

Media release

1 June 2011

Nurses and midwives urged to renew before registration lapses

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) today urged nurses and midwives whose registration expired on 31 May to apply to renew immediately if they have not already done so and want to keep practising.

Board Chair Anne Copeland said over 91 percent of the 210,000 nurses and midwives due to renew by 31 May 2011 had renewed or lodged an application which under the National Law means they can keep practising.

“It is fantastic that a large number of nurses and midwives due to renew by 31 May have successfully renewed – but anyone who has not and who wants to keep practising must apply now or risk having their registration lapse,” Ms Copeland said.

Under the National Law, nurses and midwives whose registration is due on 31 May remain registered until 30 June, but after that the registration of anyone who has not renewed lapses.

“I urge everyone yet to renew registration to act quickly and suggest to employers that they confirm their workforce has renewed registration by signing up to the special employer online services at www.ahpra.gov.au,” Ms Copeland said.

In the past, 5 – 10% of nurses and midwives did not renew their registration on time each year. Some of these deliberately opted out of registration and a smaller number intended to renew but did not.

“We have worked hard to try to make sure that the only practitioners who do not renew on time are those who have made a decision to opt out,” AHPRA CEO Martin Fletcher said. “AHPRA is working closely with employers, professional associations and health departments to remind practitioners to renew if they want to keep practising.”

Renewing online is fast and efficient as the process is straightforward if no adverse declarations are made.

AHPRA and the Board were pleased that more than 80 percent of nurses and midwives had supplied the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency with their email address, so they can receive regular and direct communication from AHPRA and the National Board, Ms Copeland said.

She said support received already from employers, member organisations and other stakeholders in promoting the ‘Renew online – Register on time’ message had helped boost online renewals.

Nurses and midwives can check their registration expiry date on the National Registers of Nurses and Midwives, published online at www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au. The best way to search the registers is by name and profession.

Ms Copeland said health practitioners in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme were responsible for renewing their registration on time. Under the National Law, health practitioners who do not renew registration within one month of their registration expiry date must be removed from the National Register of Practitioners. Their registration will lapse and they will not be able to practise their profession in Australia until a new application for registration is approved.

“Neither the National Board nor AHPRA have any discretion about this so our advice to the professions is renew online now and don’t let your registration lapse,” Ms Copeland said.

Background

There are some simple steps nurses and midwives can follow for straightforward renewal of registration:

1. **Check your contact details** – make sure your contact details supplied to AHPRA, including email and mobile telephone, are correct and current. This will allow AHPRA to send you future renewal reminders and to contact you easily
2. **Check your registration expiry date** – nurses and midwives can view their expiry date on the National Register of Practitioners, accessible at www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au and enter their last name and profession to search
3. **Watch for the reminder to renew registration** – a reminder to renew registration, including the unique contact number (user ID) supporting online renewal, is sent to each practitioner up to eight weeks before registration expires
4. **Use online services** for quick and easy renewal of registration – most practitioners can renew registration online using the unique contact number (user ID) provided on the registration renewal notice sent by AHPRA. Online renewal of registration usually takes between 48 and 72 hours, depending on the method of payment chosen by the practitioner and whether any adverse declarations are made.

Nurses and midwives who do not have their unique contact number can get it by submitting an online enquiry form – selecting ‘User ID’ as the category of enquiry or by calling 1300 419 495. Practitioners can also mail their renewal application to AHPRA, GPO Box 9958, in their capital city.

Nurses and midwives can check that their application has been received through the AHPRA website at www.ahpra.gov.au. Practitioners whose application to renew registration has been received can practise while their application is being processed. The listing on the National Register of Practitioners is evidence for employers that a practitioner is registered, even if their registration expiry date has passed.

Nurses and midwives who forget to renew their registration by the due date, or within the following one month late period, can apply to AHPRA for a fast-track application for registration. They are not able to practise in the profession until their registration application has been granted.

For more information

- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 7 3666 4911 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200