



Bord Altranais agus
Cnáimhseachais na hÉireann
Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

NMBI Statement of Strategy 2023-2025

Message from President and CEO

The role of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) is to enhance patient safety by supporting nurses and midwives to deliver safe care. As the regulator of the professions, we provide a public service, and we take our role very seriously.

This strategy sets out how we will continue to fulfil our role to protect the public and the integrity of the professions of nursing and midwifery over the next three years through:

- Setting the standards of education for nursing and midwifery in Ireland and anyone who wants to practise in Ireland has to demonstrate how they meet those standards.
- Maintaining the Register of nurses and midwives who have met these standards, allowing the public and employers to check that people are safe to practice in Ireland.
- Supporting nurses and midwives in continuing to meet these standards during their careers through guidance and continual professional development.
- Managing complaints against nurses and midwives when they arise.

As well as delivering on the above, to be an effective and efficient regulator, we need to identify the risks that could lead to public and service user harm. We must continue to assess these risks and consider how we can best support nurses and midwives to prevent harm from occurring in the first place. This is referred to as upstream regulation.

Through our Summer Series events in 2022 and the public consultation on this strategy, our registrants, stakeholders and the public shared their thoughts and insights on our role and what we can do to better support the professions, public and the system. This feedback included:

- You made it clear that we can do more to share our insights on what is causing harm, therefore allowing professionals to reflect on their own practice.
- You told us that you think more third-level undergraduate student places are needed to meet demand and we are working to do all we can to support this aim.
- In relation to overseas applicants, you told us that the process needs to be easier for them to become registered and that more should be done to support their transition into healthcare. This is an area we are working intensively on. We recognise that while we need to educate more nurses and midwives in Ireland, we also need to register nurses and midwives from overseas to work in our health service, and support them to adapt to work here.
- Many of you also highlighted that the health service needs to retain nurses and midwives and encourage them to stay in the professions.

With your feedback, we have developed this three-year strategy for the organisation.

This strategy seeks to respond to what we have learned through engagement and consultation, and this is laid out in detail in the following pages. As the regulator, we will continue to work to deliver on our statutory remit. We will also continue to act as an enabler of system-wide change. We can take key steps which in turn can lead to greater system-wide change. We can also use our data and insights to better inform the system.

We have set out our strategic aims for 2023 to 2025 under the headings of protecting, promoting, progressing, powered by partnership and enabled by technology.

In developing our strategic priorities for 2023 to 2025, our overall vision is set out below:

Our 2023–2025 vision

To support nurses and midwives, and the professions of nursing and midwifery with the following aims:

- To enhance public safety
- To increase awareness of what leads to complaints and ensure they are addressed quickly and close to where issues occurred
- To promote high standards of education, training and practice, and conduct
- To ensure that our model of regulation enhances and attracts talent – whether that is through the education system in Ireland or from overseas.

In practice, this means we will:

- share insights with registrants and other key stakeholders;
- communicate with our stakeholders to understand emerging risks and their insights;
- support our registrants to address risks through guidance and education standards;
- challenge ourselves to work with key bodies to diversify routes to the Register;
- collaborate to identify and implement a comprehensive retention strategy, as set out in by the Report of the Expert Review Group on Nursing and Midwifery; and
- influence the number of nurses and midwives educated and available to the Irish healthcare system.

In this Strategy, we will describe the actions we are committing to, which are guided by this overarching vision.



Louise Kavanagh McBride
President



Sheila McClelland
Chief Executive

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and our brand**

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Who we are



Figure 1: Who we are

What we do

- Maintain the Register of Nurses and Midwives – entitled to practise in Ireland
- Promote high standards of education, training and practice, and conduct amongst nurses and midwives
- Investigate and consider complaints against nurses and midwives.

Maintain the Register of Nurses and Midwives – entitled to practise in Ireland

NMBI Register of Nurses and Midwives

All persons in Ireland who are registered to work in Ireland as a nurse or a midwife at 1 December 2022.

84,795 persons

Everyone on the Register has had their nursing and/or midwifery qualification(s) recognised by NMBI.

