



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

Public Consultation Report on Draft

STATEMENT OF STRATEGY 2017-2019



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March 2017

Introduction

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) is the regulatory body for the professions of nursing and midwifery in Ireland. We perform our functions in the public interest under the Nurses Act 1985 and the Nurses and Midwives Act, 2011. We have a statutory obligation to protect the integrity of the practice of the professions of nursing and midwifery and to protect the public. We do this by maintaining a Register of Nurses and Midwives and through the promotion of high standards of professional education, training and practice and professional conduct amongst nurses and midwives.

Our new Statement of Strategy is premised on our core vision, which is to provide leadership to registered nurses and midwives to deliver safe care through innovative and proactive professional regulation.

The consultation process

In October 2016, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland launched a public consultation seeking submissions, comments and feedback on its draft Statement of Strategy 2017-2019.

The draft Statement of Strategy was published on NMBI's website and was available to anyone who visited the site. Registrants, staff organisations, employers, managers, patient advocate groups and other key stakeholders were emailed directly to request participation. A copy of the draft Statement of Strategy and a link to an on-line consultation survey were included in the emails.

People participated in the consultation process in a number of ways:

1. By completing an online consultation survey
2. By answering the following question: "What would be the one thing you would like to see in the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland's Statement of Strategy?" or
3. By attending meetings and workshops to give feedback

Participation in the consultation process

NMBI would like to thank all those who took time to participate in the consultation process. Our final statement of strategy has been revised and amended to incorporate the invaluable feedback provided.

The remainder of this document provides an overview of participation in the consultation process and the themes that were identified through the feedback.

There were a total of 491 responses to the consultation, including 482 online survey responses and 9 email responses.

Source	Number of respondents*
Online survey	482
Email	9
Total	491

*Note: not all respondents answered all questions in the survey

Submissions were received on behalf of the following institutions and organisations:

- AIMS (Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services) Ireland
- Athlunkard House Nursing Home
- Dublin Academic Teaching Hospital's Directors of Nursing
- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Hillcrest House Nursing Home
- Irish Association of Directors of Nursing and Midwifery
- Irish Nursing and Midwifery Organisation (INMO)
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Marian House Holy Faith Convent, Glasnevin
- Melbourne Healthcare
- Midwifery Team, School of Nursing and Midwifery, NUI Galway
- National Rehabilitation Hospital
- Nursing Homes Ireland
- Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA)
- Registrants
- Retreat Nursing Home
- School of Nursing & Midwifery, University College Cork
- Services Industrial and Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU)
- Society of Jesus in Ireland
- St. James's Hospital, Dublin

Online Survey Feedback

The online survey was broken into two sections, with Section A focusing on respondent details and profile, and Section B on respondent views of the draft strategy.

Over 93% provided feedback in a personal capacity, with the remainder completing the survey on behalf of an institution or organization.

Question 1 of Section B asked: ‘What would be the one thing you would like to see in the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland’s Statement of Strategy?’. A range of responses were received and these are summarised in the Key Findings & Analysis discussion later in this document.

Respondents to the online survey were then asked in Question 2 if the explanation of the role of NMBI was clear and easy to understand. Over two thirds agreed it was.

2. Is the explanation of the role of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland clear and easy to understand?	Response %
Yes	68.3%
No	31.7%

Respondents to the online survey were asked in Question 3 if NMBI’s draft strategic priorities are appropriate in the context of the role and environment in which it is operating. Over half said yes to this question.

3. Do you think our strategic priorities are appropriate in the context of our role and the environment in which we are operating?	Response %
Yes	51.5%
No	48.5%

Respondents to the online survey were asked in Question 4 if NMBI’s draft strategy had omitted any area of importance. Over two thirds felt there were omissions, resulting in NMBI using the additional feedback from respondents to inform the final strategy document.

4. Do you think we have omitted any area of importance?	Response %
Yes	66.4%
No	33.6%

Question 5 asked respondents ‘What technological advances would you like to see in how we deliver our services?’. A range of responses were received and these are summarised in the Key Findings & Analysis discussion in the next section.

Key Findings & Analysis:

Themes identified through the feedback received are summarised below.

