



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

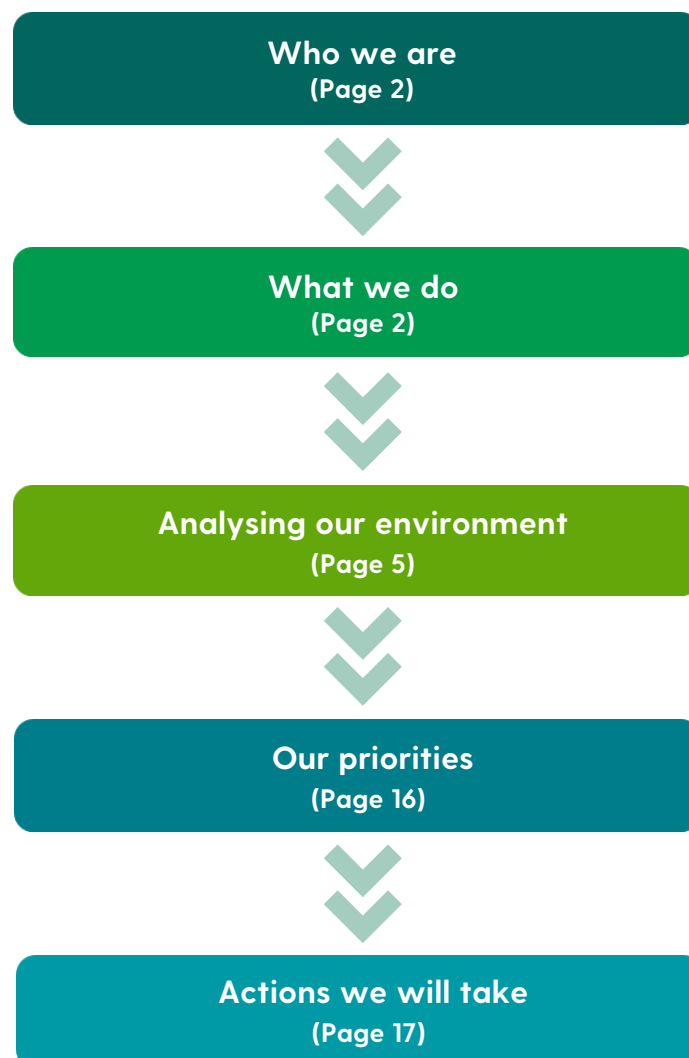
Consultation to inform NMBI's Statement of Strategy 2023-2025

Our process

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBl) is inviting members of the public to participate in an open consultation process which will inform the organisation's new strategy.

NMBl is in the process of developing its next strategy which will run from 2023 to 2025.

This document is structured as per the diagram below. We will tell you about the NMBl, who we are and what we do. We will analyse our environment to understand what is happening in the world of healthcare, nursing and midwifery, regulation and other environmental factors that NMBl has to take into account. We reflect on what our priorities should be over the next three years in this context and finally we propose what actions we will take to address these priorities.



Who we are



Figure 1: Who we are

We do this by:

- maintaining the Register of Nurses and Midwives
- promoting high standards of professional education, training and practise, and professional conduct amongst nurses and midwives
- investigating and considering complaints against nurses and midwives
- ensuring that we have an organisation which has the capacity and ability to deliver.