Figure 2: Registration data as at 1 December 2022

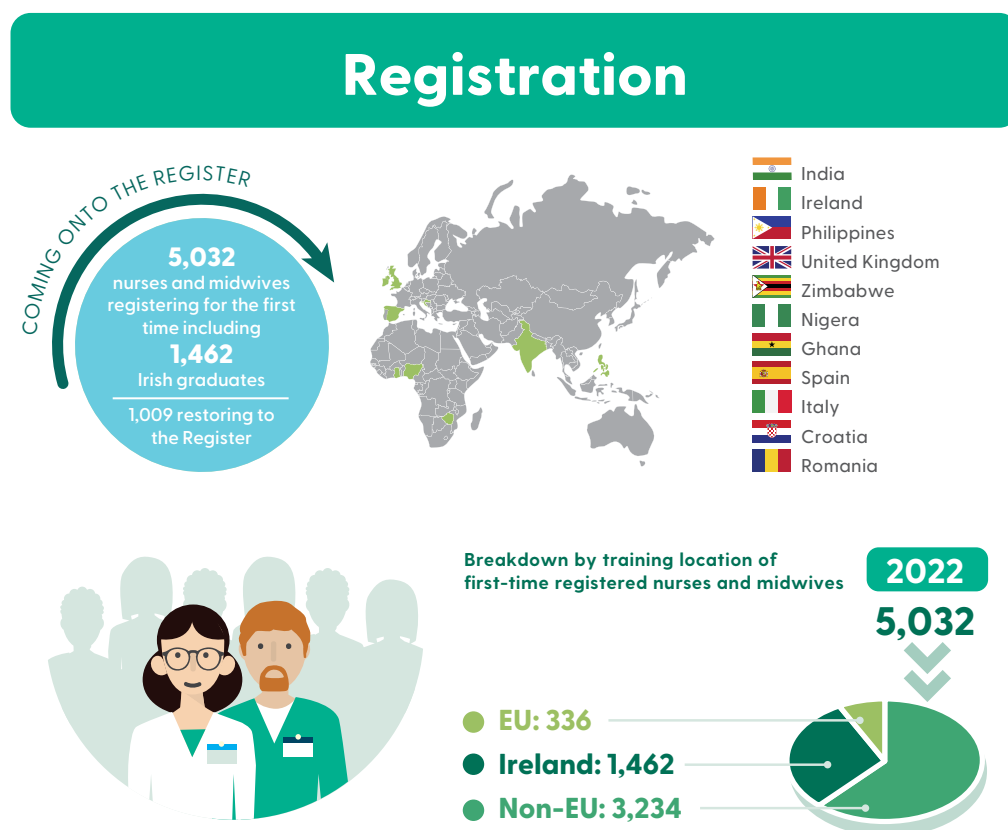


Figure 3: Registration demographics as at 1 December 2022

