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To:  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Subject: Fw: ATTN: Chair Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia

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Dear Anne

Firstly congratulations to the board on getting together such a comprehensive paper in such a short time frame of convening the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia.

I am encouraged to see the inclusion of the Proposal for endorsements for areas of practice and scheduled medicines in this paper as I am sure you are aware of how key this is to Queensland's current registration and endorsement framework and the advanced extended scope of practice of sexual and reproductive health RN in QLD. Over the last 10 years this framework in conjunction with the extensive collaboration between QLD Health Griffith University and Family Planning QLD has allowed the development of quality education to prepare RN to work within this capacity and ongoing quality improvement of standardised evidence based guidelines for practice to support RNs working in this specialty practice area.

This advanced extended role has also been a major component in QLD strategy to address the sexual and reproductive health needs of the QLD population especially for those living in regional and remote areas with minimal access to medical officers and other services with the skill and awareness necessary to work within this area. The DTP-SRH program endorsement has allowed the development of RN lead sexual health services that meets the needs of these isolated communities and other identified sexually vulnerable populations that do not access mainstream health care services while assisting to address the public health concerns of continued increases in the incidence of sexually transmissible infections such as HIV, infectious syphilis and chlamydia.

While I recognise that many RNs practicing in sexual health in other states may also have the knowledge, skills and competence to practice at an advanced role, I propose that the continued provision of the DTP-SRH program endorsement in some format to a nationally recognised endorsement would provide a vital strategy in addressing the sexual and reproductive health needs of the Australian community and provide an exciting opportunity for RNs throughout Australia to continue to expand their professional role and scope of practice.

While excited to see the provision for the development of an endorsement option within the National framework with the ability of nurse with opportunity for existing endorsements to transition to a single national endorsement my concern is as DTP-SRH program endorsed RNs in QLD are considered the primary entry point for many people into sexual health services and in some instances are the sole providers of sexual health care in their location of practice how this transition will occur with minimal impact on client services. Especially as it states in the discussion paper that it may not be practical to have the endorsement issues finalised by the 1st July 2010.

Therefore I am seeking clarification in relation to:

1. The structure of this proposed endorsement
2. How this transition will occur
3. Will RN with QLD DTP endorsements need to do additional education and professional development to transition - For example many SRH RNs in QLD are PG Certificate / masters level prepared in the specialty area of SRH as part of gaining their DTP-SRH program endorsement
4. Impact on current extended advanced role of RNs who currently hold DTP endorsement in QLD
5. Can they continue to practice to this scope come 1st July if not included with the role out of the national registration 1st July.
6. What educational framework will be approved as the mechanism of gaining the national endorsement and the time frames needed to develop these
7. Impact on current education programs and providers in QLD
8. Will there be a need to change local State Drugs and Poisons Regulations to support this change

I acknowledge that many of these concerns are important and specific to RNs and services in QLD and may have already been considered by the Board but I am keen to keep abreast with the developments in relation to this issue as I envisage that part of preparing for the change in QLD for SRH RNs will be part of my role and responsibility as the State Nurse Educator for Sexual health Services.

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the discussion paper and I look forward to future correspondence in relation to this matter

Kind regards

Judith Dean  
State Nurse Educator, Sexual Health Services

Queensland