Our statutory activities

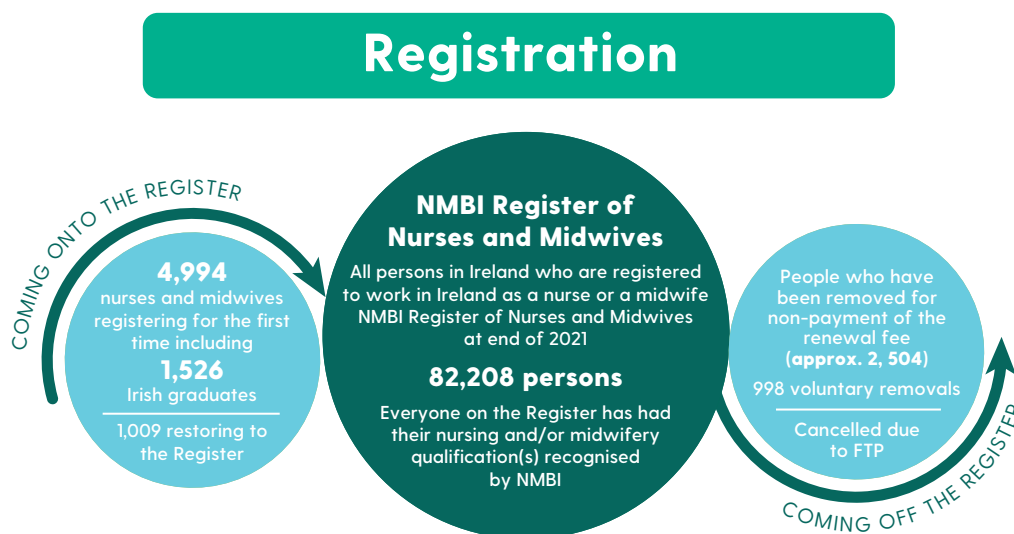


Figure 2: Registration overview 2021

Registrations by training location 2014-2021

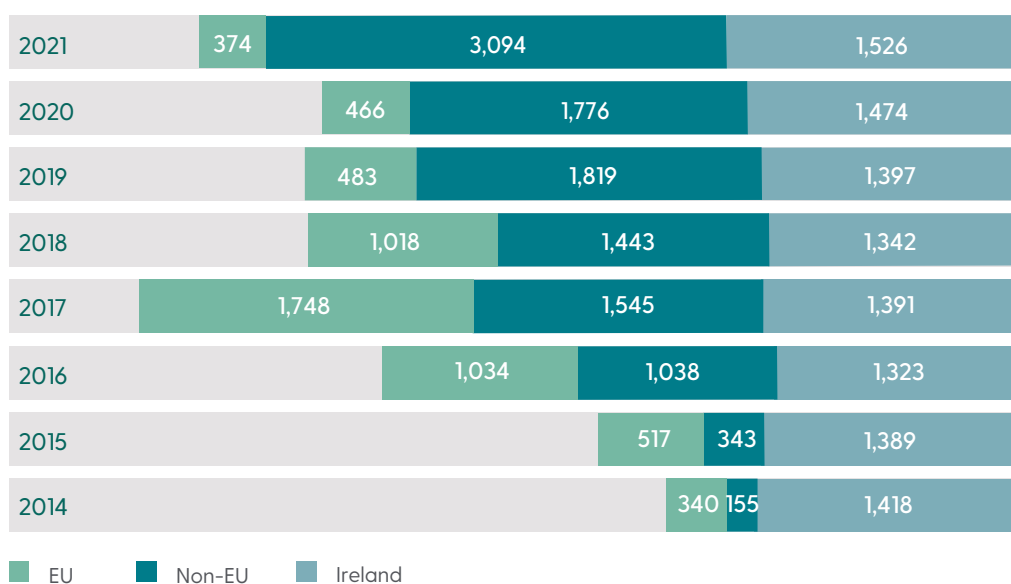


Figure 3: Registration trends 2021

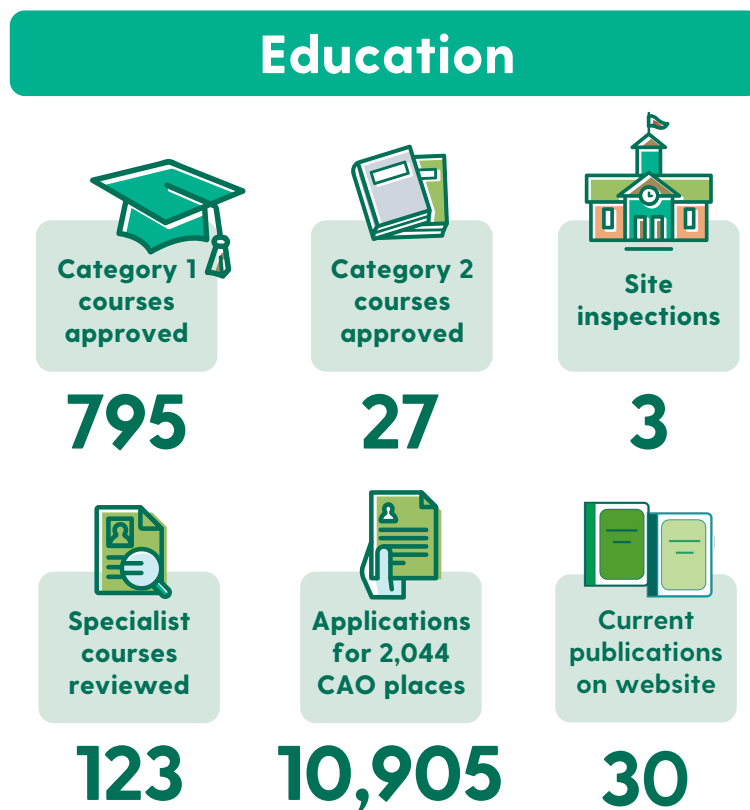


Figure 4: Education overview 2021

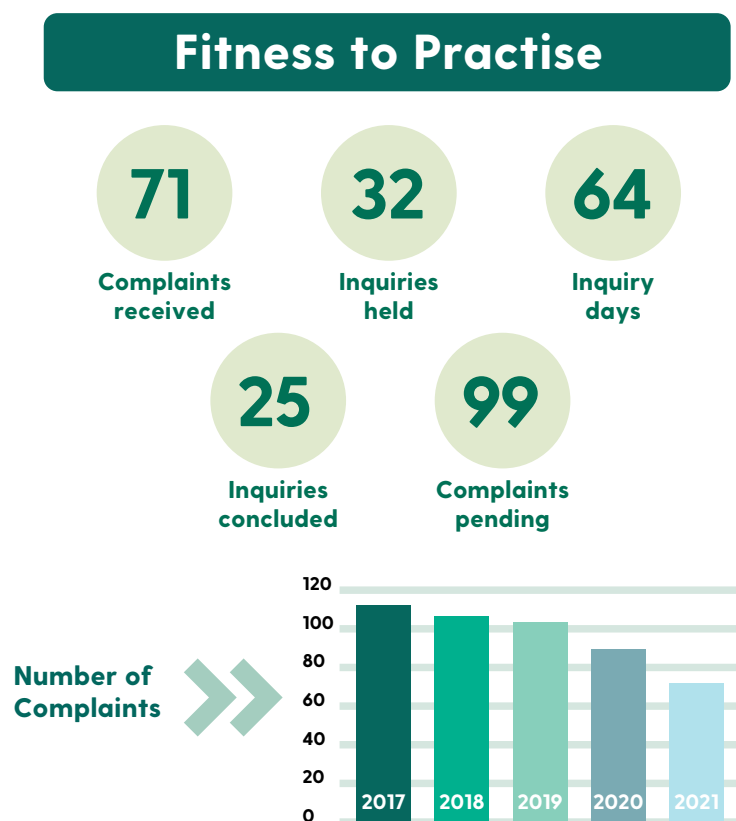


Figure 5: Fitness to Practise overview 2021

What is happening in our organisation and our environment

Context setting: What you, our research, observations and consultation with our stateholders has told us

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)'s long term strategic objectives are influenced and shaped by many factors and as such it is essential to explore the environment in which we currently operate to identify issues and plan how our regulatory model should respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. Through our research, analysis of our data and conversations with stakeholders we have identified a number of key areas and issues that have shaped the strategic priorities we have identified for 2023-2025.

