



NATIONAL NURSING & NURSING EDUCATION TASKFORCE (N³ET)

N³ET E-Update (No. 01/2006)

The National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce (N³ET) was announced in 2003. Following each meeting an E-Update is prepared and circulated to interested stakeholders. E-Updates are brief summaries of the key issues from each Taskforce meeting or other recent news/matters.

N³ET Work links to Productivity Commission Outcomes:

The final report on Australia's Health Workforce by the Productivity Commission has now been released (available at <http://www.pc.gov.au/study/healthworkforce/finalreport/index.html>) and includes recommendations that have far reaching implications for the health workforce and nursing and midwifery. Much of the direction and focus of the work presently being done to implement the recommendations from the National Review of Nursing Education by the Taskforce, Chief Nurses and others is consistent with the direction being proposed by the Commission.

In particular, the focus on national structures and processes underpinning many of the National Review Of Nursing Education recommendations are echoed in the Commission's final report, such as national consistent scope of practice (including for ENs and NPs) work that is progressed through the implementation of recommendations 4, 5 and 21.

Nursing and Midwifery Practice – scope and decision making

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) has commenced consultation on the **Framework for Decision Making by Nurses and Midwives on Scopes of Practice (National DMF)**. ANMC welcomes the input of nurses and midwives nationally, and N³ET is supporting this project and encourages all interested stakeholders to engage with the process.

The Productivity Commission report reinforces the need for health professionals to have a nationally consistent regulatory framework that provides for a flexible and responsive health workforce while still regulating dimensions of practice where this is warranted, in the public interest. It is important that nurses and midwives seize this timely opportunity and develop a national framework for making decisions about nursing and midwifery practice that is forward looking and positions nurses and midwives for the future.

The Taskforce holds the view that the framework should provide a structured and rigorous approach to making decisions about practice on a daily basis and should assist individuals, their employers, professional groups, consumers and workforce planners to safely plan and implement practice change to meet the changing needs of the Australian community.

The national DMF should be enabling and not restrictive, to maximise the potential of all nurses and midwives, including enrolled nurses to contribute to health service delivery and health outcomes. For example, this is an opportunity to question whether there is any evidence to support restrictions to enrolled nurses practice and to develop decision-making principles that apply across a range of settings and situations.

Further information about the project and dates for consultations each state/territory are on the ANMC website <http://www.anmc.org.au/>. Pre-reading packages for the forums are available from the ANMC website and include: [A Background Paper / Literature Review](#), [The Introduction to the Consultation](#), [The consultation document: Draft National Framework for Decision Making by Nurses and Midwives about Scopes of Practice](#). For more information about the forums in your state or territory, contact your Nursing and Midwifery Board, or contact ANMC on 02 6257 7960. If you are unable to attend a forum, but wish to comment on the draft framework, please complete the [feedback questionnaire](#).

Education Pathways to Nurse Practitioner (NP):

Many of the recommendations from the National Review of Nursing Education are inter-related and a number have elements that specifically relate to Nurse Practitioners. At present, a working group convened by the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (ANZ) are undertaking work on the specific pathways to nurse practitioner as part of a larger work plan about maximizing articulation pathways ([Recommendation 12](#)).

A recent mapping of NP education requirements in Australia by the National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce (N³ET) revealed that there is variation in the post registration educational qualifications required by various Nurse Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) for endorsement/recognition as a NP. The working group is therefore, using that mapping of differing regulation, minimum educational requirements and policies related to NPs and is examining how greater national consistency can be achieved through the development of national principles to guide decisions about the minimum education level.

The working group includes representatives from higher education sector, government, nurse regulatory authorities, NPs and N³ET. N³ET is scheduled to report to Ministers on all the Recommendation 12 Working Groups in 2006.

Image of nursing and midwifery – Media and Communication Principles (Recommendation 9)

In late 2005, a round of consultation was conducted through the different state and territory nursing Education and Workforce Forums aimed at developing a set of communication principles related to how nursing and midwifery should be portrayed, as a logical starting point and underpinning for marketing programs and communications material.



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The final report has been completed and includes a summary of the consultation process used as well as the proposed communication principles. The Taskforce is currently reviewing the report and developing strategies to communicate the principles to those stakeholders with responsibility for developing or commissioning media and communications materials, such as careers advisors, education and training providers, employers and recruiters, health workforce planners and nursing and midwifery professional groups.

N3ET is currently collaborating with Chief Nurses and Graduate Careers Australia to develop career industry profiles for nursing and midwifery, and the Media and Communication Principles provide a sound foundation for this work.

For more information (including previous E-Updates) on N³ET, go to
<http://www.nnnet.gov.au/>

*Have you registered as a Stakeholder yet?
If not, go to the N3ET website and follow the links to **Stakeholder registration**.*