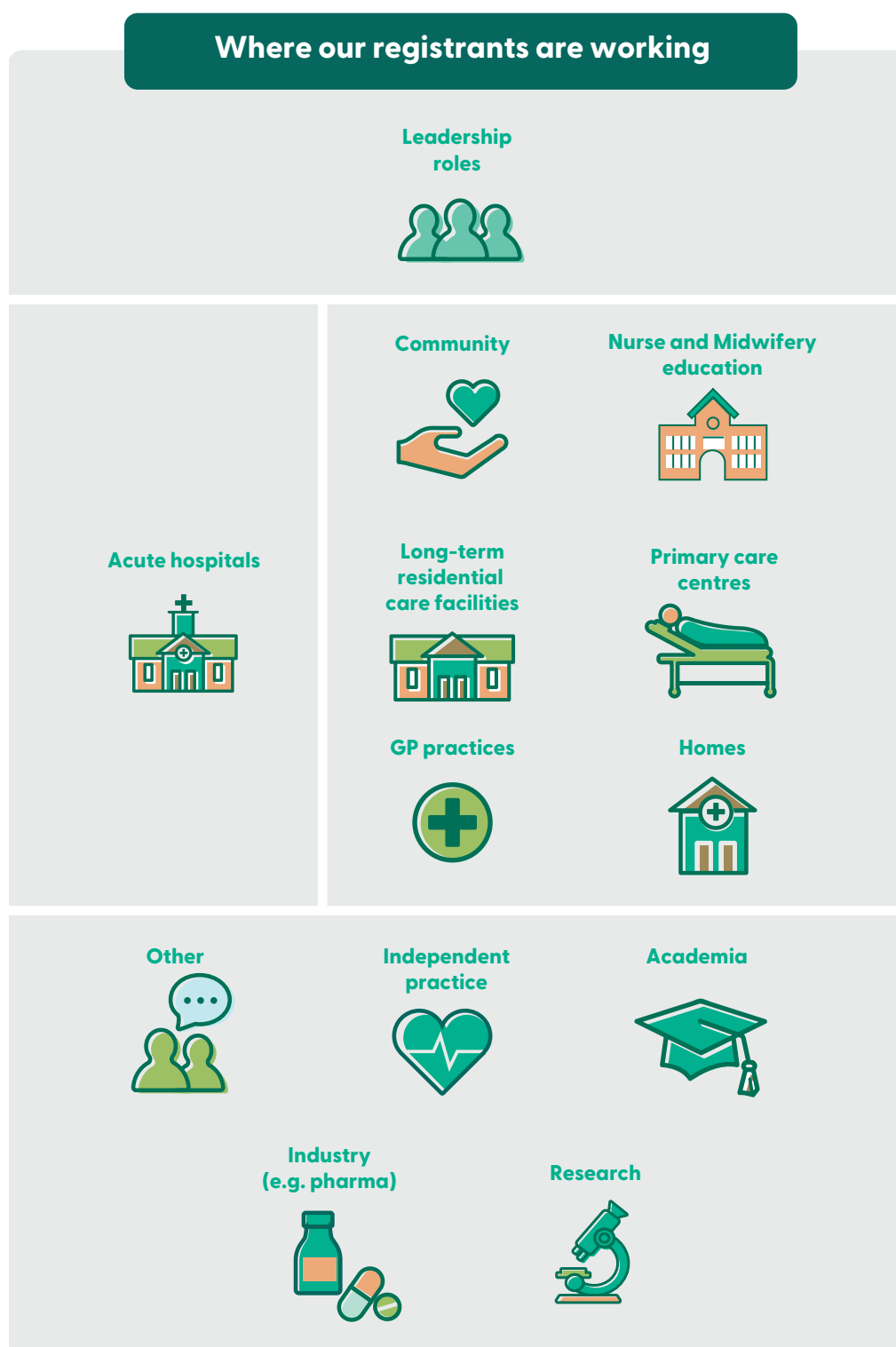


Figure 4: Where our registrants are working

Promote high standards of education, training and practice, and conduct amongst nurses and midwives