We are one part of a system-wide approach to public safety

We do not work alone. We work collaboratively with many different partners including the Department of Health, employers, managers, unions, educators, other regulatory bodies, representatives of patients and service users, and of course our registrants. We are one part of a wider environment that is focused on ensuring the safety of patients.

Our strategy is shaped by this and in addressing our strategic priorities we will partner to deliver on them and amplify their impact.

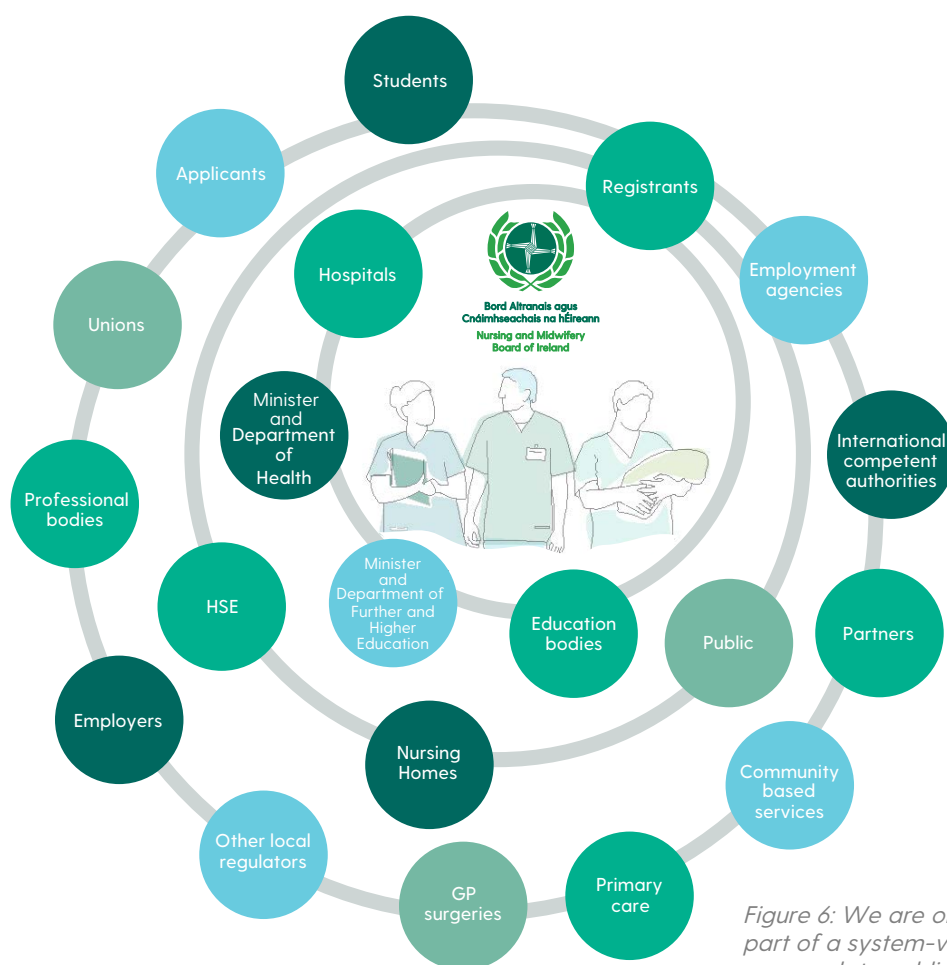


Figure 6: We are one part of a system-wide approach to public safety

Diversification of nursing and midwifery talent, the patient/service user population and care settings

Attracting, recruiting and retaining nursing and midwifery talent is critical not just to public safety but also to the wellbeing of our registrants. Lack of staff can make it difficult to practice safely and also increases burnout and attrition rates (Drennan, 2018).

In 2020 the European Commission estimated a shortfall of around 1 million health workers within the EU. The Department of Health have highlighted that emerging and accelerating global and regional shortages of healthcare professionals present a significant strategic risk to the effective functioning of the Irish health system. A shortfall in the health sector labour force is likely to be reflected in an increase in labour mobility and migration to meet growing demands in Ireland. In fact, we are seeing this trend rising already. The HSE has increased strategic recruitment of internationally qualified professionals and this has been reflected in the increasing number of applications received by NMBI.

The diagram (Figure 7) below depicts the numbers of nurses and midwives coming onto the NMBI Register in 2021. Nursing and midwifery programmes based in Ireland currently have the potential to see approximately 1,800 nurses and midwives graduating every year, with that number rising to 2,000 in the coming years. However, we also know that a growing number of undergraduate students are not completing their programmes of education and that approximately 90% of graduates join the Register post-graduation, with the remainder choosing not to pursue practice or to do so abroad. In 2021, 76% of new entrants to the NMBI Register came from abroad, with an 80:20 split non-EU to EU. Of those non-EU joiners, 90% come from India. This trend is set to continue to grow. As an agile regulator we need to respond and plan accordingly.

