independent appraisal structure within NMBI to measure and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of risks, governance and internal control procedures and financial reporting framework.

- **Business Strategy and Finance Committee**

The Business Strategy and Finance Committee advises and makes recommendations to the Board in relation to all issues pertaining to the governance and finance functions of the Board in accordance with the provisions of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011. It oversees the financial arrangements and internal operations of the Board and ensures that appropriate and adequate control arrangements exist in all areas of financial responsibility.

- **Education, Training and Standards Committee**

The Education, Training and Standards Committee monitors adherence to standards and evaluates compliance to standards and criteria for the education and training of nurses and midwives. It carries out a range of functions connected with setting standards and requirements for education programmes and validating those programmes. It provides a forum and guidance to the profession and to those who require it in relation to behaviour, ethical conduct, practice and research.

- **Registration Committee**

The Registration Committee makes decisions, and advises and makes recommendations to the Board, in relation to all issues pertaining to registration.

Our executive organisation structure

Our organisational structure reflects our core functions and activities of education, training and standards, registration and fitness to practise, together with the corporate services that enable us to achieve our corporate objectives. Corporate services include finance.

In addition, we have the Chief Executive's Office which includes the Secretariat and the human resources, data protection and communications functions.

Activities completed by each department in 2020 are provided in sections 3 to 6 of this report.



02

Our Strategy

Strategic objectives

In 2020, NMBI published the [“Statement of Strategy 2020–2022, Relevant, research-based, right-touch regulation”](#).

Over the next 10 years we aim to:

- have our role in the healthcare eco-system better recognised and valued
- be agile in response to healthcare and regulatory trends and challenges that face our registrants
- have a customer service that is monitored, timely and efficient
- have a learning culture that is also shared externally
- have the required primary and secondary legislation to support our mandate.

In this context, NMBI developed a three-year strategy.

Strategic Priorities 2020–2022

Improving the way we do it

- 1 Evolving our model of regulation
- 2 Digitising and improving the efficiency of our services
- 3 Leveraging data and research
- 4 Communicating more frequently and effectively with our stakeholders
- 5 Further developing our organisation

Strategic milestones

In addition to our core statutory activities, the detail of which are captured in sections 3 to 6, our three-year strategy also sets out a significant change agenda.

NMBI is committed to key milestones to be achieved by 2022. A summary of our progress against our milestones in 2020 is detailed below.

1. Evolving our model of regulation

Actions	Key achievements
Regularly review our Code, education standards, and guidance to ensure that they remain relevant to what nurses and midwives are experiencing on the frontline and in other diverse roles.	<p>NMBI carried out a consultation process with education stakeholders on updates proposed to the education standards and aspects of programme monitoring and approval. Following this a proof of concept was undertaken with volunteer HEIs.</p> <p>The <i>Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives</i> was reviewed, updated and approved by the Board.</p>
Work as part of interdisciplinary working groups to ensure that evolving models of healthcare are supported, patients are protected, and registrants are confident in delivering care. Interdisciplinary working groups would include registrants, patients, policymakers, educators, employers, unions, professional bodies and other regulators.	<p>NMBI worked with the Department of Health, Health Service Executive (HSE), and HEIs to provide flexibility in delivery of undergraduate education.</p> <p>NMBI implemented a successful registrant restoration process and a Return to Practice course for resources required during the first wave of Covid-19.</p> <p>To support a Covid-19 response NMBI worked on multiple interdisciplinary groups to progress Covid-19 related policies and legislative change e.g. regulatory fora.</p> <p>In response to Covid-19 NMBI engaged with union representatives on our fitness to practise inquiry approaches during the restrictions, and we deferred witness statements where appropriate. NMBI also put in place new measures including safe environments for all parties to inquiries as well as remote access, remote meetings and additional meetings when required.</p> <p>Additional powers to gather employment-related information from registrants were acquired via consultation with the Department of Health, HEIs, HSE, representative bodies and registrants.</p>
Finalise the design of the Managing the Maintenance of Professional Competence Scheme (MMPC) and start roll-out to strengthen a culture of continuing improvement. This will ensure that continuing and existing personal development is recognised, regarded and fully used in service delivery.	Options [®] appraisal initiated and completed after discussion with key stakeholders. Planned proof of concept to commence in 2021.
Explore options to widen access pathways to registration while maintaining confidence in competency.	<p>Successfully created pathways to aptitude testing to facilitate additional registration during the first wave of Covid-19.</p> <p>Negotiated increased aptitude testing capacity during Covid-19 pandemic (first wave).</p> <p>Extended recognition pool during Covid-19 pandemic.</p>

continued

Actions	Key achievements
Increase our focus on supporting all our registrants to deliver safe patient outcomes rather than concentrating on the few who have had a complaint made about them.	<p>Increased our guidance.</p> <p>Updated guidance to support student nurses and student midwives to achieve clinical learning opportunities during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Emphasis on progressing the initiative for the registrant cohort was limited to Covid-19 pandemic related guidance. Increased priority will be given to this in 2021.</p>

2. Digitising and improving the efficiency of our services

Actions	Key achievements
Streamline the registration process for applications giving them enhanced self-service options including the option to pay online and get easy access to their records and data.	<p>Launched NMBI's first digital platform MyNMBI that allows the processing of all registration applications digitally.</p> <p>Feedback from registrants and applicants has shown that some had difficulties in navigating the new system. To address this issue NMBI collected and analysed users' feedback and used this to implement multiple system improvements. NMBI also updated and clarified the renewal guide and website content, as well as increasing targeted communication through email to support applicants and registrants through various processes. In 2021, NMBI will continue to listen to our registrants and applicants and implement further system improvements with the help of their feedback.</p>
Ensure that systems are created to capture relevant evidence of qualifications, experience and professional history for all registrants, applicants and graduates.	<p>Delivered MyNMBI registration module.</p> <p>All applicant processes are now digital and associated documents referenceable.</p> <p>Registration records include employment details to allow for national recording.</p> <p>Candidate processes are deployed and, on graduation, candidates progressed onto the Register.</p>
Ensure that all educational service providers have a full understanding of our education standards, provide adequate evidence to satisfy requirements, and have a full appreciation of areas for improvement.	<p>A consultation took place with education stakeholders on updates proposed to undergraduate education programme standards and processes.</p> <p>The design, development and implementation of the education module of project Nightingale was postponed until 2021 due to a number of factors, including Covid-19 and allowing an opportunity to engage HEIs in a proof of concept of our proposed approach to approving and monitoring education programmes to inform requirements for the new system.</p>

continued

Actions	Key achievements
Create an open, efficient and effective pathway to manage complaints within the legislative process.	<p>Developed an Implementation Plan to address changes introduced through the <i>Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020</i>.</p> <p>An opportunities log was created to capture ways in which the complaints management process could deliver increased efficiency, effectiveness and a more compassionate experience for those party to a complaint.</p>
	NMBI progressed preparation of fitness to practise (FTP) cases during the Covid-19 pandemic. We did have to defer hearings for a short period but deployed the permissions and capacity for remote and hybrid hearings in Q3 and Q4 2020 to ensure that cases got progressed.

3. Leveraging data and research

Actions	Key achievements
Share data insights with our registrants and other stakeholders to support our registrants, protect the public, and inform policy.	A significant consultation was carried out on the rules to facilitate the capturing and digitising of the extended data set, including employment related information
Share data on the Register to assist health services with workforce planning activities.	<p>For the first time in NMBI's history employment related data collection began in 2020 with MyNMBI.</p> <p>We will continue to evolve the data set and analysis.</p>
Work closely with others in the healthcare sector so that we can collectively have more impact on protecting the public (sharing inspection reports, risk profiles, etc.).	<p>A macro data set was shared with stakeholders to facilitate Covid-19 planning.</p> <p>NMBI completed a consultation with the HEIs on the future publication of site inspection reports.</p> <p>National data gathering exercises were completed on student placements to ensure continued integrity of education programmes amid Covid-19.</p>
Use research and data to inform our policy approach. Using this evidence will enable us to develop insights into our registrants, making our work more effective and proportionate.	Analysis was carried out to support the HEIs and the HSE/Department of Health in the context of Covid-19 planning.

4. Communicating more frequently and effectively with our stakeholders

Actions	Key achievements
Develop and implement a strategic communications plan which focuses on content and efficient channels for communication while also accounting for signification developments in the business calendar that will need to be proactively supported i.e. our new online registration system.	<p>Baseline reputation audit results were analysed and shared with the Board (informed the Customer Action Plan).</p> <p>The Customer Action Plan was completed and published.</p> <p>The Communications Plan was completed.</p>
<p>Develop and implement a customer action plan which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the nature and quality of service that customers can expect • clarifying our role and using every opportunity to explain what we do and how we do it • updating our website with clear and easy to understand content • conducting listening events. 	<p>Registration section of the NMBI website refreshed in preparation for the launch of MyNMBI.</p> <p>Applicant guides and registrant guides were completed as part of the MyNMBI roll-out.</p> <p>After the renewal process began feedback from registrants and applicants has shown that some had difficulties in navigating the new system. In response NMBI updated and clarified the renewal guide and website content, as well as increasing targeted communication through email to support applicants and registrants through various processes.</p> <p>Changes to our policies and standards were developed collaboratively with our stakeholders.</p> <p>Listening events conducted to capture feedback of registrants who completed the 2021 renewal process. The feedback was used to implement system improvements.</p>

5. Further developing our organisation

Actions	Key achievements
Support staff in their acquisition of the knowledge, skills and competencies to do their jobs effectively and with confidence.	<p>The 2020 Staff Training and Development Plan was adapted to ensure continued staff training and development during the pandemic and remote working.</p> <p>75% of staff availed of training and development programmes during the year.</p> <p>85% of staff accessed the NMBI wellbeing initiatives.</p>
Support the Board in its delivery of our governance structure.	<p>Reflecting good governance practice, an external review of committees was undertaken. This will be considered by the Board in 2021.</p> <p>Internal audits are ongoing.</p> <p>The Board Training and Development Plan 2020 was implemented.</p>

continued

Actions	Key achievements
Review the structure of our organisation to allow for the effective and efficient delivery of our legislative remit.	<p>The Workforce Plan 2020 was developed and implemented.</p> <p>Defined, advertised and filled new positions including key senior management team roles as part of our succession plan.</p>
Continue to develop a rolling three-year workforce plan.	
Continue to abide by the <i>Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies</i> and other national and EU legislation including the <i>Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty</i> .	<p>Board elections were held.</p> <p>NMBI's annual statement of compliance with the Code was considered by the Board. The Board approved revisions to its standing orders to ensure compliance with legislative changes. All outstanding procedures required by the Code were drafted and approved by the Board, including procedures on obtaining independent professional advice and recording of Board members' concerns.</p>
Identify further ways to streamline the usage of Board time.	<p>Remote meetings and IT infrastructure were implemented.</p> <p>Commenced exploring management software options for Board papers.</p>

Business Plan 2020

In our 2020 Business Plan specific strategic projects, enabling us to deliver on our statement of strategy, were identified as follows:

1 Nurses and Midwives Act 2011

In 2020 we continued to fulfil our statutory remit under the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.