Provide more support and guidance to nurses and midwives in order to ensure public safety

Most respondents acknowledged NMBI's key role in the protection of the public. However, many respondents have suggested that while public safety is of crucial importance to all nurses and midwives, they must be supported in practice to provide safe patient care. Suggestions on how NMBI can achieve this included:

- Produce more comprehensive and accessible documents to support nurses and midwives at all levels to practise safely and responsibly.
- Engage with registrants in their areas of practise to identify areas where guidance or policy documents are required and make the Code of Conduct and Scope of Practice living documents.
- Work in partnership with third-level institutions and health care organisations to ensure appropriate continuing education/professional development programmes are developed and established.
- Support nurses through structured professional development.
- Be an advocate for the advancement and development of nursing and midwifery practice.
- Provide guidance for specialised areas within nursing and midwifery.

Improve communication with registrants

Many respondents acknowledged that NMBI wished to rebuild trust through open and transparent communication and suggested the followings ways of improving this with registrants:

- Modernise NMBI services to improve communication.
- Become more accessible to registrants.
- Increase personal contact and outreach with registrants to give more of a "face" to the organisation.
- Be more visible to frontline staff in its role as regulator and as a support to the professions.
- Be more transparent and open.
- Explain NMBI role more effectively to registrants and the public to highlight the difference between the functions of NMBI and that of professional associations.
- Use social media more to communicate with registrants.
- Development of an NMBI app.

Timely handling of registration applications

The majority of respondents want a faster and simpler registration process. Respondents suggested the following in order to make the application processes more efficient and transparent:

- Registration application forms to be made available for downloading.

- Introduce the facility to complete the application process online.
- Allow registrants to print annual registration certificates from the website.
- Provide more information regarding application timelines on the website.
- Key performance Indicators (KPIs) to be put in place regarding the application process.
- Provide clarity around timelines and decisions.

Accountability

To build trust between registrants and the organisation, respondents suggested that NMBI engage with stakeholders in a more transparent and open manner. Respondents suggested the following areas that NMBI could focus on:

- Clarity regarding Fitness to Practise (FTP) hearings and processes.
- Collaboration with other government bodies to tackle nurse and midwife shortages.
- Publication of Board reports, quarterly updates on Board activities on the website.
- Responsive in all areas of operations to answer any questions that registrants may have themselves.
- More transparency regarding NMBI expenditure.
- Accountability and governance relating to Board members and staff.
- Clarifying NMBI's self-funding model of regulation.

Relevance of the organisation to registrants

The value of NMBI was not apparent to many respondents, with a large cohort suggesting NMBI now has an opportunity to be more visible, accessible and to provide clarification around its role. This would ensure that all registrants can distinguish the role of the regulator from that of professional associations. Comprehensive open programmes of visits could help nurses and midwives begin to see the positive role played by NMBI, according to many respondents.

Fitness to practise and complaints handling

Many respondents felt that the complaints process was unclear and that there was little clarity around the number of complaints which progressed to fitness to practise hearings. Respondents felt that registrants were not informed of the status of a complaint in a timely manner and that little support or guidance was given in how to deal with complaints made against them. The following suggestions were made:

- There should be more employer responsibility when nurses and midwives work in unsafe practice environments which lead to complaints and FTP inquiries.
- NMBI should provide clarity around complaints and timelines of PPC and FTP hearings.
- There should be open and honest reporting of budget and of costs of FTP.
- Research should be conducted into reasons for complaints and analysis of complaints and shared on the website.
- The number of complaints received and the number of those that progress to FTP hearings should be published.

Professional competence and professional development

Respondents welcomed the introduction of mandatory monitoring of professional competence to ensure public safety and felt it should be introduced by NMBI as soon as possible with clear guidance for employers. Suggestions included:

- Instigate a professional competence scheme in a timely manner.
- Produce a clear statement regarding continuing education of nurses as a requirement for maintaining competency to assure the public and key stakeholders that the highest level of appropriate, evidenced-based care across all practice settings is being provided.
- Develop e-learning portfolio.
- Provide an online system for continuing education programmes.

Conclusion

NMBI would like to thank all those who took the time to participate in the consultation process. Our final Statement of Strategy has been revised and amended to incorporate the invaluable feedback provided.

Our vision is to provide leadership to registered nurses and midwives to deliver safe care through innovative and proactive professional regulation. The inclusion of your feedback in our Statement of Strategy has strengthened our ability to deliver on this.

The final NMBI Statement of Strategy 2017 – 2019 was approved by the NMBI Board in December 2016 and is now available on our website.

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