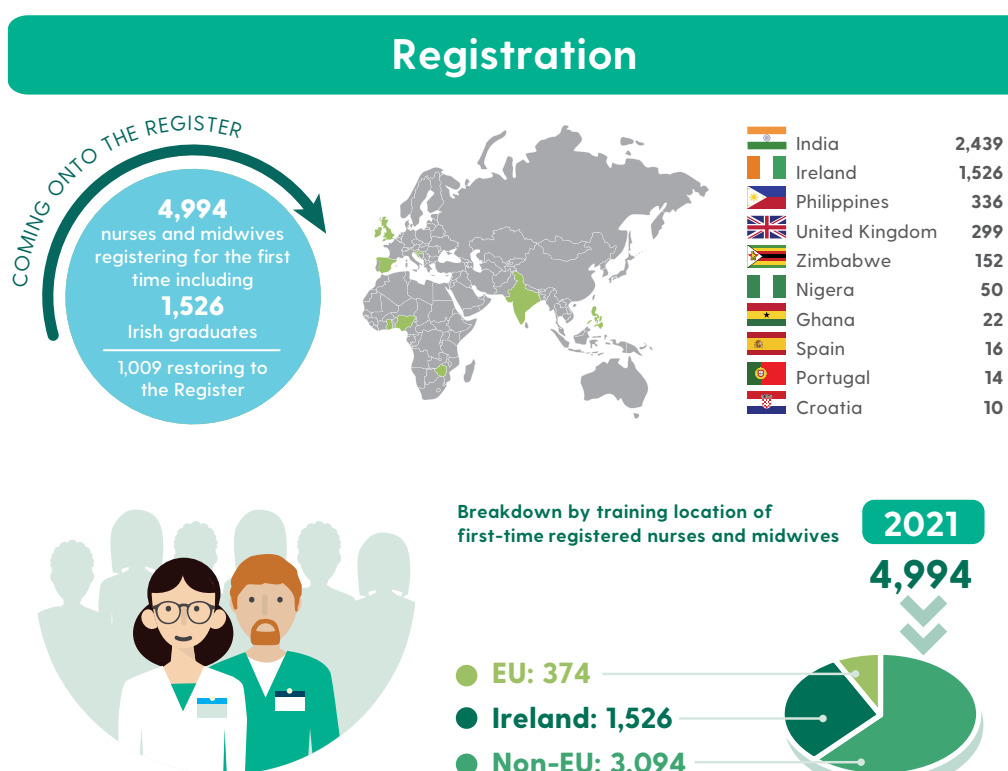


Figure 7: Registration demographics 2021

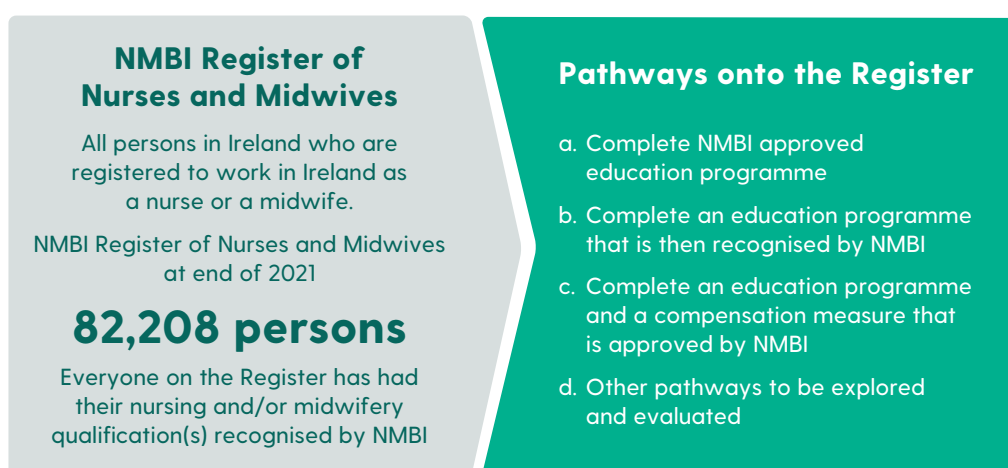


Figure 8: Pathways to registration

We need to ensure that our processes are accessible to international applicants, as well as local applicants. We need to ensure that we make it as straightforward as possible to apply and deliver timely decisions so that we can respond to workforce needs and Ireland can remain competitive in attracting talent from overseas.

We also need to work with our partners to further develop supports to allow migrant nurses and midwives to ease their transition into Ireland and the Irish healthcare system. It is important to enable them to accelerate through the learning curve and advance in their careers.

Just as our nursing and midwifery registrant population is becoming more diverse, so too is the wider population. The most recent Census data (2022)¹ tells us there was net inward migration of more than 190,000 since the 2016 census. With diversification of the population, health professionals will be expected to be culturally competent to ensure effective support for all patients and service users.

Our registrants are also working in an increasingly wide variety of settings including acute and community based, patient and non-patient facing, public and private, industry, academic and corporate settings. This diversity presents exciting opportunities for registrants but also challenges. As the regulator we need to ensure that our standards for education programmes, the distinctions between divisions on the Register and the guidance we provide better reflect this variety of practice settings and potential career paths.

¹ Census data (2022). Retrieved from <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpr/censusofpopulation2022-preliminaryresults/>



Figure 9: Where are our registrants working?

Health service models

Sláintecare is the Government's ten-year programme to transform our health and social care services. At its core is a community-based model of care and the strategic priority is the provision of an integrated health care model, with a focus on provision of early intervention/care through multi-disciplinary community-based teams.² Changes in the nature and context of services will influence future skills and competences required by health professionals.³

The shift towards provision of care in the community, an increased emphasis on multi-disciplinary working and shared team responsibility will likely see increased demand and evolving roles for health professionals. Professionals will be required to work across health and social care settings and support integrated models of care provision.⁴

The Government also has a ten-year National Maternity Strategy 'Creating A Better Future Together, 2016-2026', which maps out the future for maternity and neonatal care, to ensure that it will be safe, standardised, of high-quality and offer a better experience and more choice to women and their families.

People are living longer and modern life has become more stressful, and, in many ways, society is presented with more challenges and as a result the needs of patients and service users are becoming more complex (OECD, 2020). At the same time automation and the delegation of some tasks to Health Care Assistants (HCAs) means that a greater proportion of the time nursing and midwifery professionals is focused meeting the ever-increasing complexity of care. As the regulator we need to plan to support our registrants to work to the top of their license and flex their practice within their scope.