2 The implementation of a new Registrant System to deliver continued improvements in value for money and processing efficiencies

The new Registration module went live in September 2020. In addition to a new applicant, registrant and higher education institution (HEI) portal, the new system also delivers improved reporting capability.

Requirements gathering for the Education module commenced and is well progressed.

3 A public consultation on the design of a Managing the Maintenance of Professional Competence Scheme

The public consultation was deferred in the context of Covid-19 and the pressure on frontline workers.

4 Updating our Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

In the context of new legislation and healthcare models and settings NMBI conducted a review of our *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives*. The updated Code was approved in 2020.

5 Continue to respond to and operationalise NMBI elements of 'A Policy on the Development of Graduate to Advanced Nursing and Midwifery Practice'

The credentialing and annotation elements of the policy were an area of focus for us in 2020 and NMBI looks forward to further developing our thinking with the Department of Health in 2021.

6 The selection, configuration and roll out of a new FTP case management tool

The implementation of a new software case management system to support FTP activities will be critical to the delivery of continued improvements in value for money, processing efficiencies and reporting capability.

Requirements have been defined with implementation expected in 2021.

This case management system will track complaints and inquiries, will automate alerts and be a repository for all material associated with complaints, Preliminary Proceedings Committee (PPC) and FTP activity. It will significantly reduce manual scheduling, filing and tracking, and increase our reporting capability.

7 Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Bill 2019/Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020

In anticipation of the new Act, NMBI conducted preliminary planning in Q1, Q2 and Q3. The new legislation commenced in Q4 and the implementation plan was finalised. The primary impact has been and will continue to be in the FTP area. Implementation activities will commence in 2021.

8 Increase capacity in FTP to accelerate inquiry timelines

In 2020 we saw our PPC and FTP activity, which was paused initially during the first lock down, brought online and some inquiries were conducted through a hybrid approach (virtual and face to face) where restrictions allowed.

NMBI conducted a review of our complaints' management processes to identify opportunities for improvement from an efficiency and effectiveness point of view. NMBI also looked at the experience of parties in a complaint (complainants, registrants and witnesses).

The amendments to the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020, due to be commenced in mid-2021, will provide NMBI with additional options for dealing with complaints and there is an anticipation of an accelerated inquiry timeline as a result.

9 Succession planning at Board and senior management team level

In 2020, NMBI developed and implemented a succession plan for a number of key leadership positions within the Board and the senior management team.

In relation to the Board there were a number of changes in 2020. Eleven members' terms of office ended in 2020, with three of those terms being renewed following re-appointment/re-election. In addition, two members were elected by the professions to the Board for the first time, three members were appointed using the PAS process for State bodies and three members were put forward for appointment, two by the HSE and one to represent the Directors of Nursing/Midwifery.





03

**Chief Executive's
Office, Corporate
Services and Finance**

Human Resources

NMBI has a sanctioned staffing level of 55. During 2020, our Registration Department required additional agency administration support to deal with Covid-19 related Registration restorations and applications, at these peak times headcount numbers increased to 60.

A continuous recruitment drive took place from the beginning of 2020, filling a total of 12 roles:

- Registration, Case Officer x 3
- Clerical Officer, Finance
- Clerical Grade IV, Fitness to Practise
- Communications and Governance Officer
- Education, Policy and Standards Administrator
- Quality Assurance and Compliance Manager
- Finance Manager
- Director of Fitness to Practise
- Director of Registration and Digitisation
- Head of Operations

Staff turnover dropped from 28.57% in 2019 to 17.77% in 2020.

Throughout 2020 the Staff Development and Training Plan was reviewed and adapted to address the impact of the pandemic. In 2020 the following organisation wide online training took place:

- MS Office Suite applications - Microsoft Excel, Word, and Outlook - all levels
- Diversity and Inclusion Training
- GDPR Awareness Training
- IT Security Awareness Training

Further specialist training was organised:

- FOI for Decision Makers
- Dynamics 365 CRM Customisation
- Procurement Essentials
- White and Green Belt in Lean Sigma Healthcare
- Intermediate Pensions Training

A new Third Level Course Funding Application process was introduced for staff members. Eight staff members applied for and were granted financial support in the following areas:

- Data Analytics Certificate
- Advanced Diploma in Medical Law
- Professional Diploma in Regulation
- Facilities Management

As part of the NMBI digitisation agenda – the Softworks Online Time and Attendance system also went live. All staff were trained prior to the go live date, the system was fully operational across all departments from March 2020.

From the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the NMBI implemented all Covid-19 health and safety protocols, which were updated throughout the year in line with Government guidelines. A Covid-19 officer and team were appointed, and the HR Department operated a 24/7 phoneline for all staff. Sanitising stations, protective screens and temperature monitoring equipment were installed. A 'Working From Home' policy was introduced.

Throughout 2020 there was continuous communication by email and CEO briefings with all staff on Covid-19 protocols, working from home and on-site arrangements. There was a strong focus on staff wellbeing in all communications. A number of wellbeing initiatives were implemented:

- Building Resilience/Promoting Wellbeing through and after the Pandemic
- Lunchtime Wellbeing initiatives
- Enhanced EAP service for staff and their families
- Introduction to Mindfulness – a six-week lunchtime online course for all staff

Standard Health and Safety training such as Fire Warden training also took place during the year.

NMBI remains focused on strengthening our reputation as a modern, professional regulator.

Communications

During 2020, the key areas of focus for the Communications Department were Covid-19, the launch of our new online registration system, MyNMBI® and engagement with stakeholders regarding the 2021 annual registration renewal.

The Communications Department implemented a number of measures to ensure regular and timely communication was issued to our registrants, the media and key stakeholders. This included regular updates, news stories, press releases and eZines.

The website and eZine remains the largest channel for NMBI to communicate with our registrants, stakeholders and the public. Three new sections of the website were created to support additional activity: Covid-19, the launch of MyNMBI, and the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. An overview of the website activity in 2020 can be found below.

To support the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, a new eZine initiative was introduced to 'Shine a Light' on the work of our registrants on the frontline. The monthly spotlight article gave nurses and midwives the opportunity to share their experiences.

Extensive work was also carried out in the development of the NMBI website, content and documents. Through the use of plain English, and by considering tone, content was tailored to suit different audiences and the approach was modernised through the use of video content.



The Communications Department supported the launch of the MyNMBI registration module in September through planned stakeholder engagement, branding and assisting the MyNMBI team in the creation of a new logo and supporting material including user guides, a video and website content. This was followed by the annual registration renewal process. As annual renewals were done exclusively through MyNMBI, extensive stakeholder engagement was required to inform and update registered nurses and midwives on the new renewal process.

NMBI remains focused on strengthening our reputation as a modern, professional regulator. Following independent research conducted in 2019 to acquire stakeholder insights into how NMBI was viewed as an organisation, the Customer Action Plan and Customer Charter were developed and published.

In addition to this, the Communications Department engaged in and supported the following ongoing activity:

- All media relations and public affairs output
- NMBI consultation processes – The Nurses and Midwives (Amendment) Rules 2020, Nurses and Midwives (Fitness to Practise Subcommittee) Rules 2020 and amendments to the Nurses and Midwives Standards and Requirements (2016)
- A move of the fitness to practise communications activity in-house
- Branding and design of new material for The Irish Times Higher Options careers fair
- The publication of all NMBI documents
- Drafting of external presentations

The Communications Department is also responsible for dealing with Parliamentary Questions (PQs) and Ministerial Representations referred by the Department of Health. During 2020, NMBI received eight PQs and 29 Ministerial Representations.

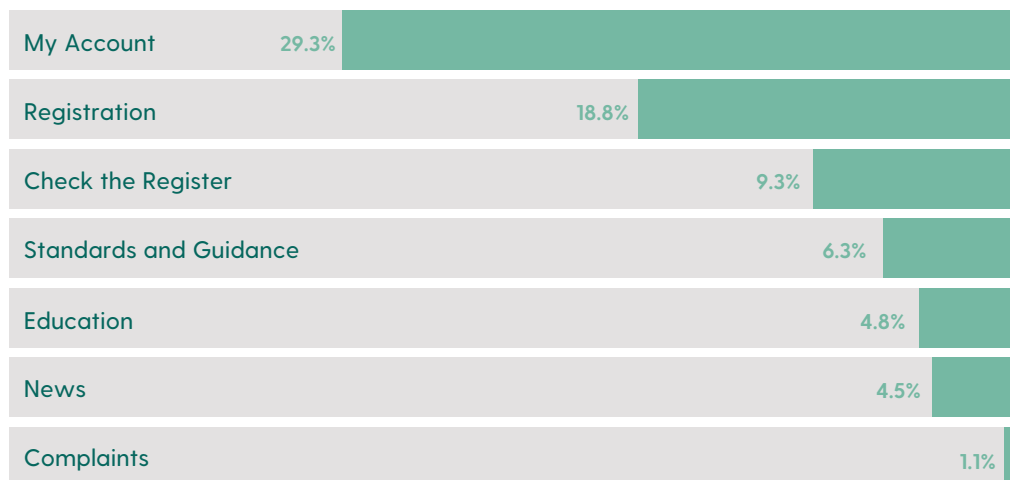
NMBI Online

The Communications Department is responsible for the management of the NMBI website. The website is visited by approximately 500,000 users each year and receives approximately five million pageviews.

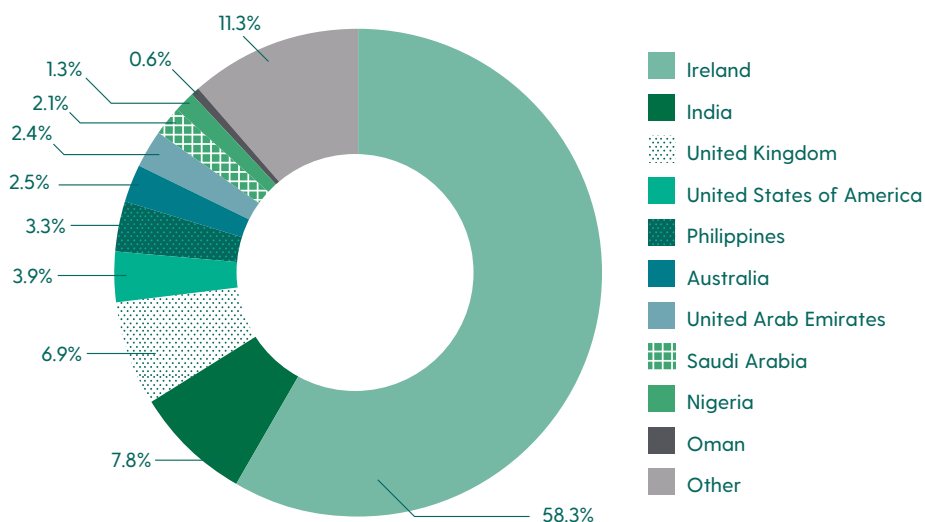
An overview of the NMBI website activity is outlined below.