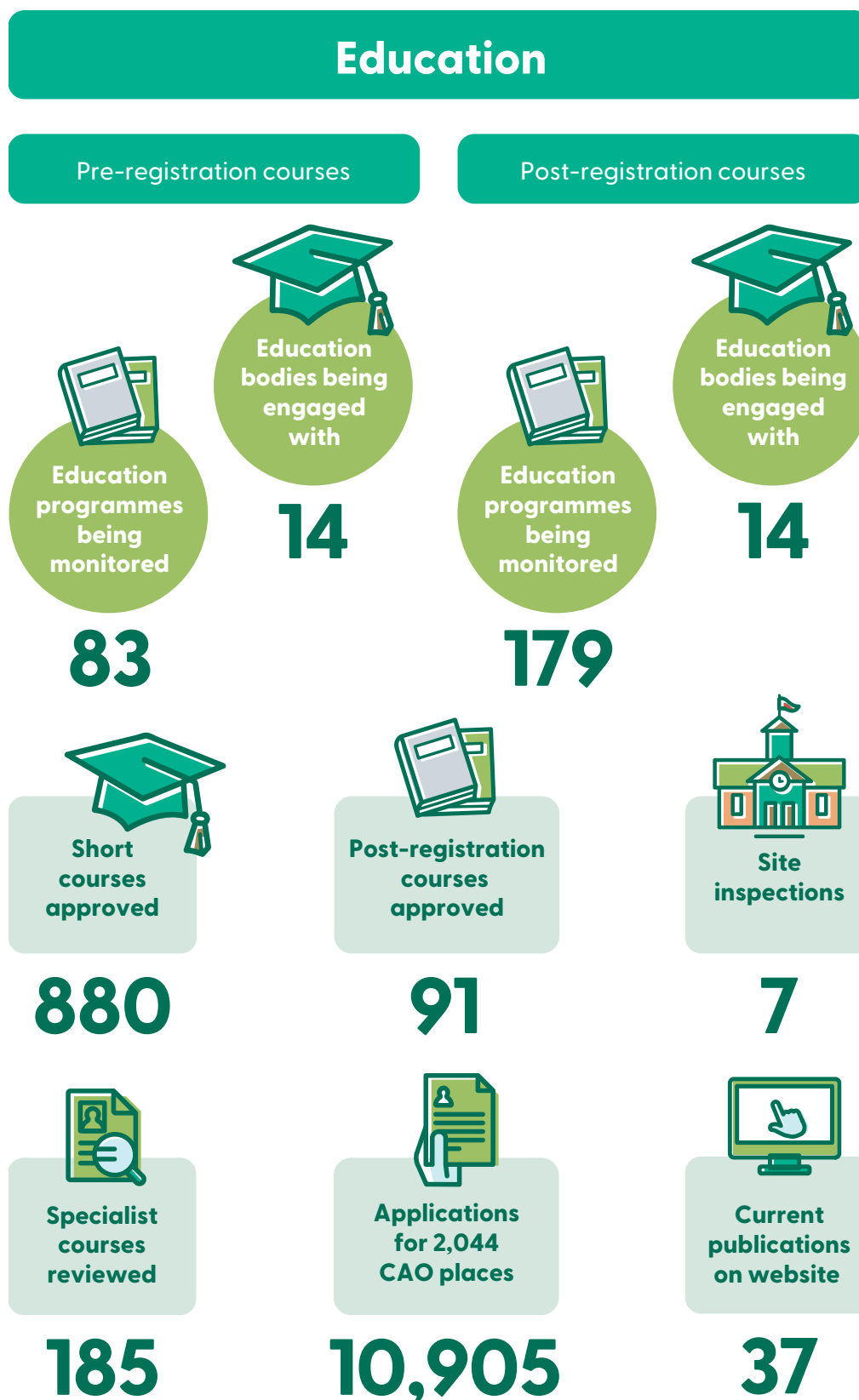


Figure 5: Education data for 2022 as at 1 December 2022

Investigate and consider complaints against nurses and midwives

Fitness to Practise

47

Complaints
received

31

Inquiries
held

62

Inquiry
days

23

Inquiries
concluded

96

Complaints
pending

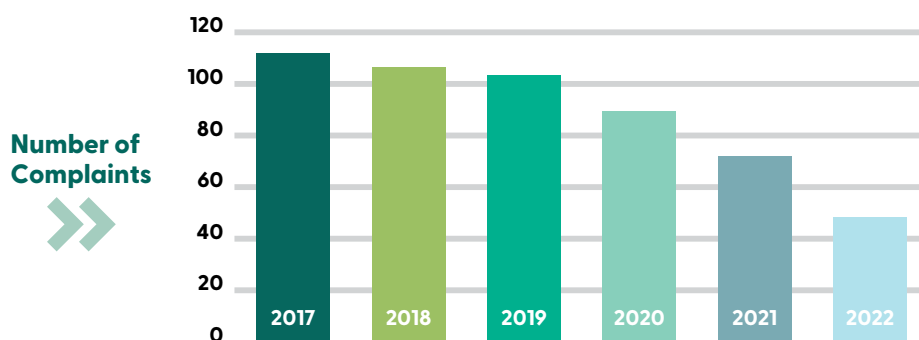


Figure 6: Fitness to Practise data for 2022 as at 1 December 2022

Our strategic priorities

Our vision for 2023 to 2025 is to support nurses and midwives, and the professions of nursing and midwifery with the following aims:

- To enhance public safety
- To increase awareness of what leads to complaints and ensure they are addressed quickly and close to where issues occurred
- To promote high standards of education, training and practice, and conduct, and
- To ensure that our model of regulation enhances and attracts talent – whether that is through the education system in Ireland or from overseas.

We will continue to carry out our key functions as outlined above. In addition, we have identified a range of actions, projects and activities we will undertake between 2023 and 2025.

We have grouped our strategic priorities under three ‘P’s – which form the core of what we do – protecting, promoting and progressing. These will be supported through partnership and technology.

We have incorporated the overall strategy in a visual for our stakeholders and staff to bring our strategy to life.