As the regulator we will need to work with our partners to ensure that our standards for education programmes are evolving to support this new model of care. A practical example of this would be increasing community-based practice placements on the undergraduate programme reflecting the fact that an increasing proportion of graduates will be practicing in these settings after graduation.

Crucially, this shift to a new model of care can only be enabled if professionals with the right skill knowledge and competencies are available where and when they are needed. This requires national and local strategic workforce planning. The gathering, analysis and dissemination of data (in line with good governance and data protection), to support public safety outcomes is receiving increased attention by regulators in recognition of its role to inform strategic workforce planning.⁵ NMBI is no different and we see that we have a huge opportunity to support a well-functioning health system by sharing data appropriately to support strategic workforce planning. A practical example of this is sharing analysis of the data on our Register. We can provide a view of not just numbers on divisions of the Register but also information on where they work and how many might retire in coming years, based on age profile. This information is invaluable as the health system tries to plan for and source talent.

² Committee on the Future of Healthcare Sláintecare Report. Retrieved from: <https://assets.gov.ie/22609/e68786c13e1b4d7daca89b495c506bb8.pdf>

³ European Commission. Health workforce. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/health/workforce/overview_en

⁴ Medical Council Statement of Strategy. Retrieved from: <https://www.medicalcouncil.ie/News-and-Publications/Reports/Medical-Council-Statement-of-Strategy-2019-2023.pdf>

⁵ Medical Workforce Intelligence Report. Retrieved from: <https://www.medicalcouncil.ie/News-and-Publications/Publications/Medical-Workforce-Intelligence-Report-2018-Annual-Retention.pdf>

Technology is also facilitating rapid change in health care models. Registrants will increasingly be required to be tech-savvy and able to use new technologies and data in an ethical, safe and responsible manner. Increased automation means that some tasks may become redundant in time, whilst new areas of practice may emerge. In addition, advances in the use of assistive technology and artificial intelligence are likely to influence future health and social care provision.⁶

A Digital Roadmap for Nursing and Midwifery (2019)⁷ has been developed to facilitate national engagement on what actions need to happen for nursing and midwifery and to initiate and progress strategic and policy decisions about information and digital technology in nursing and midwifery. The development of digital health capabilities to support nurses and midwives was seen as a key enabling factor towards building a digital workplace. To address this need for the nursing and midwifery workforce the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) initiated the project to develop a Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Capability Framework which was published in May 2022. As the regulator we will leverage these insights to inform our education programme standards and requirements.

Expert Review Body report

In March 2022, the Minister for Health published the 'Report of the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022 – A Pathway for developing and strengthening the role of the Nurse & Midwife'.

The terms of reference provided that the Expert Review Body 2022 (ERB, 2022) would conduct a general review of nursing and midwifery, embracing the full spectrum of issues relating to scope and role, structure, operational flexibilities, management responsibilities, professional development and other measures designed to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery in an integrated way.

NMBI made a detailed submission to the Expert Review Body. The final report makes 47 recommendations overall and NMBI has a named role in addressing 12 of these, in partnership with other stakeholders in the health services.

We are delighted to have had an opportunity to input to the Expert Review Body and the resulting recommendations are very much in line with our regulatory policies and thinking. We look forward to implementing them, in conjunction with our partners, as part of the Statement of Strategy 2023-2025. The partnership approach to implementation is crucial in that it will strengthen the impact and adoption of the recommendations.

⁶ Share, P. & Pender, J. Preparing for a Robot Future? Social Professions, Social Robotics and the Challenges Ahead Retrieved from <https://arrow.dit.ie/ijass/vol18/iss1/4/>

⁷ Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director. (2019). Digital Roadmap for Nursing and Midwifery 2019 - 2024. Retrieved from <https://healthservice.hse.ie/filelibrary/onmsd/digital-roadmap-for-nursing-midwifery-2019-2024.pdf>

Workforce	Education	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HSE, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and higher Education Institutions (HEI) to review access and capacity of undergraduate education with a plan to increase undergraduate student numbers in each of the disciplines annually in line with the projected workforce demands. It is recognised that the projected increase in nursing and midwifery student numbers will require planning in relation to academic, clinical staffing and placements resources as well as infrastructural resources. • The HSE and NMBI to develop a five-year strategy, supported by workforce intelligence data, for the retention of nurses and midwives in Ireland, with a particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Early graduate and early career nurses and midwives. – Nurses and midwives in the last decade of their career. – Professional mobility. – Workforce stability. • This strategy should also utilise and incorporate staff retention supports and tools such as professional development plans, performance reviews, clinical supervision, coaching, mentorship, staff wellbeing, access to continuing professional development and postgraduate education, and leadership support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Health, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), higher education institutions and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to review the routes of entry to undergraduate nursing and midwifery as part of increasing diversity of the nursing and midwifery workforce. • Higher Education Institutions, in partnership with the NMBI, to introduce Graduate Entry to Nursing (GEN) and Graduate Entry to Midwifery (GEM) programmes as part of the wider future health workforce planning process. • Higher education institutions, the Department of Health, the HSE and the NMBI, through a high-level working group, to review the undergraduate nursing and midwifery curricula in the context of Sláintecare, the introduction of the enhanced practice contract, and the future health needs of the population. This group should also align any revisions to the curricula to national health priorities as well as global issues (UN Sustainable Development Goals). This review should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leadership – Working within and across primary, community, and acute care settings. – Working effectively in interprofessional teams. – eHealth and technology-enhanced communication. – Social determinants of health. • Advanced physical and psychological assessment and interventions. • The NMBI, higher education institutions, the HSE (including Community Health Organisations) to expand the locations for undergraduate nursing and midwifery student clinical placements, particularly in community and primary care settings. In addition, to reflect the implementation of Sláintecare in the provision of integrated care, the time allocated to community placements for nursing and midwifery students should be increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland to review the Standards and Requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate level education programmes every five years to ensure that requirements are aligned with both national and global health priorities. • The NMBI to develop a plan for the undergraduate curriculum of psychiatric and intellectual disability nursing to meet European Union standards. • Higher education institutions, in partnership with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and the HSE, to develop and implement a variety of relevant and contemporary postgraduate education programmes in community nursing and general practice nursing. • The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and higher education institutions to review the options for conversion programmes for registered nurses and midwives to enable them to move between the disciplines and further intra-professional mobility.