- January and December had the highest level of traffic.
- Registration, Check the Register and My Account were the most visited sections of the website during 2020.
- Over half of website users in 2020 were located in Ireland
- India replaced the United Kingdom as the second highest user location in 2020.
- 25-34-year-olds are the highest age category of users (30%)
- 2020 saw an increase of 8% in male visitors compared to 2019.

Percentage pageviews by website sections 2020



Audience by location



Governance

The Covid-19 pandemic fundamentally altered the way the NMBI Board and committees conducted their business. From March 2020, NMBI moved to hold meetings virtually. For the rest of 2020, with the exception of one meeting in July when, due to the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, the Board was able to meet in person, all meetings were held remotely. While this was initially challenging, it gave members more flexibility and there were continued high levels of attendance throughout the year as the Board and committees continued to meet on a regular basis. The Audit and Risk Committee increased the number of its meetings during the earlier stages of the Covid-19 crisis to review and update NMBI's Covid-19 specific risk register. Updates following these meetings were provided to the Board.

To ensure that meetings were held in accordance with the Board's procedures, the Board approved changes to its standing orders which allowed it to consider all items remotely, including fitness to practise items. In addition, a new act – the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 – was signed into law which gave NMBI a statutory basis to hold meetings of the Board and fitness to practise hearings remotely. The Board also approved changes to its standing orders and to committee terms of reference specifying that meeting minutes could be signed electronically.

A training company was engaged at the end of 2019 to provide ongoing governance training to Board members. This training continued remotely throughout 2020 with the senior management team also taking part in some dedicated sessions.

In compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, an independent external evaluation of Board effectiveness was undertaken at the end of 2019. Outputs from this evaluation were circulated to the Board and an action plan developed. An external review of all committees was started towards the end of 2020. A report on this review will be brought to the Board in Q2 2021.

Data protection and Freedom of Information

Data protection projects continued through 2020. Our nominated data champions began training during the latter part of the year. Training included subject access rights, data breach reporting, and security awareness. It was delivered online by Castlebridge. A separate session on how to use the newly procured Privacyengine software also took place.

Data protection awareness training was conducted for all staff in January and again at the end of June. The session in June was run online and in conjunction with ICS Skills.

Privacyengine was procured this year to augment our data protection compliance and will be rolled out throughout 2021. The Privacyengine system includes privacy risk management, incident response and tracking, and online menu driven data protection impact assessments. It will also be used to provide online awareness training for all staff.

The advent of Brexit brought some extra issues. A data sharing agreement and Standard Contractual Clause (SCC) document were signed and agreed with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in the UK at the end of 2020.

There were 14 reportable data breaches in 2020, a reduction of six from 2019. Thirteen were low risk and one was a medium risk.

There was a total of 14 FOI requests. Seven requests were for personal data, seven were for non-personal data. Of the 14 requests, four were from journalists, two from business groups and eight from people who interacted with NMBI during the year.

Facilities

In March, when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, the NMBI was designated an essential service, requiring the NMBI to continue to perform its functions and responsibilities. With the support of the IT Department a secure system was established to allow homeworking. Laptops and other ancillary equipment were procured and within a short period of time in excess of 50 members of staff were facilitated to work from home.

NMBI closed our offices to the public due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As some of the organisation's operations were still primarily paper based, particularly the Registration Department, this meant some staff were required to attend our offices in person. To facilitate these operations, and to protect the health and safety of staff, teams were divided into smaller groups and located in separate offices on different floor levels. Workstations were socially distanced and separated by screen dividers. Cleaning and sanitising services were enhanced throughout the building and strict protocols were enforced in relation to entry and movement within the building. The facilities team also supported a number of socially distanced Fitness to Practise inquiries and meetings during the year.

Finance

The Finance Department adapted quickly to remote working in 2020. Reporting of the Board's financial resources was monitored through the processes of budgeting, monthly management accounts and ongoing forecasting. Reports were provided to the senior management team; the Audit and Risk Committee; the Business, Strategy and Finance Committee; and the Board, ensuring that the management team and the Board were fully informed.

The Finance Department continued to manage the Council's financial resources in line with all legislative and governance requirements, applying best practice to the governance of its financial affairs. All necessary changes from public sector circulars and legislation in relation to payroll, expenses and financial transactions were implemented in a timely and efficient manner.

NMBI Financial Note

NMBI accounts will be audited later in 2021. This is a preliminary Financial Note.

NMBI generated a total income in 2020 of €10.2m. This income (unaudited) was derived from the Annual Retention Fee (€7.5m), registration fees (€2.5m) and other fees/income €0.2m.

An annual fee of €100 is charged to each registrant for the retention of their name on the Register. In 2020, approximately 75,000 nurses and midwives paid their fee.

Registration fees are mainly made up of applications to the register €2.1m of which overseas applications accounted for €1.8m, restorations to the register by registrants who were previously removed from the register €0.3m and other services provided by the NMBI to registrants €0.1m.



Key areas of expenditure related to the statutory functions as set out in the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 including the management of complaints, maintenance of the Register and approval and review of programmes of education and training.

Other expenditure related to staff salaries, professional fees, accommodation costs, ICT and related technical support.

In 2020, there were additional costs in relation to cleaning, supplies and equipment due to Covid-19. There were offsetting savings in travel and subsistence resulting from the move to virtual meetings.

Third party support contracts continue to be managed to ensure value for money and service delivery targets are met.

Total expenditure (unaudited) in 2020 was €9.8m, resulting in a surplus of €0.4m for the year.

Capital expenditure amounted to €0.9m in 2020, in line with our business plan. This was primarily spent on the development of MyNMBI® with the module for registration now live and modules for Registration, Education and support for a Professional Competence Schemes to follow.

Expenditure on equipment to facilitate home working was accelerated due to Covid-19.

The Board can confirm that all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit and asset disposals were adhered to. Finance policies in the areas of banking, fixed assets, budgetary control, and credit card usage were updated during 2020.

Furthermore, the Board can confirm that it adhered to the Public Spending Code and the Government travel policy requirements.

The Board has included a Statement on the System of Internal Control in the format set out in the 2016 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in the unaudited Financial Statements for 2020.

The Board approved the draft unaudited Financial Statements and agreed that they are a true and fair view of the Board's financial performance and position at year end. The unaudited Annual Financial Statements for 2020 were submitted to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) as per Section 34 of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 and the 2016 Code.

The Financial Statements will, within three months after the Comptroller and Auditor General issues the audit certificate, be published in the prescribed manner on the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland's website and laid before each Houses of the Oireachtas.

Procurement

The procurement team provides support to the business users in the organisation in relation to their procurements needs.

In 2020 a number of procurements were completed across all sections of the organisation including the following:

- Provision of laptops and ancillary equipment to support home working
- ICT managed services
- Web hosting services
- Financial services support
- Maintenance of professional competence stakeholder discussion document
- Printing services
- Offsite meeting facilitation services
- Legislation and standards gap analysis
- Assessment testing and hosting services
- Project management services
- Review of committees
- Online Board election voting services.

In 2020 a new Procurement Policy and Plan for 2021 was approved. This policy sets out the purchasing controls and procurement activities for 2021. The object of the plan is to ensure procurement rules are adhered to and that the NMBI receives value for money in the acquisition of goods and services.

Areas of procurement planned in 2021 include:

- Fitness to Practise case management
- Data governance project
- Print solutions
- DR cloud installation
- IT internal audit review follow up
- Building refurbishments
- Regulation stakeholder
- Intranet solution
- Copyeditors (inclusive of a new House style guide)
- Website support services.

Risk management

NMBI has a comprehensive risk management policy and framework in place which identifies risks, the likelihood of the risk materialising, the impact should the risk occur and the mitigating controls or actions required.

The Board has ultimate responsibility for risk management in the NMBI and approves the NMBI risk management policy, risk appetite and business continuity/ disaster recovery plan.

Following the external review of risk management in the NMBI, which was conducted in 2019, risk management is being integrated throughout the organisation and in 2020 a new risk register was implemented.

NMBI has considered the level of risk it is prepared to accept in order to carry out its duties and functions and has updated its risk appetite statement which was approved by the Board.

The business continuity and IT disaster recovery plans were approved by the board in 2020.

Covid-19 presented new risks to the organisation and was a test to the organisation's ability to maintain operations. These risks and challenges were managed by establishing a separate Covid-19 risk register.

In 2020 regular meetings, fortnightly initially, of the Audit and Risk Committee were held to review the risk register, allowing for the timely capture of risks and implementation of actions to minimise exposure.

Directorate risk registers have been established, integrating risk management throughout the organisation.

Risk is now a part of the business planning process at NMBI. Further improvements are planned in 2021 to ensure that risk management remains an integral part of the operations of NMBI.

IT

Throughout 2020 there was a strong focus on IT security and, as a proactive measure, NMBI engaged Deloitte to conduct a comprehensive testing of any vulnerabilities in the network and systems environments, including the new registration portal.

Cyber security awareness training developed by Deloitte was rolled out to all staff and a specialised training was delivered to the NMBI Board. Several key policies were updated and approved by the Board including electronic asset acceptable use, the disaster recovery plan and a new policy on cyber incident management.

In response to Covid-19, over a short period the IT Department delivered the capability for over 50 staff to work remotely. Microsoft Office 365 capability allowed us to use Microsoft Teams as NMBI's video conferencing collaboration platform. This allowed the NMBI to conduct remote meetings, including managing Board/Committee meetings and Fitness to Practise hearings. It also enabled the hosting of a fully remote site inspection of Dublin City University (DCU) in December 2020.

The IT Department provided technical IT assistance to several important projects and initiatives, including Project Nightingale and the Board election.