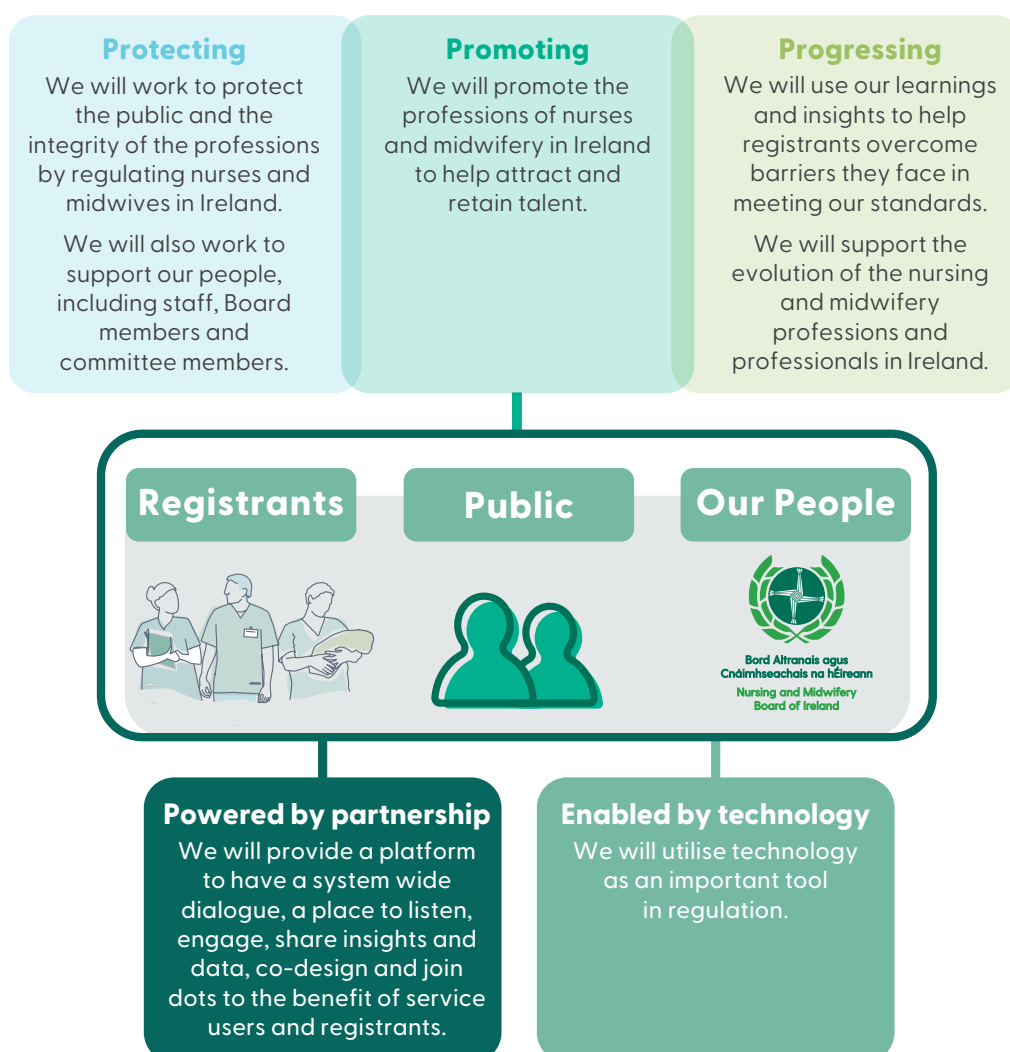


Figure 7: Our strategic priorities

Protecting

Key objectives

- 1 Support the education of nurses and midwives to protect the integrity of the professions and people using services
- 2 Support nurses and midwives who qualified overseas to transition to working in the Irish healthcare system
- 3 Develop guidance and standards to support nurses and midwives
- 4 Improve Fitness to Practise timelines

Promoting

Key objectives

- 5 Streamline registration and application pathways for overseas nurses and midwives
- 6 Attract new nursing and midwifery students and encourage career progression

Progressing

Key objectives

- 7 Support the implementation of recommendations from the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022
- 8 Progress standards of care with a continuous focus on service user safety
- 9 Develop education standards to progress the professions
- 10 Share our data to inform education, strategy and planning
- 11 Be agile in response to healthcare and regulatory trends and challenges that face our registrants
- 12 Ensure our Fitness to Practise process is more compassionate

Powered by partnership

Key objectives

- 13 Provide a platform to have a system wide dialogue, a place to listen, engage, share insights and data, co-design and join dots to the benefit of service users and registrants

Enabled by technology

Key objectives

- 14 Utilise technology as an important tool in regulation

Protecting

Key objective 1

Support the education of nurses and midwives to protect the integrity of the professions and people using services