Figure 10: Recommendations assigned to NMBI from the 'Report of the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022 - A Pathway for developing and strengthening the role of the Nurse & Midwife'

Note: Many of these recommendations will require projects and approaches extending beyond the lifetime of this statement of strategy and will require collaboration with stakeholders.

Regulatory trends

Internationally, right touch regulation, the concept of applying the minimum regulatory force required to achieve the desired result, is gaining traction. There is heightened awareness of the burden of regulation and the need to choose the appropriate and proportionate instrument for managing the risk. The principles that underpin a right-touch approach are that regulation is proportionate, consistent, targeted, accountable and adaptable.^{8, 9}

This approach is reflected in the EU Directive of the European Parliament that will require a proportionality test before the adoption of new regulation of professions by EU member states, the aim of which is to adopt a risk-based regulatory approach that ensures labour mobility and fairness to the applicant within the EU.¹⁰

We also need to ensure that we are responding to international trends in regulation and learning from best practice. For example, internationally, regulatory trends indicate that older professionals with qualifications gained outside the jurisdiction, whose first language is not that of the country of residence and who are practising in isolation are of most concern with regards to maintaining competence and/or being subject to complaint.^{11, 12} In response health profession regulators, have initiated approaches to support internationally qualified registrants to understand national, cultural, social, legal and professional aspects of practice.¹³

There is also an increasing emphasis internationally on preventing professional misconduct or poor professional performance through paying greater attention to educational standards, codes of conduct and ethics, continuing professional development, workforce development and better complaints systems to identify issues as early as possible. The aim is to address performance issues before they arise rather than dealing with them in the context of fitness to practise cases when the damage has already been done.^{14, 15} This is generally referred to as 'upstream regulation'. NMBI continues to commit itself to agile regulation and evolving its model of regulation in line with risk.

The NMBI must also consider changing trends in regulation from regulators in Ireland, EU and internationally. We have seen a move for regulation to become more adaptable to the broader health service changes. This can be seen in the appreciation of more eclectic approaches to undergraduate education, broader access to registration and a more comprehensive appreciation of advanced practice roles.

NMBI also needs to be prepared to look wider in relation to where our regulatory scope might best serve the public and engage in networking opportunities with other international healthcare regulators, to share insights from Ireland and gain a greater understanding of future directions for regulation globally.

⁸ Professional Standards Authority (2015). Right Touch Regulation. Retrieved from: https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/publications/thought-paper/right-touch-regulation-2015.pdf?sfvrsn=eaf77f20_18

⁹ The Challenges and Benefits of Risk-Based Regulation in Achieving Scheme Outcomes. Retrieved from: <https://www.actuaries.asn.au/Library/Events/ACS/2015/NichollsRegulation.pdf>

¹⁰ European Commission. Directive (EU) 2018/958 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 June 2018 on a proportionality test before adoption of new regulation of professions. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/958/oj>

¹¹ BMJ Quality and Safety. Identification of doctors at risk of recurrent complaints: a national study of healthcare complaints in Australia. Retrieved from: <https://qualitysafety.bmj.com/content/22/7/532.short>

¹² Australian Dental Journal. Complaints about dental practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/adj.12625>

¹³ General Medical Council. Increasing support for overseas doctors. Retrieved from: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/responsible-officer-hub/news/increasing-support-for-overseas-doctors>

¹⁴ Searle, R.H., Rice, C., McConnell, A.A. & Dawson, J. F. (2017). Bad apples? Bad barrels? Or bad cellars? Antecedents and processes of professional misconduct in UK Health and Social Care: Insights into sexual misconduct and dishonesty. Retrieved from: <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/publications/research-paper/antecedents-and-processes-of-professional-misconduct-in-uk-health-and-social-care.pdf?sfvrsn=8>

¹⁵ Professional Standards Authority (2017). Right-touch reform: A new framework for assurance of professions. Retrieved from: https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/publications/thought-paper/right-touch-reform-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=2e517320_5

Organisational sustainability and our funding model

To best serve our registrants and the public, NMBI as an organisation must operate effectively and be sustainable. We are very aware that we are a public sector body, primarily funded through Registrant fees. As such we take our responsibility to operate within our means very seriously. As our overall model of regulation evolves and specific strategies within that model are defined, we need to always ensure that our spending plans represent value for money, reflect the needs of nursing and midwifery practice in Ireland and further enhance the protection of the public in its dealings with nurses and midwives. We need to choose where we can be most impactful. We need to evolve in line with emerging risks and focus our attention accordingly. We should also stop doing things that are no longer necessary where risks have been reduced and are being managed.

Key considerations which have shaped our strategy

In the context of the above key considerations have emerged and they have shaped our strategy.

These are:

- There is a global shortage of nurses and midwives. At the same time there is a growing demand for nurses and midwives in the Irish healthcare system. Attracting, regulating, integrating and supporting nurses and midwives educated within and outside Ireland is integral to the delivery of health care in Ireland and safe patient outcomes.
- The models and settings of care in Ireland are evolving, the service needs of the population are becoming more complex, and technology is playing a larger role in care. The day-to-day work experiences and roles of our nursing and midwifery registrants is changing in line with this. Our education standards and guidance need to evolve to reflect this.
- Risk based regulation is regarded as best practice and we should align our resources and attention to where there is risk, or it is emerging.
- As the regulator we are one part of a system-wide approach to patient safety. Continued collaboration with our partners will be essential, as well as evolution of our contribution to the system. Technology is playing a greater role in regulation, in Ireland and internationally.
- The recommendations contained in the 'Report of the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022 – A Pathway for developing and strengthening the role of the Nurse & Midwife' will shape the evolution of nursing and midwifery professions and professional in Ireland.

