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## **Public consultation paper on international criminal history checks**

Australian College of Nursing is pleased to provide the following comment in relation to the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) public consultation paper *Public consultation paper on international criminal history checks*. On July 1, 2012, Royal College of Nursing, Australia and The College of Nursing unified to become the Australian College of Nursing.

Australian College of Nursing (ACN) believes that the criminal history of health professionals seeking to work in Australia is a public safety issue of central importance. It is our view that each of the Options presented have some issues but of those outlined within the consultation paper, we are in support of *Option 2* that requires all internationally qualified applicants to provide criminal clearance certificates with their application.

Contributing to this view is the requirement that Australian applicants have a criminal history clearance as part of their application processing. ACN's view is that the same standard should also be applied to international applicants seeking to work in Australia and that criminal history checking should not be left to random audit.

It is noted that the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia currently requires an international applicant to provide a statutory declaration to attest that they have no criminal history that would preclude them from practice in Australia. While in support of *Option 2*, it is noted that the the consultation paper does not provide adequate evidence relating to the effectiveness of these current requirements. An assessment of the current situation would perhaps assist in reaching a definitive answer.

It is also noted in the paper that currently not all classes of Visa require a criminal clearance. As an alternative, we suggest the option of AHPRA negotiating with Department of Immigration and Citizenship to have criminal clearance checks included as a mandatory requirement in all relevant visa classes.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely



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Australian College of Nursing  
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