Examples of how we will do this

Recommendations of the Expert Review Body (ERB) 2022

- Carry out a fundamental review of the curricula of the undergraduate nursing and midwifery programmes, in the context of Sláintecare, through a high-level working group of NMBI, HSE and education bodies. Programme reviews to be implemented for intake of students in September 2025.
- Examine options for undergraduate programmes in Psychiatric, Mental Health and Intellectual Disability nursing to encompass EU legislated general nursing requirements, through the Expert Review Body Education workstream activities.
- Group to review access to and capacity of undergraduate education, with the aim of developing a plan to deliver an increase in undergraduate student numbers. ERB Education workstream will explore options for the provision of more practice placements and NMBI will recognise additional placement sites in line with Sláintecare and, to follow, education bodies will need to utilise additional places identified.
- Expert Review Body Education workstream to review graduate entry options to best fit the Irish setting with learnings from international programmes in place, in order to recommend an approach for standards and requirements which will be considered by the Board. This will realise net additional student capacity and the aim is to have at least two programmes offered and running at a national level by 2025.
- Review options on conversion programmes for registrants to enable them to move between the disciplines and further intra-professional mobility. Review existing post-registration programmes leading to discipline registration and work to standardise approach and awards, enabling greater responsiveness in the system to demands and pressures. NMBI will prepare standards and requirements and will explore the use of aptitude testing for the short and medium term for workforce flexibility. Programme reviews will be implemented in a timeline enabling student intakes in 2024.

Monitoring the Maintenance of Professional Competence

- Fully implement the legislation.



Key objective 2

Support nurses and midwives who qualified overseas to transition to working in the Irish healthcare system

Examples of how we will do this

Online supports

- We will co-design a free online learning module/s specifically aimed at applicants and registrants planning to work in Ireland as nurses and midwives for the first time.
- It will focus on our Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives, healthcare models in Ireland and embed cultural competencies. It will be circulated to new registrants in 2024 and made available on a hub for overseas applicants.



Key objective 3

Develop guidance and standards to support nurses and midwives

Examples of how we will do this

Guidance and communication

- NMBI plan to increase our publication of guidance to nurses and midwives in a variety of healthcare settings outside acute hospitals, responding to change as required, with an aim to publish three guidance documents per year.
- We will evolve our communication through the use of interactive platforms to ensure registrants and students can more easily understand the key elements of the standards and guidance. Changes to commence within 2023.

Examples of how we will do this

Stakeholders

- Continue to be a key stakeholder at forums where the future models of healthcare are being discussed.
- Create a specific forum with HIQA and the Medical Council in 2023 to share knowledge and learnings on risk in healthcare settings.

Key
objective 4

Improve
Fitness to Practise
timelines

Examples of how we will do this

Fitness to Practise changes

- Continue to decrease Fitness to Practise timelines through increased utilisation of undertakings based on analysis and learnings.
- We will report on the impact of the increased legal services panel that was put in place in 2022.

Promoting

Key objective 5

Streamline registration and application pathways for overseas nurses and midwives

Examples of how we will do this

MyNMBI

- Develop the Next Generation of MyNMBI to make the portal easier and more straightforward for registrants to apply for recognition and registration and track an application. We will aim to have a Decision Letter issued within 21 days of an accepted application.

Work with partners to make application pathways as smooth as possible

- Develop and introduce a dedicated virtual and physical overseas applicant hub to better support applicants through the application process and to provide tailored information.
- Collaborate with relevant third parties (such as embassies and recruitment agencies) to listen, inform our communications material and further improve our processes.
- Remain cognisant of social equity in recruitment activities to avoid creating talent shortages in other countries.
- Complete a comprehensive re-validation of adaptation sites in 2023 to ensure they meet our standards and are candidate friendly and encourage further adaptation capacity.
- Spearhead a conversation with education bodies and the HSE to explore a programme of education that would bridge the known gap in the nursing and midwifery qualifications from identified jurisdictions with the NMBI standards, facilitating entry onto the Register without the need for an adaptation period.



Key objective 6

Attract new nursing and midwifery students and encourage career progression

Examples of how we will do this

Careers material

- Revise and update the careers material on our website to focus on the breadth and variety of roles and career pathways which a nursing or midwifery qualification can provide access to. This includes but is not limited to entry from graduate to advanced practitioner, acute to non-acute settings, public and private sectors, independent practice, academia, research and management. It should also provide information on the different routes into the professions.

Routes to the Register

- Reduce barriers of entry to our Register, without compromising our standards. Make it as seamless as possible for an applicant to demonstrate how they meet those standards and for NMBI to validate that.
- Encourage high-quality new routes to the Register for people who can meet our standards to facilitate access to the Register.
- Broaden, and make more flexible, access pathways to our Register. Innovate both ourselves and with partners to understand how to expand routes and simplify the process in a manner that is scalable and risk appropriate.