04

**Registration
and Digitisation**

Primary registration objectives (2020 Business Plan)

The primary 2020 registration objectives as described in NMBI's 2020 Business Plan are as follows:

1. Nurses and Midwives Act 2011
 - Maintain the Register of Nurses and Midwives
 - Recognise qualifications, provide statistical information on applications for recognition of qualifications and registration processes
2. Implementation of our new online registration system (MyNMBI/Nightingale)
 - Implement and stabilise registrant module Q3 2020
 - Data/reporting approach

MyNMBI

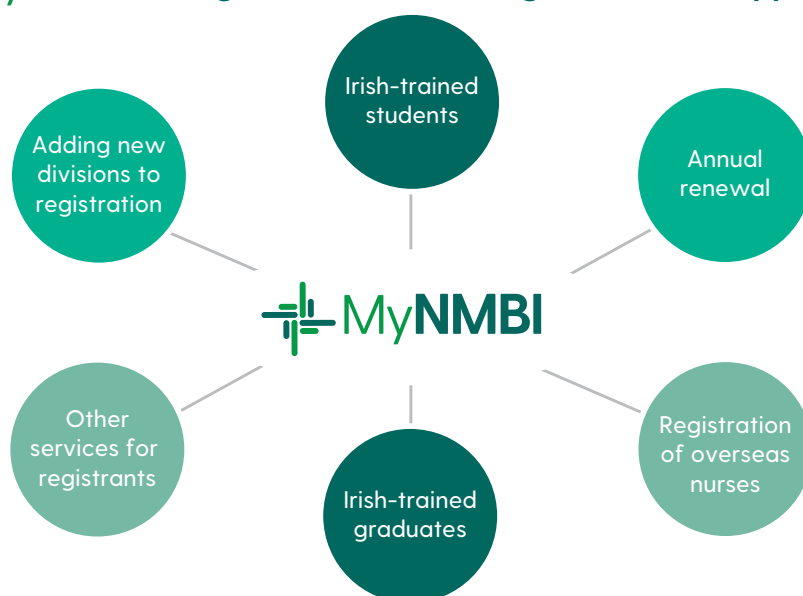
On 28 September 2020 NMBI launched the new online registration system, MyNMBI.

MyNMBI is the public-facing portal while the overall functionality includes a Microsoft Dynamics CRM at the back end, Sitefinity (public facing portal) and Power BI reporting tool.

MyNMBI allows registrants and applicants to log into one portal to have access to all registration services. The 'My Documents' section of MyNMBI saves all relevant registration documents on the portal and allows users to access them at any time. It also shows users the live status of their applications.

MyNMBI represents the most significant technological leap in the last 20 years, as the organisation moves away from relying on paper-based processes and shifts to a fully digitised system.

MyNMBI : Digital Services for Registrants and Applicants



Since the launch of MyNMBI all main registration processes have been completed through the system including:

- Approximately 650 overseas recognition applications submitted through the digital platform in Q 4 (October-December)
- Approximately 600 overseas registrations were processed in Q 4 (October-December).
These were primarily paper based applications that were migrated to MyNMBI.
- 1,250 graduates (fourth year students) and 1,213 candidates (first year students) registered via MyNMBI
- Digital renewal process kicked off in November 2020, collecting employment data for the first time.

Before the launch of MyNMBI, user guides, a video and communication materials were developed to support registrants through the new process. After the renewal process there was evidence that some registrants and applicants had difficulties in navigating the new system. To address this issue the NMBI collected and analysed users' feedback and used this to implement multiple system improvements. NMBI also updated and clarified the renewal guide and website content, as well as increasing targeted communication by email to support applicants and registrants through various processes. In 2021, NMBI will continue to listen to our registrants and applicants, and implement further system improvements with the help of their feedback.

Ensuring that there are sufficient nurses and midwives to respond to Covid-19 was our priority in March 2020.

Nadia Dagash
Director of Registration and Digitisation

Registration statistics

One of the primary objectives of the Registration Department is the maintenance of the Register of Nurses and Midwives. At the end of 2020 there were 80,620 nurses and midwives on the Register. Those on the Register had their nursing or midwifery qualifications recognised by the NMBI and they remain on the Register by renewing their registration annually.

NMBI's Register is dynamic with registrants coming onto the Register and being removed continuously.

Coming onto the Register

New entrants to the Register can be categorised into three groups:

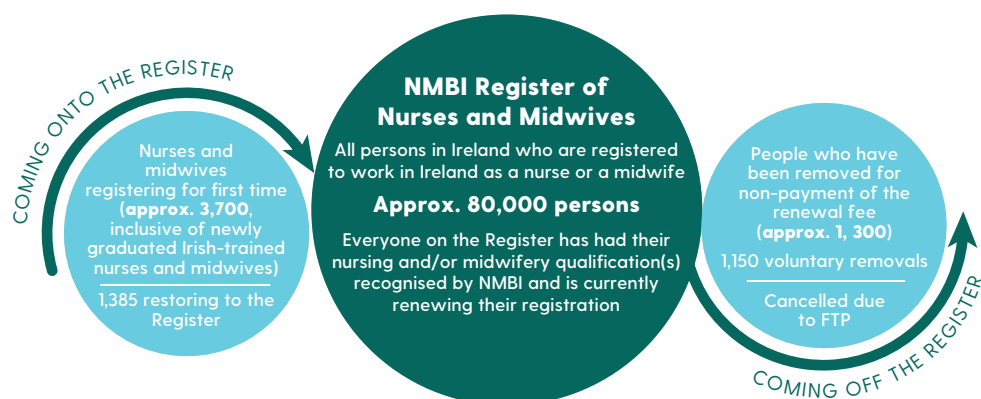
1. Newly graduated Irish trained nurses and midwives joining the Register for the first time. In 2020 that represented 1,474 nurses and midwives.
2. Overseas nurses and midwives registering for the first time with NMBI. In 2020, there were 2,242 overseas nurses and midwives registered.
3. Nurses and midwives returning to the Register (restoring their registration after being removed). From the outset of Covid-19 one of the NMBI's main priorities was to fast-track the restoration process for nurses and midwives, as part of the national response to the pandemic. In 2020, NMBI processed 1,385 restorations.

Coming off the Register

There are three main ways registrants are removed from the Register:

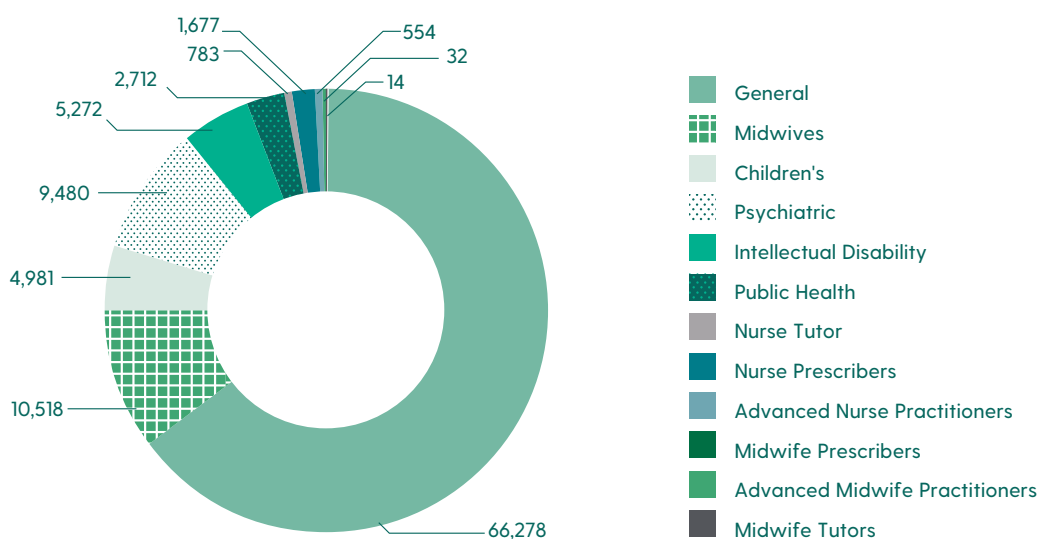
1. Nurses and midwives who retire, take a career break, or decide to stop practising for other reasons can remove their name from the Register. In 2020, there have been 1,154 nurses and midwives who voluntarily removed themselves from the Register.
2. Nurses and midwives who let their registration lapse or did not renew their registration in time, which results in their removal from the Register. In 2020, 1,303 nurses and midwives were removed for non-payment of their renewal fees.
3. Cancellation of registration resulting from a fitness to practise process.

Summary of 2020 changes to the Register



Register of Nurses and Midwives by division¹

In total there are 102,308 division registrations. Please note that one nurse or midwife could be registered in multiple divisions. In other words, 80,620 nurses and midwives hold 102,308 registrations at the division level.

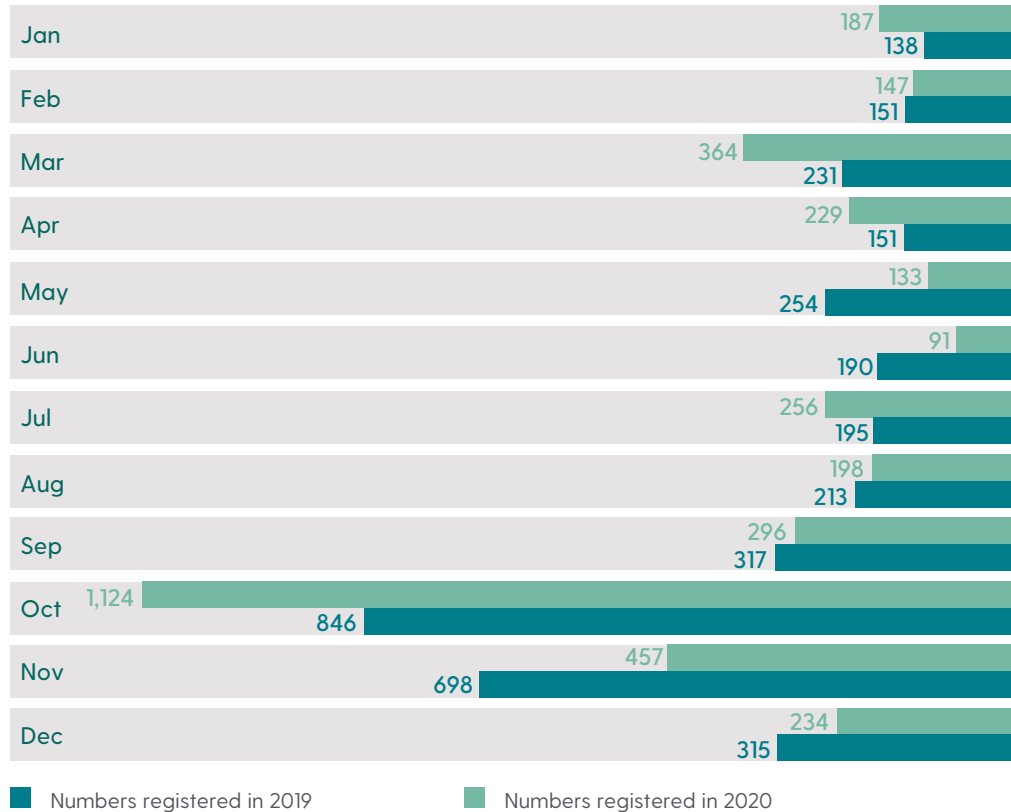


¹ Excludes legacy divisions such as Fever, Infectious Diseases' and Tuberculosis

Registration rates (by month)