Our Strategic Priorities

The key considerations identified above through our research, analysis of our data and conversations with stakeholders have shaped the strategic priorities we have identified for 2023-2025. Those priorities are set out below.



Actions we will take

Protecting

We will work to protect the public and our registrants by regulating nurses and midwives in Ireland. We will also work to support our people, including staff, Board members and committee members.

Key strategic actions

Ongoing

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain an accurate Register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set robust and appropriate education standards, approving programmes meeting those standards.• Extend and tailor our guidance. Guidance per division may also be required where specific risks emerge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage complaints efficiently and effectively.• Monitor our complaints process to understand if there are trends that we need to address. We will also collaborate with other stakeholders to conduct research to inform other regulatory interventions, e.g., communication campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support our staff, Board members and committee members, enabling their continuous development will help us deliver our ambitions.

New initiatives

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a particular focus on the support we provide to our overseas applicants and registrants, and those supporting them (including applicants, recruitment and employment agencies, employers and embassies). We will create a migrant nursing and midwifery hub, which will have both virtual and 'physical' components. (Ideas we will be evaluating will include support videos for applicants featuring registrants who have made the same journey, information events for employers, recruitment agencies etc, collaboration with third parties to create supports to acclimatise new registrants to the Irish healthcare system and culture.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERB 2022 - The NMBI to develop a plan for the undergraduate curriculum of psychiatric and intellectual disability nursing to meet European Union standards. • ERB 2022 - The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and higher education institutions to review the options for conversion programmes for registered nurses and midwives to enable them to move between the disciplines and further intra-professional mobility. • Extend the pilot of our new 'Managing the maintenance of professional competency' (MMPC) scheme to all registrants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other regulators and employers to understand context, policies, actions and behaviours that lead to harm. Our collective ability to 'connect the dots' across the entire life cycle of harm will broaden the breadth, depth and maturity we require of our stakeholder relationships. When our partners inform us of opportunities to reduce harm and we inform them, the overall system will be positively influenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our Board training plan recognises specific changes that have taken place in 2022 and changes which will take place in 2024, being aware of the Board's lifecycle. Long standing Board members, having reached the end of their term/s, will no longer be with us. Revamp the development approach for newer members to reflect insights gathered from exit interviews and Board research on how to support and enable more effective Board contribution and expedite the learning curve.

Actions we will take

Promoting

We will promote the professions of nursing and midwifery in Ireland to help attract and retain talent. We will also promote nursing and midwifery in Ireland as a career of choice and a career to stay in.

Key strategic actions

Ongoing

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with partners to make pathways between divisions as smooth as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make career information easily accessible and impactful.• Work with partners to make application pathways as smooth as possible and to positively differentiate Ireland as a career destination.• Ensure our standards for education programmes include leadership and collaborative decision-making emphases to support nurse and midwifery representation in decision making and leadership forums.• Encourage ongoing competency development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work to increase understanding of the role of the regulator in relation to our complaints process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work to promote the organisation so that we continue to attract more high-quality staff by offering dynamic, challenging and rewarding roles.

New initiatives

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct or contribute to independent research to understand factors which attract people to nursing and midwifery careers and those that cause them to leave. Understand what we can change as the regulator to continue to make nursing and midwifery careers attractive. Share insights with and influence stakeholders where factors are outside of our control. • ERB 2022 - The HSE and NMBI to develop a five-year strategy, supported by workforce intelligence data, for the retention of nurses and midwives in Ireland, with a particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Early graduate and early career nurses and midwives. – Nurses and midwives in the last decade of their career. – Professional mobility. – Workforce stability – Retention and support tools for staff. • ERB 2022 - The HSE, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and higher Education Institutions (HEI) to review access and capacity of undergraduate education with a plan to increase undergraduate student numbers in each of the disciplines annually in line with the projected workforce demands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our guidance covers new aspects of care as part of a multi-profession healthcare team and increased use of technology etc. • Find new and innovative ways to promote the role of our Code, standards and guidance in supporting nurses and midwives in their practice and their role in delivering safe patient outcomes. • ERB 2022 - The Department of Health, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), higher education institutions and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to review the routes of entry to undergraduate nursing and midwifery as part of increasing diversity of the nursing and midwifery workforce. • ERB 2022 - Higher Education Institutions, in partnership with the NMBI, to introduce Graduate Entry to Nursing (GEN) and Graduate Entry to Midwifery (GEM) programmes as part of the wider future health workforce planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to find new and better ways to promote the role of the regulator in relation to our complaints process and enhance understanding of what we do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and promote opportunities for staff, the Board and committee members to grow and advance our experience, capabilities and capacity as an organisation and those who take up these roles.

Actions we will take

Progressing

We will support the evolution and progression of the nursing and midwifery professions and professionals in Ireland. We will also work to progress our own organisation and the ways in which we operate.

