

Our Duty of Care – Recommendation 12

MAXIMISING EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Progress Update - 2005

Preliminary investigation in this matter shows that while there are education pathways for nurses and for people to pursue a career in nursing, these pathways are not always streamlined and progression is not always unproblematic. A number of tensions and barriers have been identified and it is clear that the context for this work is rapidly changing.

In collaboration with the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery – Australian and New Zealand, five work groups have been formed to focus on five (5) identified issues,

Work group 1 - Pathways for entering nursing at various levels of education.

Work group 2 - Cross sector articulation and credit arrangements, & credit arrangements at post registration and/or postgraduate level.

Work group 3 - Pathways to progress to nurse practitioner.

Work group 4 - Pathways for Bachelor of Nursing students to enrol as ENs

Work group 5 - Articulation between Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Nursing.

Representatives from the CDNM-ANZ are chairing the work groups assisted by the Taskforce secretariat. Key stakeholders were invited to participate on groups where the work was of interest. Terms of reference and work activities have been agreed, work plans are being formed, and in some cases, investigation to better understand the current context. The terms of reference for the groups include identifying:

- Barriers, complexities and challenges to optimal pathways and
- Options, opportunities and strategic directions to maximise education pathways.

What is this project about?

The National Review of Nursing Education identified that nursing career pathways are linked to nurses' education and training pathways. Currently education for nurses is conducted in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) for enrolled nurses and the Higher Education sectors for registered nurses. Qualification linkages enable individual learners to move from one qualification to another in efficient and effective learning pathways, and underpin career progression for nurses and health workers. Similarly, access to a nursing career through a range of entry points increases the opportunity for some groups and people to become nurses.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) provides a comprehensive, nationally consistent framework for all qualifications in post-compulsory education and training. The AQF connects qualifications from the schools sector, VET sector and higher education sector in a single coherent framework, and provides guidelines containing the main criteria for defining qualifications based on the general characteristics of education and training at each qualification level. An important dimension of the AQF is the development of linkages between VET and higher education. Courses leading to AQF qualifications need to articulate or provide credit transfer to other qualifications

The National Review of Nursing Education identified a number of issues influencing the availability of effective articulation pathways for nurses and health workers in related fields:

- Awarding credit for experience and previous study is a developing feature of nursing education. While articulation pathways already exist, there are issues around maximising credit and the lack of infrastructure to support individuals who wish to progress through the system;
- Approaches to credit transfer and transition vary across Australia and within each state and territory, and are highly dependent on curriculum design;
- There is no framework that demonstrates that Enrolled Nurse Competencies are an identifiable subset of the competencies for registered nurses;
- Currently courses for Enrolled Nurses are not part of a national training package, although there are packages for some Certificates 11 and 111 which articulate into Enrolled Nurses Training

The aim of this project is to strengthen and enable career transitions and opportunities for development in the education and training of registered nurses, midwives, and health care workers by:

- Formulating strategies to address the limitations of existing articulation pathways for nurses; and
- Developing approaches to maximize the potential for recognition of prior learning and current competence in enrolment processes for nurses and health care workers.

Taskforce Role	Taskforce to implement	Commencement of Work	JUNE 2004
Key Milestones/Deliverables			Timeline
<p>Phase 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of articulation pathways • Pathways status report: indicating limitations of existing articulation pathways, barriers to articulation and opportunities to strengthen articulations and transitions <p>Phase 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work may be required to address issues identified in Phase 1 • A framework for consistency in approaches to recognition of prior learning (RPL) and recognition of current competency (RCC) in enrolment processes for nurses and health care workers. 			<p>Dec 2004</p> <p>Dec 2004</p> <p>May 2006 (revised date)</p>
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