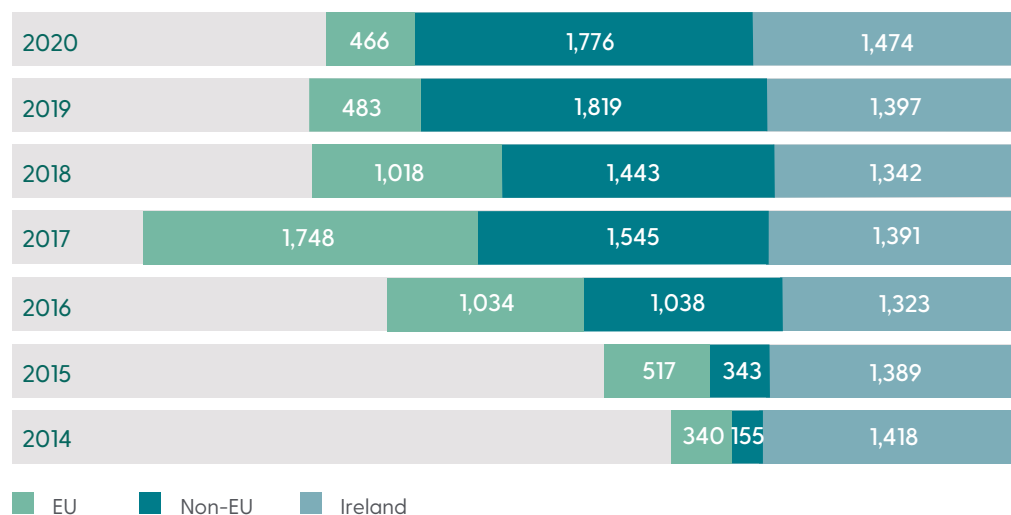
The graph below depicts the numbers of first-time registrants by month in 2019 and 2020.

First time registrants, by month 2019-2020



This graph includes all overseas applicants and Irish graduates coming onto the register for the first time. It is worthwhile noting the spike in October 2020 registrations compared to 2019. This is driven by online processing of Irish graduates which was faster than the paper-based process.

Registrations, by training location 2014-2020





Registration Department response to Covid-19

The full complement of registration staff plus additional agency administration support worked throughout the pandemic. The main priority was to fast-track the restoration process for nurses and midwives as part of a national response to Covid-19. Between mid-March 2020 and the end of July the registration team restored 1,126 nurses to the Register.

NMBI also accommodated the needs of overseas applicants who were planning to travel to Ireland to complete a compensation measure as part of their qualification recognition process. A decision letter is issued to overseas applicants who need to successfully complete an adaptation period or an aptitude test before the NMBI can recognise their qualifications. Under normal circumstances a decision letter is valid for 12 months from the date of issue. In 2020, decision letters were extended by a further six months as travel restrictions were in place.

The Registration Department is keen to assist nurses and midwives who are on our Register or who wish to be added to our Register. Detailed information and guidance are available on our website nmbi.ie and we can be contacted on the following email addresses:

- **Overseas registration:** Email: G3reg@nmbi.ie
(For applicants: trained outside Ireland and outside EU-EEA)
- **EU-EEA registration:** Email: Euregistration@nmbi.ie
(For applicants: trained in the EU-EEA)
- **Registration:** Email: IReg@nmbi.ie
(For applicants: trained in Ireland/registered with NMBI only)

Registration staff worked hard to fast-track the restoration process for nurses as part of a national response to Covid-19.

Nadia Dagash
Director of Registration and Digitisation





05

**Regulation and
Fitness to Practise**

Through its fitness to practise functions, NMBI is responsible for considering complaints against nurses and midwives. This ensures the protection of the public, the safeguarding of confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions, and that NMBI is seen to clearly declare and uphold standards.

Nurses Act, 1985

Some complaints have been received under previous legislation and need to be addressed under that legislation. All applications for inquiry received before 2 October 2012 are considered by the Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC) established under the Nurses Act, 1985. This committee will continue in office until all such cases are concluded. Two inquiries remain to be heard but could not be scheduled prior to the end of 2020 due to factors outside the control of NMBI.

Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 ('the Act')

Preliminary Proceedings Committee

The Preliminary Proceedings Committee (PPC) gives initial consideration to complaints. Amid the challenges of Covid-19 the PPC adapted quickly and changed their ways of working. Moving online, almost seamlessly, allowed the committee to continue its important work without disruption. The PPC met on 11 occasions during 2020. Nine of the meetings from March to December were held remotely.

On 1 January 2020, there were 77 outstanding cases for PPC consideration, and a further 95 complaints were received during 2020, giving a total of 172 cases for consideration.

By the end of 2020, the PPC had made decisions or recommendations to the Board on 96 of the 172 cases that were before it, and 76 cases were still under consideration.

- The number of complaints received was 13% lower than in 2019 (95 v 109). This was particularly noticeable during the period March-June 2020.
- The progress of cases through the PPC process slowed because of the Covid-19 related restrictions and registrants being delayed in preparing responses as they were not able to meet with their representatives or were involved in the provision of frontline care. Healthcare facilities were not able to respond to requests for documentation as quickly as usual due to the demands of frontline healthcare provision.
- 41% of new complaints came from members of the public (usually patients or relatives of patients).
- 59% of complaints came from employers, colleagues and other registrants.

PPC cases in 2020	
Cases referred to inquiry	32 (35% of cases)
Cases where PPC recommended no further action warranted and recommendation accepted by Board	47
Cases where PPC recommended no further action warranted and not yet considered by Board by year end	12
Cases where the Board declined to accept the recommendation of the PPC that no further action was warranted and decided that further action was necessary and referred the case forward for an inquiry	0
Withdrawn cases – case closed	1
Withdrawn cases – PPC proceeded as if not withdrawn	3
Complaints referred to the Board under Section 55(5) – criminal conviction, registration cancelled.	0
Complaints referred to the Board under Section 55(5) – criminal conviction, referred back to PPC.	1

Nature of complaints

No one particular type of complaint dominated in 2020. Allegations generally fell into the following categories:

1. **Competency/clinical practice issues:** Medication management was a recurring issue.
2. **Behaviour:** These ranged from communication issues to verbal and physical assault. Breach of confidentiality and/or data protection issues featured in a number of complaints.
3. **Health issues:** Commonest was drug abuse linked with behavioural issues, e.g. forging of prescriptions and/or theft of drugs.
4. **Issues not relating to NMBI:** There were five complaints related to matters that do not usually fall within the remit of the PPC, e.g. HR-related issues and family disputes. These complaints were not referred to inquiry.
5. **Conditions breach:** There was one complaint related to a failure to comply with conditions attached to an individual's registration.

Many complaints related to more than one category of complaint.

A small number of complaints related to alleged failures to follow Covid-19 public health protocols. These complaints are still under consideration by the PPC. None of the Covid-19-related complaints received were directly linked to patient care.

Five members of the public made complaints about more than one registrant (two to three registrants).

Five employers or other registrants made complaints about more than one registrant (two to eight registrants).

Fitness to Practise Committee

The Covid-19-related restrictions impacted significantly on the holding of FTP inquiries and call-overs. There were 28 weeks during which no in-person inquiries could be held. The use of virtual technology to hold fully remote inquiries was explored and five inquiries were held fully remotely using two different IT platforms.

Only certain types of inquiries could be held fully remotely, and this only occurred with the consent of all parties involved. When in-person inquiries did resume it was in full compliance with all public health protocols. In cases where more than a certain number of individuals needed to attend at the same time, the in-person inquiry was held off-site from NMBI offices in a larger venue. When inquiries were resumed, a hybrid approach was taken with the Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC), the registrant and legal teams physically present but most witnesses giving evidence remotely.

The pandemic brought challenges for fitness to practise causing a halt to the running of onsite/in-person inquiries.

Colm O'Leary
Director of Regulation and Fitness to Practise

Call-overs

The FTPC meets at call-overs to consider preliminary applications: for example applications with regard to the hearing of an inquiry other than in public or preliminary applications in relation to the production of documents.

Ten call-over meetings were planned for 2020. Four were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions; four were held in person, and two were held fully remotely.

Public inquiries

Inquiries under the Act are held in public. However, an application may be made by a registrant or a witness (about whom personal matters may be disclosed at the inquiry) for all or part of the inquiry to be held in private. The decision to hold an inquiry following such an application is made by the Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC). The FTPC must be satisfied that it would be appropriate in the circumstances to hold all or part of the inquiry in private. In 2020, 6 inquiries (27%) were held in public and 13 inquiries (59%) were held in private whilst one case (5%) was held partly in public and partly in private and two cases of inquiries (9%) were held in public with certain parties anonymised. The most common reason for an inquiry being held in private is that elements of the inquiry relate to the health of the registrant who is the subject of the inquiry.

Inquiries

At the onset of Covid-19 NMBI reacted quickly to ensure the important Fitness to Practise work continued. Online inquiry solutions were identified and tested, and during the course of the year more than 20 inquiries were held either online or onsite. There were 39 inquiry days in 2020.



Inquiries in 2020	
Inquiries commenced in 2019 and concluded in 2020	5
Inquiries commenced in 2019; continued in 2020 and to be concluded in 2021	1
Inquiries commenced in 2019 and to be concluded in 2021	1
Inquiries commenced in 2020	16
Inquiries commenced and concluded in 2020	15
Inquires commenced in 2020 to be concluded in 2021	1

Findings

Of the 20 inquiries that concluded in 2020, findings were made against 14 registrants.

Grounds proven in 2020 included:

- Professional misconduct only
- Poor professional performance only
- Relevant medical disability only
- Professional misconduct and poor professional performance
- Professional misconduct and a failure to comply with a code of professional conduct
- Professional misconduct, poor professional performance and a failure to comply with a code of professional conduct
- Professional misconduct and a relevant medical disability
- Professional misconduct, poor professional performance and a relevant medical disability
- Professional misconduct, a relevant medical disability and an irregularity in relation to the custody, prescription or supply of a controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Acts 1977 and 1984 or another drug that is likely to be abused.
- Professional misconduct, a failure to comply with a code of professional conduct and a relevant medical disability
- Poor professional performance and a failure to comply with a code of professional misconduct

In four cases, no findings were made against the registrant.