Progressing

Key objective 7

Support the implementation of recommendations from the Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022

Examples of how we will do this

Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery 2022

- Work with partners to implement Expert Review Body recommendations, as set out in that report and page 11 of this strategy.

Key objective 8

Progress standards of care with a continuous focus on service user safety

Examples of how we will do this

The Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives will be updated and published

- The Code will be updated.
- The updates will make the Code as easy as possible to understand and more relevant to registrants and all of the settings they practise in.
- The Scope of Nursing and Midwifery Practice Framework will be incorporated into the Code.
- Videos and other channels will be utilised to communicate and share the Code.
- It will be shared at the point of registration and provided annually as part of the annual renewal process.

Key objective 9

Develop education standards to progress the professions

Examples of how we will do this

Leadership

- Ensure our standards for education programmes include leadership and collaborative decision-making emphases to support nursing and midwifery representation in decision-making and leadership forums.

Key objective 10

Share our data to inform education, strategy and planning

Examples of how we will do this

Data publication

- Creation of research and findings about fitness to practise inquiries, complaints and service user harm in Ireland and beyond to inform employers, representative bodies and registrants about known and emerging risk. There will also be an education element to this to address unfair or inappropriate referrals to the NMBI from line managers, employers or other parties. Publish data and learnings in an annual State of Complaints report.
- Publish an annual State of the Register report, analyse and share with partners.
- Share NMBI pack for education bodies annually with insights on complaints, inquiries and good practice observed across education and placement site visits to inform education bodies' curricula and approaches.

Examples of how we will do this

Events

- Plan and deliver lecture series and other events at which we will share data and provide a forum for conversation and collaboration about the future of the professions.
- Organise a conference in 2023 to share learnings and insights.

Utilising data

- Seek to understand the impact of our work on people with different protected characteristics and work with others to understand how we can address inequalities identified.

Key
objective 11

Be agile in
response to
healthcare and
regulatory trends
and challenges
that face our
registrants

Examples of how we will do this

Legislation

- Continue to evolve with the implementation of legislation, and plan for future changes in legislation with our stakeholders. To be an effective and agile regulator we have a dependence on our legislation.
- We will continue to embed aspects of our legislation that have been recently commenced, e.g. the humanitarian clause and three-person inquiry panels.
- We will work closely with the Department of Health to plan for enabling aspects of our legislation that are not yet commenced, e.g. annotation.
- We will also work closely with the Department of Health and others to shape improvements to our legislative framework allowing us to be more effective, agile and to remain relevant to current and future risks to the safety of service users and supportive to our registrants.

Innovation

- We will encourage regulatory innovation by piloting new things more often. Based on the results we will either extend them or learn from them and move on. A risk that is addressed through information, support and reflective learning may reduce and then our time, attention and resources can move to other emerging or greater risks.



Key objective 12

Ensure our
Fitness to Practise
process is more
compassionate

Examples of how we will do this

Compassion Project

- We will make changes in how we deal with complaints and inquiries. This is based on a compassion project which we completed last year to ascertain how the complaints management process could be made more 'compassionate' to all those involved.
- By moving to a more person-centred fitness to practise approach and using the provisions of our newly amended legislation, we intend to deal with less serious complaints at an earlier stage and use undertakings (a promise of action given by the nurse or midwife who is the subject of the complaint) and consents where appropriate. This will reduce the number of complaints progressing to inquiry which will subsequently reduce the wait time for registrants which has been unacceptably long.
- Provide better assistance to registrants and witnesses involved in the inquiry process by providing phone-based support and more detailed information.
- Support documents and aids will be simplified and enhanced.
- Communication from and with the NMBI, whether face to face or in writing, will have an emphasis on compassion and empathising with the experience of all participants in the process.
- Greater analysis of received complaints and the inquiry outcomes will be used to inform nursing and midwifery education programmes.
- Systematically investigate the impact of contextual factors in fitness to practise cases, while retaining a focus on individual professional accountability. This will help us achieve fairer outcomes and also inform our outreach programme.