Key strategic actions

Ongoing

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data from our Register in an open and appropriate manner to aid workforce planning and research. • Use our learning and insights to help registrants overcome any barriers they face in meeting our standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share learnings and best practice from our education site visits to assist other Higher Education Institutes. • Ensure our education standards reflect the practice settings and competencies required in the evolving Irish healthcare model and the variety of settings in which our registrants provide services including non-acute setting such as primary care centres, GP practices, and in people's homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share learnings to encourage best practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a progressive organisation with a strong focus on reflective learning we will continuously reflect on what we can learn or do differently or better next time. We will be solutions focussed when approaching all challenges big and small. • Hold lecture series and other events at which we will share data and provide a forum for conversation and collaboration about the future of the professions. • Invest in the skills required to deliver on our strategy. We will do this through an annual staff training plan and a 3-year Board training plan. • Continue to evolve our digital systems. • Continue to evolve within our existing legislation and how it is implemented, and plan for future changes in legislation with our stakeholders. To be an effective and agile regulator we have a dependence on our legislation allowing us to be such. • We will continue to embed aspects of our legislation that have been recently commenced, e.g., the humanitarian clause and three person inquiry panels. • We will work closely with the Department of Health to plan for enabling those aspects of our legislation that are not yet commenced, e.g., annotation. • We will also work closely with the Department and others to shape improvements to our legislative framework allowing us to be more effective, agile and to remain relevant to current and future risks to patient safety and supportive to our registrants.

New initiatives

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce barriers of entry to our Register, without compromising our standards. Make it as seamless as possible for an applicant to demonstrate how they meet those standards and for NMBI to validate that. • Encourage high quality new routes to the Register for people who can meet our standards to facilitate access to the Register. • Broaden and make more flexible, access pathways to our Register. Innovate ourselves and with partners, to understand how to expand routes and simplify the process in a manner that is scalable, risk appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the evolution of nursing and midwifery professions and professional in Ireland by developing an implementation plan and starting implementation of the recommendations contained in the "Report of the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022 – A Pathway for developing and strengthening the role of the Nurse & Midwife". (Details earlier in the document.) • ERB 2022 - Higher education institutions, the Department of Health, the HSE and the NMBI, through a high-level working group, to review the undergraduate nursing and midwifery curricula. • ERB 2022 - Review the standards and requirements for undergraduate programmes and practice placements settings to ensure we are preparing the next generation of nurses and midwives for the healthcare settings and models of care that they will find themselves working in. • Just as our registrant population is diverse, so too is the patient population. We will seek to leverage research and data to understand how any inequalities might be addressed. • Evolve our communication through the use of interactive platforms to ensure registrants can more easily understand the key elements of the standards and guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolve our complaints management processes, aiming to make the experience a more compassionate one for all and with resources and attention focussed on the greatest risks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – By moving to a more person-centred fitness to practise approach and using the provisions of our newly amended legislation, we intend to deal with less serious complaints at an earlier stage and use undertakings (a promise of action given by the nurse/midwife who is the subject of the complaint) and consents where appropriate. This will reduce the number of complaints progressing to inquiry which will subsequently reduce the wait time for registrants which has been unacceptably long. – Provide better assistance to registrants and witnesses involved in the inquiry process by providing phone-based support and more detailed information. – Support documents and aids will be simplified and enhanced. – Communication from and with the NMBI, whether face to face or in writing, will have an emphasis on compassion and empathising with the experience of all participants in the process. – Greater analysis of received complaints and the inquiry outcomes will be used to inform nursing and midwifery education programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to understand the impact of our work on people with different protected characteristics and work with others to understand how we can address inequalities identified. • Encouraging regulatory innovation by piloting new things more often. Where successful we will extend them. Where they do not go to plan, we will reflect, learn and move on. A risk that is addressed through information, support and reflective learning may reduce and then our time, attention and resources can move to other emerging or greater risks.

Continued

Registration	Education and Guidance	Fitness to Practise	Our Organisation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERB 2022 - Higher education institutions, in partnership with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland and the HSE, to develop and implement a variety of relevant and contemporary postgraduate education programmes in community nursing and general practice nursing. • Encourage and support our registrants and the health system to enable nurses and midwives to work to the top of their license maximising and furthering the role they play in the healthcare system. e.g., through use of annotation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Systematically investigate the impact of contextual factors in fitness to practise cases, while retaining a focus on individual professional accountability. This will help us achieve fairer outcomes and also inform our outreach programme. • Develop an outreach programme to inform and support registrants on emerging risks and provide insights from our complaints management processes. This programme will allow us to listen and scan for emerging risks. There will also be an education element to this to address unfair or inappropriate referrals to the NMBI from line managers, employers or other parties. 	

Legislation

As the regulator we work under the remit of our primary national legislation and EU Directive 2005/36/EC. We must also be aware of other legislation that may impact us as an agency of the Department of Health or our registrants who work in Ireland.

In 2020 we developed an implementation plan to address changes introduced through the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020. We continue work to embed changes introduced by this Act.

We actively participate in debate and discussion about any changes being considered for any update to the EU Directive 2005/36/EC.

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act was signed into law in December 2015. However, it is not yet fully commenced. The current plan is for full commencement in June 2022. We will keep a watching brief to understand how as a regulator, we may need to respond and support our registrants with this and any other legislative changes.

Powered by partnership

All of our actions will be powered by partnership. Partnering with our stakeholders to share insights and co-design for the benefit of service users and registrants.

- We will regularly listen and facilitate dialogue with our registrants, partners and other stakeholders in the healthcare system. We will do this by complementing our current outreach programme with an annual knowledge sharing conference and listening events around the country.
- We will make those platforms inclusive and open to all our partners.
- We will continue to participate and contribute in cross-stakeholder forums.
- We will continue to strive to be accessible to our partners and open to feedback and collaboration.

Implementing our strategy and measuring success

Throughout the lifecycle of this strategy, we will assess progress and publish it in our annual reports. This assessment will largely focus on activity-level information. It will be complemented by available analysis and stakeholder feedback, through engagement forums, to help us understand progress and context for each strategic theme. Success will be measured and monitored through a suite of key performance indicators aligned to each strategic priority.

Our priorities will be clear, understood and leave room to be flexible where necessary. All of our people will understand their role in delivering on these priorities.

We will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) best practice in our business plans and the delivery of them.

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