One case was dealt with by way of an undertaking pursuant to Section 65(1) of the Act.

Expert witnesses (nurse/midwife and/or medical) were used in 14 of the 21 cases heard or part-heard in 2020.

- Nursing expert only – 5 cases
- Midwifery expert only – 2 cases
- Medical expert (psychiatrist) only – 5 cases
- Nursing expert and medical expert (psychiatrist) – 1 case
- Nursing expert, medical expert (psychiatrist) and psychologist – 1 case.

Sanctions

The FTPC panel that hears the inquiry makes a recommendation regarding sanction if there are findings against the registrant. The decision regarding sanction is, however, made by the Board. Sanctions other than *advice*, an *admonishment* or a *censure* must be confirmed by the High Court.

Meetings of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee and call-overs involving the Fitness to Practise Committee moved online, almost seamlessly.

Colm O'Leary
Director of Regulation and Fitness to Practise

The schedule of Board meetings was disrupted due to Covid-19 restrictions. From March onwards, the Board dealt remotely with FTP matters that did not require that the registrant be invited to attend. In December 2020 the Board commenced dealing fully remotely with FTP matters that did require that the registrant be invited to attend, provided that all parties agreed that the matter could be dealt with remotely.

In cases where findings were made the following sanctions were applied before the end of 2020:

Sanction applied in 2020	Number of cases
Cancellation	4
Censure	3
Suspension and Conditions	1
Censure and Conditions	2
Advice	1

In 10 of these cases a final determination on sanction had not been made by the Board or had not yet been confirmed by the High Court at the end of 2020.

There were no appeals against findings and/or sanction in 2020.

Section 58: Application to the High Court for suspension from the Register in the public interest

The Board considered one case pursuant to section 58 of the Act and decided not to make an application to the High Court.

In relation to a case first considered in 2019, the High Court remitted the case back to the Board so that the Board could consider new information provided to the High Court. The High Court made an Interim Section 58 Order while this occurred. The Board re-considered the matter and decided that the additional material did not alter its original decision. The High Court made a continuing Section 58 Order in the case.

Section 53(1): Registration procured by fraud or misrepresentation

The Board considered one case pursuant to Section 53 (1) of the Act and removed the individual from the Register on the basis that they had procured registration by misrepresentation.

Section 79: Restoration to the Register following cancellation for fitness to practise reasons

The Board did not restore any such individuals to the Register.

IMI Alerts

IMI Alerts are an electronic means of communicating information between regulatory authorities about individuals whose right to practise their profession has been permanently or temporarily removed and restricted.

NMBI is required by law to issue an IMI Alert within three days of a nurse's or midwife's registration being cancelled or suspended or conditions being attached to a nurse's or midwife's registration as a result of a fitness to practise process. The majority of alerts came from UK regulatory authorities, with a significant number relating to nurses and midwives. These are checked against the NMBI registration database to identify any individuals who are, or who were, registered with NMBI or who have applied to register with NMBI.

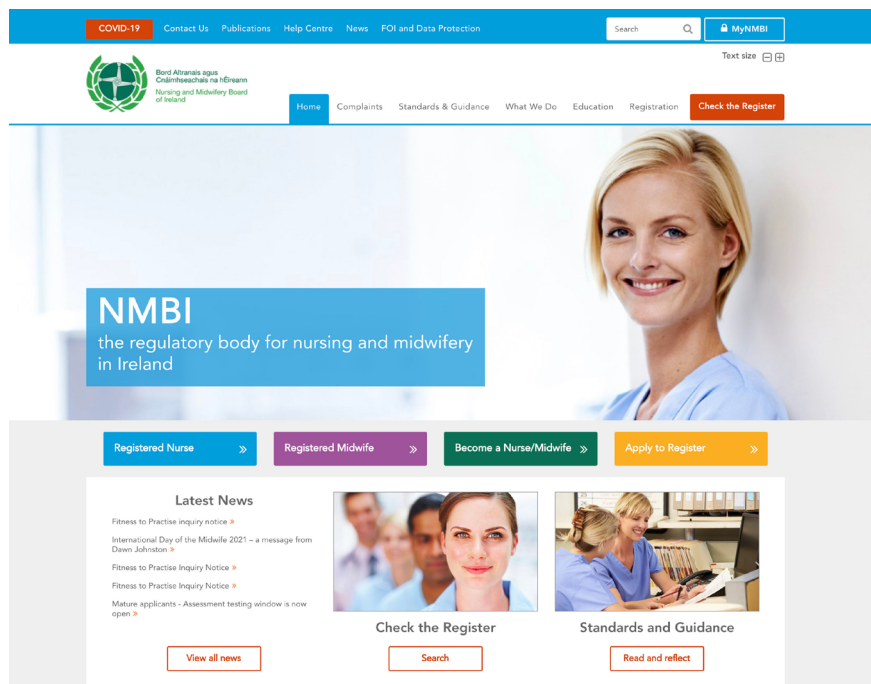
NMBI received 2,642 alerts through the IMI system in 2020 and 23 registrants were identified on the NMBI registration system based on these alerts. Those identified either were not registered or had an incomplete application closed.

Online inquiry solutions were identified and tested, and during the course of the year more than 20 inquiries were held either online or onsite.

Colm O'Leary
Director of Regulation and Fitness to Practise

Publication

Details of individual cases are published on the website of NMBI at www.nmbi.ie.





06

**Education, Training
and Standards**

Education

As the regulator NMBI has a remit to promote high standards of education for nursing and midwifery students and further education for registrants through recognised courses and training.

Our education approval process remained focused in 2020 with our guiding principles centred on:

- setting and monitoring of educational standards and requirements for pre-registration and post-registration courses
- inspecting and approving the HEIs, hospitals and healthcare institutions (AHCPs) providing training to ensure that valuable clinical and theoretical experience is provided.

Standards and requirements for nurse and midwife registration education programmes

The standards and requirements for nurse and midwife pre-registration programmes, which were approved in 2016, were reviewed in 2020. The NMBI carried out a consultation process focused on streamlining the standards for compatibility with a new digitised system for the education function of NMBI.

This included a review of the indicators of standards for approval of programmes, the HEIs and the AHCPs. This review was complemented with a gap analysis of the current policies and procedures and legislative requirements of the education function.

A number of workstreams have emerged from these reviews which will culminate in 2021 in a more streamlined, user-friendly and searchable database of the education function associated with the approval of pre-registration, post-registration and specialist education programme processes.

A number of functions including monitoring and approval processes, reporting and publishing site inspections, selection of site inspection teams, and consultation with the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science have been reviewed in detail with a view to the Board agreeing revised processes.

Other standards and requirements documents published in 2020 include:

- *Guidance for Registered Nurses and Midwives on Medication Administration, 2nd Edition*
- *Nurse Authority to Refer for Radiological Procedures, Standards and Requirements, 2nd Edition*
- *Return to Midwifery Practice Standards and Requirements*
- *National Clinical Learning Environment Audit Tool, Short Placement Edition*

With a view towards digitisation, we commenced a review of our education policies and procedures, and standards and requirements

Dr Anne-Marie Ryan
Director of Professional Standards, Nursing

Other standards and requirements documents developed in 2020 and being progressed towards final approval include:

- *Intellectual Disability Post-registration Nurse Programme Standards and Requirements*, 1st Edition 2020 (being prepared for publication)
- Update to the *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives* to incorporate recent legislative changes (being prepared for publication)
- *National Quality Clinical Learning Environment Audit Tool, Professional Guidance Document* (2020)
- *Guidelines on the Clinical Learning Environment Audit Tool*
- *Post-registration Specialist Nursing and Midwifery Education Programmes, Standards and Requirements* (being prepared for publication)
- *Return to Nursing Practice Courses, Standards and Requirements*, 2nd Edition, (consultation conducted)
- *Standards and Requirements for Education Programmes for Nurses and Midwives with Prescriptive Authority*, 2nd Edition (consultation conducted)

Covid-19 response

In partnership with the HEIs, the HSE and the Office of the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) at the Department of Health, NMBI responded to the challenges which emerged for the delivery of the education programmes to student nurses and midwives. Clinical placements for first, second and third-Year undergraduate students were suspended by the HSE from April until the end of August 2020.

Covid-19 required us to adapt and to rethink our site inspections.

Dr Anne-Marie Ryan
Director of Professional Standards, Nursing

A number of positions and papers were considered by the Board and three statements of interpretation and guidance to education providers were developed and issued to assist student nurses and student midwives achieve the required learning outcomes while acknowledging the challenges of learning and working in a pandemic.

Site inspections to healthcare institutions and linked third-level institutions

NMBI is required to monitor compliance with nursing and midwifery education and training standards at least once every five years. NMBI carries out site inspections to HEIs and healthcare institutions to ensure ongoing compliance with and monitoring of adherence to the standards of nursing and midwifery education and practice. The focus of inspections is to assess that all statutory and regulatory requirements of NMBI and the European Directives (where appropriate) are met.



NMBI responded to the pandemic in this instance by establishing protocols for virtual site inspections and carried out a virtual site inspection of DCU, meeting with the associated healthcare agencies for programmes in General Nursing, Integrated Children's and General Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing and Intellectual Disability Nursing. Site inspectors for the DCU virtual inspection were selected from a panel established in 2019 and chosen to reflect the relevant disciplines. They were accompanied by officers of the NMBI.

All student midwives completing fourth year gained the required experience and were able to qualify in August 2020.

Dawn Johnston
Director of Professional Standards, Midwifery

Post-registration courses

NMBI approves post-registration education courses for nurses and midwives based on criteria divided into three categories:

Post-registration Category 1 courses

In 2020, NMBI approved 869 (813 in nursing and 56 in midwifery) Category 1 courses. These short programmes (less than 35 hours) are considered central to the continued development and maintenance of knowledge, skills and competencies for nursing and midwifery practice within a rapidly changing health care environment. These included:

- in-service education
- seminars
- study days
- conferences
- continuing professional development (CPD) programmes (which are not accredited by an academic awarding body, university or college).

Post-registration Category 2 courses (specialist programmes)

These courses are specialist education courses for nurses and midwives which support practice development and service need. Category 2 programmes are QQI major awards at level 8 and above. Courses leading to registration are not included. These courses are considered by the Education, Training and Standards Committee. These courses must satisfy the criteria set out in the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (2015) *Requirements and Standards and Requirements for Post-Registration Nursing and Midwifery Education Programmes – Incorporating the National Framework of Qualifications (First Edition)*.

Nine HEIs submitted a variety of programme from single modules through to master's degree awards in areas which support specialist areas of practice within a flexible education framework. This framework enables nurses and midwives to incrementally work towards achieving a major award.