Powered by partnership

Key objective 13

Provide a platform to have a system wide dialogue, a place to listen, engage, share insights and data, co-design and join dots to the benefit of service users and registrants

Examples of how we will do this

Stakeholder engagement and partnership

- We will regularly listen to and facilitate dialogue with our registrants, people using health and social care services and other stakeholders in the healthcare system. We will explore more opportunities to collaborate, co-design and support outcomes.
- We will establish a mechanism to ensure the service user voice is incorporated in our work.
- We will identify a model to better measure the impact of regulation and to inform a system-wide approach to protecting people using services.
- We will work with other regulators and employers to understand context, policies, actions and behaviours that lead to harm. Our collective ability to 'connect the dots' across the entire life cycle of harm will broaden the breadth, depth and maturity we require of our stakeholder relationships. When our partners inform us of opportunities to reduce harm and we inform them, the overall system will be positively influenced.
- We will work with our international regulatory colleagues to share insights and best practice. Explore developing strategic alliances.
- Build relationships with relevant Government departments and agencies and work together on issues of common interest.

Enabled by technology

Key objective 14

Utilise technology as an important tool in regulation

Examples of how we will do this

MyNMBI

- We will invest in developing the next generation of MyNMBI during the lifetime of this statement of strategy, to support the registration of nurses and midwives and students, and streamline the processing of applications to join the Register. This will also enable data sharing, enabled by technology.

Digital transformation

- In line with Government policy, we will prioritise digital transformation and work to leverage digital solutions to further streamline and automate processes.

Cyber security

- As an organisation, we will further invest in cyber security.

The role of NMBI and our brand

Aim	Examples of how we will do this
Clearly communicate the role of NMBI to our stakeholders	<p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our communication plans will aim to raise the profile of NMBI and increase the understanding of our role and the role of professional regulation. Work on the nursing and midwifery undergraduate programmes (as described above) is an opportunity to demonstrate other aspects of our role. <p>Upstream regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed a culture of ‘upstream regulation’ across the organisation, where we focus on supporting nurses and midwives to prevent harm from occurring in the first place.

Aim	Examples of how we will do this
Operate effectively and sustainably	<p>Develop our organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will choose where we can be most impactful. We will evolve in line with emerging risks and focus our attention accordingly. We will prioritise our attention to where harm can be avoided. As a progressive organisation with a strong focus on reflective learning we will continuously reflect on what we can learn or do differently or better next time. We will be solutions focussed when approaching all challenges. <p>Evolve our organisation and develop a HR strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in the skills required to deliver on our strategy. Identify and promote opportunities for staff to grow and advance, through an annual staff training plan. Grow capabilities and capacity as an organisation in line with this statement of strategy. Promote retention. Grow resilience in all levels of the organisation to drive forward the vision as set out in this statement of strategy. <p>Our Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will invest in the skills required to deliver on our strategy through a three-year Board training plan. <p>Great Place to Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will participate in the Great Place to Work programme. <p>Good and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the Government policy of Green Public Procurement (GPP) we will seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact. We will also work to ensure we are engaged in socially responsible procurement.

Supporting factors

Legislation

As the regulator we work under the remit of our primary national legislation and EU Directive 2005/36/EC. We must also be aware of other legislation that may impact us as an agency of the Department of Health or our registrants who work in Ireland.

In 2020 we developed an implementation plan to address changes introduced through the Regulated Professions (Health and Social Care) (Amendment) Act 2020. We continue work to embed changes introduced by this Act.

We actively participate in debate and discussion about any changes being considered to the EU Directive 2005/36/EC.

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act was signed into law in December 2015. However, it is not yet fully commenced. Similarly, the Patient Safety (Notifiable Patient Safety Incidents) Bill 2019 has yet to be passed through the Oireachtas. We will keep a watching brief to understand how as a regulator, we may need to respond and support our registrants with this and any other legislative changes.

Environmental analysis

This strategy was informed by an environmental analysis of what is happening within our organisation, and our political and legal environment. Read the analysis on www.nmbi.ie.

Consultation

The strategy has also been informed by feedback received through stakeholder engagement and a public consultation. Read the report on the consultation on our website, www.nmbi.ie.

Implementing our strategy and measuring success

Throughout the lifecycle of this strategy, we will assess progress and publish it in our annual reports. This assessment will largely focus on activity-level information. It will be complemented by available analysis and stakeholder feedback, through engagement forums, to help us understand progress and context for each strategic theme. Success will be measured and monitored through a suite of key performance indicators aligned to each strategic priority.

Our priorities will be clear and understood, while allowing room for flexibility where necessary. All of our people will understand their role in delivering on these priorities.

We will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) best practice in our business plans and the delivery of them.



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Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)

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