



Continuing Professional Development

Continuing professional development is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives. The CPD cycle involves reviewing practice, identifying learning needs, planning and participating in relevant learning activities, and reflecting on the value of those activities¹.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development* sets out the minimum requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses. The Standard applies to all nurses and midwives who work either full-time or part-time, are undertaking clinical or non-clinical practice, in paid or unpaid employment, and even if they're on leave from work. Nurses and midwives are all required to meet the standards outlined by the NMBA if they hold general registration as a nurse or midwife.

To meet the NMBA's Standard, nurses and midwives must complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD per 12 month registration period (1 June – 31 May). CPD must be relevant to the individual's context of practice. If you're a nurse or midwife with an endorsement then you must complete an additional 10 hours related to that endorsement. If you're a dual registrant (a practitioner who is registered in two health professions), you must complete the required CPD for each registration. Examples of dual registration are: nurse and midwife; or nurse and paramedic. For dual registrants, CPD activities that are relevant to both professions, may be used as evidence for each registration.

Along with the requirement of a minimum number of CPD hours the NMBA also requires nurses and midwives to keep records of their CPD activities for a period of five years. There is no mandated tool that you need to use for recording, however, there are key requirements for documenting each CPD activity. These include:

All evidence should be verified, and it must demonstrate that the nurse or midwife has:

- *identified and prioritised their **learning needs**, based on their self-reflection and evaluation of their practice against the relevant ... professional practice standards*
- *developed a **learning plan** based on identified learning needs*
- *participated in effective **learning activities** appropriate to their learning needs, and*
- ***reflected** on the value of the learning activities or the effect that participation will have on their practice. (NMBA, 2016)²*

The NMBA conducts random audits to ensure registrants are meeting the registration standards. If you are selected for audit you will need to provide evidence of completion of your CPD.

CPD records may include participation in the following activities:

- *tertiary, vocational and other accredited courses including distance education (related to context of practice)*
- *conferences, forums, seminars and symposia*



- *short courses, workshops, seminars and discussion groups through a professional group or organisation who may issue a certificate of attendance/completion*
- *mandatory learning activities in the workplace in the area of practice (related to context of practice and demonstrates **new** learning)*
- *self-directed learning (such as: reading and discussing journal articles, codes, guidelines, standards, policies and procedures), and*
- *any other structured learning activities not covered above³.*

Self-recorded CPD, preferably using a CPD portfolio, is verified evidence of having completed the CPD cycle.

When audited, nurses and midwives need to show evidence that they have completed the required hours and provide a copy of their CPD plan for the previous registration year.

One of the biggest challenges for nurses and midwives, when audited, is the requirement for reflection. Nurses and midwives must demonstrate that they have reflected on the CPD activity and how this activity has or will impact on their practice. That is, they need to document the extent to which the activity has met their identified learning need: was it met, did it change or impact their practice and what are the next steps (if any) to achieve the identified learning need?

The NMBA provides a sample template on their website for use by nurses and midwives. Each state and territory Branch of the ANMF also provides various tools and resources, sometimes referred to as a portfolio, which can assist nurses and midwives with keeping the required CPD cycle documentation.

In summary, nurses and midwives are all required by the NMBA to formally document their CPD cycle of planned and completed CPD activities, and, reflect upon the outcome of the activity completed.

Members are encouraged to contact their Branch if they have further questions related to meeting CPD requirements. Please contact your Branch if you are audited and require assistance.

References

1. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016, *Registration standard: Continuing professional development*, viewed 2 July 2018, <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>
2. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016, *Guidelines: Continuing professional development*, viewed 2 July 2018, <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>
3. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. 2016, *Fact sheet: continuing professional development*, viewed 2 July 2018, <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>