Courses available to registrants include:

HEI	Course title
GMIT	Certificate in Acute Medicine Nursing
ITT	Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate Professional Nursing
NUIG	Master of Science /Postgraduate Diploma (Obesity)
RCSI	<p>Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate Nursing care of the surgical patient</p> <p>Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma/Certificate in Nursing in the following specialist areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Nursing • Coronary Care Nursing • Perioperative Children's Nursing • Perioperative Nursing • Nursing - Critical Care Nursing • Neuroscience Nursing • Gerontological Nursing • Renal Nursing • Cancer Nursing • Ear, Nose and Throat Nursing • Ophthalmic Nursing • Respiratory Care in Nursing Practice • Wound Management and Tissue Viability • Orthopaedic Nursing • Infection Prevention Control Nursing
TCD	<p>Master of Science in Mental Health</p> <p>Master of Science in Mental Health – Psychosocial Intervention</p> <p>Master of Science Mental Health – Child, Adolescent and Family</p> <p>Master of Science in Dementia</p> <p>Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma/Certificate in Specialist Nursing in the following specialist areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiovascular Nursing • Emergency Department Nursing • Gerontological Nursing • Haematology and Cancer Care Nursing • Orthopaedic Nursing • Perioperative Nursing • Renal Nursing • Intensive Care Nursing
UCC	<p>Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate in Older Person Rehabilitation</p> <p>Postgraduate Studies in Older Person Rehabilitation (Continuous Professional Development Modules)</p> <p>Master of Science in Midwifery</p> <p>Postgraduate Certificate in Health Protection</p> <p>Stand-alone modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute and Chronic Wound Care for Healthcare Professionals • Diabetes Management • Physical Assessment for Nursing Practice • Complementary Therapies in Healthcare • Prescriptive Authority for Ionising Radiation (X-ray) • Decision Making and Advanced Practice Professional Roles • Leadership, Quality Improvement and Governance for Advanced Clinical Practice

continued

HEI	Course title
UCD	Graduate Diploma in Critical Care (Children) Graduate Diploma in Dermatology/Graduate Certificate in Dermatology Nursing Master of Science/Graduate Diploma/Graduate Certificate in Gerontological Nursing Professional Certificate in Referring for Radiological Procedures Graduate Diploma in Perioperative Nursing
UL	Master of Science/Graduate Diploma in Nursing (Older Person) Professional Doctorate in Healthcare Practice Master of Science Nursing Palliative Care

Post-registration courses leading to an additional registration

These are courses that, when successfully completed, entitle the nurse or midwife to registration in an additional division of the Register such as:

- Public Health Nursing Division
- Nurse or Midwife Tutor Division
- Advanced Nurse or Midwife Practitioner Division
- Registered Nurse or Midwife Prescriber Division
- Children's Division
- Psychiatric Division
- Midwives Division

In 2020, the NMBI Education Department approved 10 courses in Children's Division, Advanced Nurse/Midwife Practitioner Division and Registered Nurse Prescriber Division as follows:

HEI	Course title
Dublin City University	Higher Diploma in Children's Nursing
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Certificate in Nursing/Midwifery Medicinal Product Prescribing
National University of Ireland Galway	Certificate in Nursing (Nurse/Midwife Prescribing)
Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITT) leading the consortium of the following HEIs for delivery and coordination of the programme: Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)	Master of Science in Advanced Practice, (Nursing) Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Practice, (Nursing) Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Practice, (Nursing) Certificate in Medicinal Product Prescribing, (Nursing)

continued

HEI	Course title
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland University of Medicine and Sciences	Master of Science Advanced Practice Nursing Master of Science Advanced Practice Nursing with Prescribing of Medicinal Products Postgraduate Certificate Advanced Practice Nursing Postgraduate Diploma Advanced Practice Nursing with Prescribing of Medicinal Products
Trinity College Dublin	Professional Certificate in Nurse/Midwife Prescribing of Medicinal Products
University College Cork	Certificate in Nursing (Nurse/Midwife Prescribing)
University College Dublin	Higher Diploma in Children's Nursing Professional Diploma Prescription of Medication
Consortium, UCD/UCC/NUIG/TCD/UL	Master of Science in Advanced Practice (Nursing/Midwifery amendments to the MSc Nursing Advanced Practice)

Category 2 equivalence

The Board defines Category 2 courses as programmes that include a broad range of major award courses, excluding those leading to registration with the Board. Specialist programmes are post-registration programmes designed, developed, and conducted with reference to a specific body of knowledge and experience in an area of nursing and midwifery. The Board is required by the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011 under Section 85(6) to recognise post-registration nursing qualifications completed from another country. NMBI review equivalence of credentials acquired by nurses and midwives outside the Republic of Ireland. In 2020, NMBI reviewed 58 courses for Category 2 equivalence and 40 of these were accepted.

Verification of Category 2

NMBI also reviewed 154 courses for nurses who obtained a specialist qualification in Ireland. Of these, 129 applications met the criteria for equivalence to the agreed national policies.

Careers

Main functions of the NMBI Careers Centre

NMBI works with the HSE and other appropriate bodies to provide careers information on nursing and midwifery.

NMBI provides careers information to:

- those who are interested in becoming a nurse or a midwife such as Leaving Certificate students, post-Leaving Certificate students or mature applicants.
- registered nurses or registered midwives who are considering future career pathways that exist within the professions.
- relevant stakeholders who are involved in the education, training, support and counselling of these groups, such as lecturers, guidance counsellors, staff at healthcare agencies, healthcare service users and parents.

2020 was a most eventful year for midwifery, with a great deal of our focus centred on the impact on students of clinical practice allocations due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dawn Johnston
Director of Professional Standards, Midwifery

Careers information is provided through publication of the NMBI booklet *Nursing and Midwifery, A career for you*. NMBI hosts a Careers section on our website and takes part in regular stakeholder communication. The Careers Centre also manages the selection process for entry of mature applicants to nursing and midwifery programmes through the CAO.

The Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) of the HSE provides NMBI with €200,000 per annum to support the NMBI careers function. The arrangement to formalise the coordination, co-operation, and information exchange between NMBI and the HSE in the provision of careers information was formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding in 2020.

CAO applications for mature students

The Careers Centre is responsible for the ongoing management of mature applications to undergraduate nursing and midwifery programmes with the CAO. To be eligible to apply for a place on an undergraduate nursing or midwifery programme, mature applicants (aged 23 or over by January 1 of the year of application) must apply to the CAO and sit an assessment tests as set out in the *Nurses and Midwives (Education and Training) Rules 2018*.

The assessment tests include a verbal reasoning, a numerical reasoning and a job simulation test. Up to and including 2020, tests were provided by the Public Appointments Service (PAS) on behalf of NMBI. NMBI however began the process of procuring a new test provider in 2020 for use of a new service for the 2021 competition.

Due to Covid-19 it was not feasible to administer the tests at the PAS offices in 2020 and instead the tests were held remotely by the online assessment platform Sova from 30 April to 6 May 2020. Feedback received from Sova reported that the standards in 2020 were broadly in line with previous years.

Applications to nursing and midwifery programmes 2015-2020

The total number of places in pre-registration nursing and midwifery degree programmes for 2020 was increased by 153 to 1,985 (1,830 was the agreed amount but this was increased as a result of special measures introduced to respond to Covid-19). Applications statistics are supplied by the CAO at the end of each year. Analysis of this data was completed and the following trends noted:

1. Total applications to nursing and midwifery in 2020 were 9,789. This is an increase of 563 on 2019. It amounts to a 6% increase and it is the highest number of applications since the introduction of the degree programme in 2002.
2. The increase in total applications is primarily due to an increase in Standard Leaving Certificate applications to 8,113 (11%) which is also the highest number since 2002 (average 7,346).

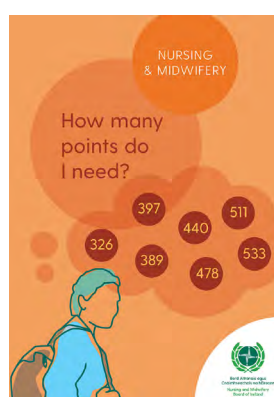
Attendance at the Irish Times Higher Options Careers Fair 2020



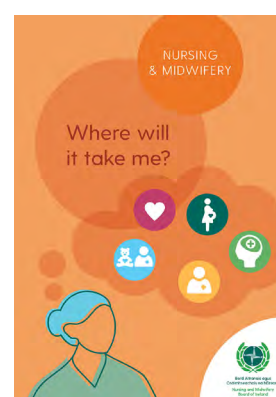
Nursing and Midwifery Careers Booklet



How do I get in? Eligibility criteria, standard applicants



How many points do I need?



Where will it take me?

NMBI, in partnership with the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Service Director (ONMSD), attended the Irish Times Higher Options fair with the aim of inspiring Ireland's next generation of nurses and midwives. Due to the pandemic the fair was hosted online. Live chat with more than 30 nursing and midwifery experts was provided to all students, guidance counsellors and teachers registered for the fair. It took place over two days from 1-6pm on Wednesday, 4 and Thursday, 5 November.

A panel discussion on nursing and midwifery careers was moderated by Carl O'Brien, Irish Times Education Correspondent and featured Aisling Khuwais, recent graduate and registered midwife in the National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street, Dublin; Kieran Johnson, recent graduate and registered general nurse (RGN) working on an acute medical ward in University Hospital Tralee; Gwen Regan, RGN, CNS Infection Prevention and Control Team/NMPDU Project Officer; and Lorraine Clarke-Bishop, RGN, Clinical Placement Coordinator, for the RCSI Louth Hospital group, based at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda and Chair of the NMBI's Education, Training and Standards Committee.

Provision of information on careers

The Careers Centre at NMBI is available to answer any queries via the email careersinformation@nmbi.ie.

In 2020 there were 688 email queries for career information, a 28% increase on 2019.

Professional guidance

Professional advice is provided by the Professional Advisor (Careers Centre) to stakeholders on receipt of emails to a dedicated email address professionalguidance@nmbi.ie. This email address is advertised through our professional framework the *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives* (NMBI, 2014) and the *Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework*, through our website. This information is maintained in a database for both quality purposes and for creating reports on specific practice matters that may inform future guidance provision within the Professional Standards Department.

NMBI has been supporting registrants and our stakeholders in the HSE on the many challenging practice matters arising during the Covid-19 emergency. NMBI has collaborated with the HSE, the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA), the Department of Health and the nursing and midwifery professions on a number of matters regarding scope of practice and ethical conduct. NMBI participated in a public consultation conducted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) on guidance for prescribers on foot of emergency amendments to medicines regulations. NMBI also assisted with the drafting of S.I. no. 698 in December 2020 to provide for the supply and administration of vaccines for Covid-19 by nurses and midwives.

