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3 June 2005

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

To whom it may concern

Inquiry into skills recognition, upgrading and licensing

Thank you for the opportunity to submit information regarding skills assessment for Migration. The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (formally the ANC) is the peak body for regulation of both nurses and midwives. Our Council is comprised of representatives from each state/territory Nurse/Midwifery Regulation Authorities.

The National office is authorised by DIMIA to assess nurses and midwives who wish to migrate to Australia under the skilled migration category. We assess nurses/midwives who are offshore and also nurses/midwives who are here on working/holiday visas. The latter group are usually already registered as nurses or midwives in an Australian state or territory and come to us for what we deem a modified assessment. This assessment is modified as they have already demonstrated competency at the state/territory level.

For nurses and midwives offshore this office processes what is deemed a full assessment. This requires the nurse/midwife to demonstrate competence through having graduated from an appropriate nursing/midwifery program, being registered to practice in his/her own country which is demonstrated by a verification of license from the country of origin, a professional reference denoting competence and finally being competent in the use of English, demonstrated by an IELTS overall score of 7 with 6.5 in each category or an OET of Overall B.

In the past our assessment procedures have been protracted taking six to eight weeks. As a result of internal changes we now do same day assessments provided we have all the evidence we require. The majority of our assessments are now completed within two working days.

The table below indicates the number of assessments completed in 2004.

ANMC completed assessments 2004 by ASCO Code

ASCO Code	Total Number
2323- 11 Registered Nurse	1709
2324 – 11 Registered Midwife	94
2325 – 11 Registered Mental Health Nurse	124
2326 -11 Registered Developmental Disability	17

As demonstrated in this table the majority of individuals who ask for skills assessment are registered nurses. This is followed by Registered Mental Health Nurses and then midwives and finally Registered Developmental Disability Nurses.

When a nurse/midwife's education is not deemed suitable, that is the assessor does not believe the applicant can demonstrate competency then the applicant is offered a migrant bridging program. These programs must be completed onshore and are accredited by the Nurses/Midwifery Regulatory body in each state/territory. These vary in both content and time depending on the state/territory in which they are completed. A concern of this office is applicants suggest to us it is sometimes difficult to gain a visa that will allow them to complete one of these onshore programs. The length of these programs varies from state to state. I have enclosed a copy of a booklet listing all these programs for your information.

It would appear that technology (websites) assist applicants to access information regarding assessment. All applications must be submitted in hard copy as the process requires certified copies of all documents for security purposes.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely

Karen Cook
A/CEO
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council