Requests from the professions for guidance increased by 34% in 2020 with significant query levels in March, April, May and June during the first wave of the pandemic. A sample of the type of advice requested included:

- PPE
- Pronouncement of death by nurses
- CPR decision making by nurses
- Scope of practice and redeployment
- Chemical restraint and incapacitated patients with Covid-19
- Medicines regulations and electronic prescribing
- Medication protocols
- Vaccinations





07

Appendices

Appendix 1: Members of the NMBI Board 2020

The Board of NMBI is made up of 23 members set out as follows:

- 2 members of the academic staff, one at a University and the other at an Institute of Technology, and of whom one is a registered nurse and one a registered midwife
- one Director of Nursing or Director of Midwifery
- 8 registered nurses or registered midwives elected by registered nurses and registered midwives
- 7 persons put forward by the following: the Medical Council, the Health Service Executive, the Health and Social Care Professionals Council, the Health Information and Quality Authority and a third-level educational establishment which is involved in the education and training of nurses or midwives
- one person who is experienced in the provision of health or personal social care in the voluntary sector
- 5 persons selected by the Minister for Health using the PAS process for State bodies. (These people are not and never have been registered nurses or registered midwives in the State or in another jurisdiction.)

All Board members act in a non-executive capacity.

For details on our Board members, the Board meeting schedule and attendance during 2020, please refer to the Appendices.

We have eight committees. Four are statutory committees and four are advisory committees with specific responsibilities to support the activities of the Board in governing NMBI.

There were a number of Board changes in 2020. Eleven members' terms of office ended in 2020, with three of those terms being renewed following re-appointment/re-election. In addition, two members were elected by the professions to the Board for the first time, three members were appointed using the PAS process for State bodies and three members were put forward for appointment, two by the HSE and one to represent the Directors of Nursing/Midwifery.



Essene Cassidy
President



Louise Kavanagh McBride
Vice President



Mark Blake-Knox



Karen Canning



Lorraine Clarke-Bishop



Catherine Cocoman



Pat Dolan



Mary Gorman



Karen Greene



Liam Hamill



Martin Higgins



John Horan



Anne Horgan



Kilian McGrane



Eileen Kelly



Denise Lawler



Breda Liston



Kathleen Lombard



Dermot Manning



Liam Minihan



Denis Murphy



Colm O'Herlihy



Laura Sahm

Appendix 2: NMBI Board meetings 2020

The Board is required to meet four times per year.

Board members who do not attend a minimum of four Board meetings a year or who absent themselves from six consecutive meetings and/or six without the Board granting leave may be required to cease office. A member of the Board who does not attend a meeting of the Board for a consecutive period of 6 months ceases at the end of that period to hold office unless the member demonstrates to the Minister's satisfaction that the failure to attend was due to illness.

Special meetings of the Board are convened to consider certain fitness to practise matters, mostly Section 58 applications and no prima facie recommendations. Members of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee should not attend unless needed for a quorum.

For the purpose of determining attendance, each Board meeting day is counted as one attendance. The number of scheduled Board meeting days and special Board meetings are shown separately.

A members' attendance is the total number of meetings they attended - scheduled and special meetings combined.

Board member	Scheduled Board meetings	Additional and optional meetings	Special Board meetings	Member's attendance
Mark Blake-Knox	7	1	5	13
Karen Canning ^{1,3}	9	3	6	18
Essene Cassidy	10	3	6	19
Lorraine Clarke-Bishop ³	7	1	4	12
Catherine Cocoman	7	1	4	12
Pat Dolan ³	8	1	2	11
Mary Gorman ¹	6	1	-	7
Karen Greene ²	4	2	-	6
Liam Hamill	2	1	3	6
Martin Higgins ³	9	2	5	16
John Horan	9	2	8	19
Anne Horgan ¹	7	2	2	11
Louise Kavanagh McBride ³	6	2	2	10
Kilian McGrane ⁴	-	-	-	-
Eileen Kelly	7	-	2	9
Denise Lawler	6	2	3	11
Breda Liston ^{1,3}	9	2	3	14

continued

Board member	Scheduled Board meetings	Additional and optional meetings	Special Board meetings	Member's attendance
Kathleen Lombard	4	2	4	10
Dermot Manning ³	8	3	6	17
Liam Minihan ³	7	3	-	10
Denis Murphy ¹	6	2	1	9
Colm O'Herlihy	7	1	2	10
Laura Sahm ³	6	2	6	14

¹ Karen Greene, Denis Murphy, Breda Liston, Anne Horgan and Mary Gorman are members of the PPC. Unless required for a quorum, they should not attend meetings convened to consider S58 cases or special Board meetings convened to consider no prima facie recommendations from the PPC i.e. meetings on 9 January, 2 April, 8 April, 12 August, 23 September, 20 October, 19 November and 3 December.

² Karen Greene resigned from the Board in November 2020. Her resignation became effective from 25 November 2020.

³ The terms of office of the following Board members ended on 5 December, therefore, they did not attend the Board meeting on 15 December 2020, with the exception of Laura Sahm who attended with the agreement of the President: Liam Minihan, Dermot Manning, Pat Dolan, Martin Higgins, Breda Liston, Karen Canning, Laura Sahm, Louise Kavanagh McBride and Lorraine Clarke-Bishop.

⁴ Kilian McGrane resigned from the Board on 17 December 2019. His resignation was effective from the following Board meeting on 9 January 2020.

Appendix 3: Committee members and meetings 2020

Business, Strategy and Finance Committee

There were six meetings of the Business, Strategy and Finance in 2020.

Committee structure: Six members (six Board members and no non-Board members).

Chairperson: Kathleen Lombard

Member	Number of meetings
Essene Cassidy	6
Kathleen Lombard	6
Denis Murphy	6
Karen Canning	6
Pat Dolan	4
Louise Kavanagh McBride	2

Audit and Risk Committee

There were nine meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee in 2020.

Committee structure: Six members (three Board members and three non-Board members) – increased from five members in March 2020 (three Board members and two non-Board members).

The President is an ex officio member.

Chairperson: Martin Higgins

Member	Number of meetings
Martin Higgins	9
Denis Doherty	9
Margaret Campbell ¹	8
Mark Blake-Knox	8
Liam Minihan ²	2

¹ Margaret Campbell resigned from the committee in September 2020. Her last meeting was 8 September 2020.

² Liam Minihan was ill from March to May and was unable to attend meetings during this time.

Fitness to Practise Committee (2011)

There were 35 inquiry days and 6 call-over days in 2020.

Committee structure: 33 members (11 Board members and 22 non-Board members)

Chairperson: Denise Lawler

Member	Inquiry days	Call-over days	FTPC meetings
	35	6	1
Mark Blake-Knox	3	1	1
Karen Canning ¹	3	6	1
Lorraine Clarke-Bishop	1	-	1
Pat Dolan ¹	18	-	1
Liam Hamill	5	-	-
Eileen Kelly	10	1	-
Denise Lawler	1	4	1
Liam Minihan ¹	12	-	1
Colm O'Herlihy	11	-	-
Louise Kavanagh-McBride	3	1	-
Laura Sahm	2	-	1
Mary Barrett	9	-	1
James Buckley	10	2	1
Eileen Flynn	10	-	1
Richard Hammond	4	-	1
Mark Kane	4	2	1
Stephen Kealy	2	2	-
Jill Long	4	3	1
Shane McCarthy	8	2	1
Martin McNamara	-	-	-
Amanda Phelan	10	-	1
Emma Prendergast ²	-	1	-
Michele Monahan	-	-	1
Margaret Philbin	2	-	1
Triona Cowman	11	-	1
Valerie Beatty	4	1	1
Dermott Jewell	1	2	1
Ada Bradbury	11	2	1
Juliana Henry	2	-	-
Kathryn Muldoon	12	-	1
Sara Phelan	-	-	1
Cindy Mackie ³	-	-	-

¹ Karen Canning, Pat Dolan and Liam Minihan left the committee on 5 December 2020.

² Emma Prendergast left the committee on 22 September 2020.

³ Cindy Mackie left the committee on 29 January 2020.

Preliminary Proceedings Committee

There were 11 meetings of the Preliminary Proceedings Committee in 2020.

Committee structure: 11 members (5 Board members and 6 non-Board members)

Chairperson: Denis Murphy

Vice-Chairperson: Breda Liston

Member	Number of meetings
Denis Murphy	9
Breda Liston	10
Mary Gorman	8
Anne Horgan	8
Karen Greene	2
Deirdre Naughton	10
James Doorley	10
Timmy Frawley	11
Geraldine Feeney	10
Anne Sheehan	7
Brendan O'Dea	10

Registration Committee

There were six meetings of the Registration Committee in 2020.¹

Committee structure: Nine members (five Board members and four non-Board members).

Chairperson: Dermot Manning

Member	Number of meetings
Dermot Manning	6
Liam Hamill	2
Martin Higgins	4
Catrina Heffernan	3
Janet Wynne ²	3
Karen Clarke	3
John Horan	6
Catriona Molloy ³	-

¹ There were five scheduled meeting in 2020 and one additional meeting convened on 24 February 2020.

² Janet Wynne resigned from the committee on 31 October 2020.

³ Catriona Molloy resigned from the committee ahead of the April Board meeting.

Education, Training and Standards Committee

There were five meetings of the Education, Training and Standards Committee in 2020.

Committee structure: 11 members (6 Board members and 5 non-Board members)

Chairperson: Lorraine Clarke-Bishop

Member	Number of meetings
Lorraine Clarke-Bishop	4
Laura Sahm	4
Catherine Cocoman	4
Louise Kavanagh McBride	3
Dermot Manning	5
John Horan	5
Mary McDonnell Naughton	4
Barbara Kelly	4
JP Nolan	4
Aisling Culhane	3
Steve Pitman	4

Midwives Committee

There were four meetings of the Midwives Committee in 2020.

Committee structure: Eight members (three Board members and five non-Board members).

Chairperson: Denise Lawler

Member	Number of meetings
Denise Lawler	4
Mary Gorman	3
Breda Liston	3
Mark Skehan ¹	1
Gemma Gorman ¹	1
Deirdre Walsh ²	-
Clíodhna Grady ³	3
Lorraine Mulligan	4

¹ Mark Skehan and Gemma Gorman resigned from the committee in September 2020.

² Deirdre Walsh was on maternity leave from May 2020.

³ Clíodhna Grady replaced Deirdre Walsh.

More about NMBI

Further information about the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland is available on our website <https://www.nmbi.ie/Home>



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

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)

18/20 Carysfort Avenue | Blackrock | Co. Dublin | A94 R299

T +353(0)1 639 8500 www.nmbi.ie