



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

Review of Achievements 2001 to 2006



*National Council for the
Professional Development
of Nursing and Midwifery*

*An Chomhairle Náisiúnta d'Fhorbairt
Ghairmiúil an Altranais agus
an Chnáimhseachais*

NOVEMBER 2006



A Celebration of Life

By Catherine Barron

Mission Statement of the National Council

The Council exists to promote and develop the professional role of nurses and midwives in order to ensure the delivery of quality nursing and midwifery care to patients/clients in a changing healthcare environment.

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Foreword

The last decade has witnessed unprecedented levels of change in Irish society in general and in the health services in particular. A better educated and more discerning public rightly expects that healthcare will be provided and delivered by a highly competent healthcare workforce. Nurses and midwives form a vital part of that healthcare workforce and as such have responded to much of the change that has taken place in that decade.

The publication of the *Final Report of the Commission on Nursing: A Blueprint for the Future* (Government of Ireland, 1998) was a watershed for nursing and midwifery in Ireland. It marked a shift in the way nurses and midwives thought about themselves as professionals and about the ways in which they contributed to Irish health services. In addition the report has provided key directions for professional development.

The National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery was established on a statutory basis after the Commission on Nursing published its report. Since the Executive staff and I have commenced our operational and strategic work on behalf of nursing and midwifery in Ireland we have always borne in mind that we are building on the cornerstone laid down by the Commission. Our mandate and our mission is to promote the professional role of nurses and midwives in order to ensure the delivery of high-quality nursing and midwifery care to patients and clients in a changing healthcare environment.

This review of the National Council's achievements provides an outline of the work we have undertaken since 2001. While we have built on the foundations provided by the Commission of Nursing, we have incorporated the demands of the national health strategy *Quality and Fairness - A Health System for You* (2001), its subsidiary strategies and the Health Service Reform Programme, as well as consulting with our nursing and midwifery constituency, in order to ensure that our developments are fit for purpose.

Our most singular achievement has been the development of the clinical career pathway. Nevertheless, we have assisted and promoted the development of nurses and midwives throughout the country and working in a wide range of services through the funding of hundreds of continuing education programmes. Consultation and collaboration have been crucial to the ways in which we have conducted our business and to our successful outcomes. For example, prescribing of medications by nurses and midwives is close to being realised due to the combined efforts of the National Council and An Bord Altranais. Furthermore, our research work has necessitated the buy-in of national, regional and local services and agencies. Throughout the last six years in particular, we have been effective in reaching out to nurses and midwives across all types of services through our personal communications, our website and our publications.

As I prepared this review, I was reminded of just how much the National Council has accomplished. I am proud of our record, not just for ourselves here in the National Council but for what it represents for nurses and midwives in terms of innovation and achievement. We have a solid foundation on which to build as we continue our work in the next transformative phase of the Health Service Reform Programme.

Yvonne O'Shea
Chief Executive Officer



SECTION 1

The Mission of the National Council

The Mission of the National Council is to promote and develop the professional role of nurses and midwives in order to ensure the delivery of quality nursing and midwifery care to patients/clients in a changing healthcare environment. In order to fulfil this mission, the National Council provides national leadership primarily in the development of the clinical career pathway for nurses and midwives and in a number of other important areas. This career pathway is designed to ensure that nurses and midwives can fulfil their professional role working within a range of care settings and working at different grades and with different levels of clinical autonomy. These grades include those of staff nurse/staff midwife, clinical nurse specialist (CNS), clinical midwife specialist (CMS), advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) and advanced midwife practitioner (AMP). It is the mission of the National Council to ensure that nurses and midwives can avail of comprehensive professional development support appropriate to their own individual clinical career path.

The principal activities of the National Council that are designed to provide this professional development support include:

- Providing clear guidance for the establishment of specialist and advanced practice roles
- Providing accreditation for advanced nurse practitioner and advanced midwife practitioner roles
- Monitoring the development of nursing and midwifery specialities
- Supporting and assisting in the development of continuing education and professional development for all nurses and midwives.

In keeping with the demands of a twenty-first century health system, we ensure that our own projects are evidence-based as well as promoting the imperative of evidence-based practice and professional development among nurses and midwives. This approach is illustrated by our evaluations of CNS/CMS and ANP/AMP roles, and of nurse-/midwife-led services.

The evaluations of CNS/CMS roles identified a number of positive outcomes from these posts. These include streamlining of services to meet patients' needs, high levels of patient satisfaction with CNS-/CMS-provided services, more focused education of patients and education of staff nurses/midwives. Similarly, the evaluations of ANP posts have also identified several positive outcomes. These include shortened waiting times for services, enhanced clinical outcomes, high levels of patient satisfaction and improved multidisciplinary team working.

As well as supporting local and regional continuing education and professional development projects, our own national conference and regular master classes have been significant additions to the repertoire of continuing education and professional development activities now available to nurses and midwives of all grades and working in the healthcare and education sectors.

The extent and nature of our activities involves close co-operation and collaboration with nurses and midwives working at regional and national levels, both in the healthcare and education sectors, and with key health-related agencies. The National Council provides professional advice to national strategic committees involved in the development of the health services and in the development of educational services for healthcare professionals.

The purpose of this document is to take stock of the progress that has been made in the last six years - 2001 to 2006. The year 2006 signals the final year in a three-year strategic planning cycle for the National Council, so this analysis provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the last two strategy cycles as a prelude to the preparation of the new strategy for the Council for the years 2007 to 2009.

SECTION 2

Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery

Over the past six years the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery has strategically and proactively set the agenda for the professional development of the nursing and midwifery in response to client/patient needs and service demands. By expanding boundaries, creating new opportunities and enhancing roles, the contribution made to the delivery of services by nurses and midwives in Ireland has undergone significant change. By November 2006 the National Council had approved and supported the development of:

- 48 ANP posts
- 1,833 CNS and CMS posts.

The evidence shows that these posts are improving patients' healthcare experience through innovative care delivery and enhanced care pathways. The frameworks in place for the development of these posts have delivered robust, effective posts which are facilitating the delivery of high-quality patient care (see the table in Section 4). The development of these posts has ensured that Ireland's clinical career path for nurses and midwives is at the forefront of international best practice in this area.

In addition to providing support for specialist and advanced practice posts the National Council also provides support for staff nurses and midwives in all care settings. This includes, for example, the provision of a page on the website of the National Council dedicated to items of interest to staff nurses and midwives, dedicated items in the National Council's *NCNM Quarterly Review* circulated to all staff nurses and midwives registered with An Bord Altranais, and the development of guidelines and templates for the maintenance of professional portfolios.

The National Council also provides a wide-ranging service in its resourcing of additional continuing education services for all nurses and midwives. Over the past five years the National Council has supported 641 continuing education programmes aimed at supporting innovative service delivery and development (for example, site preparation for nurse-led minor injuries services): these have been attended by over 20,000 nurses and midwives.

Nurses and midwives in Ireland are engaged in innovative activities on a daily basis. These activities are motivated by the desire to improve client/patient care outcomes and effectively and efficiently meet health service delivery demands. Many of these initiatives have resulted in significant improvements in the health of patients, populations and health systems.

The National Council drives a number of initiatives that foster nursing and midwifery innovation and promote an environment for knowledge sharing and professional development. These initiatives are intended to:

- Promote the dissemination of nursing and midwifery innovations to a wider audience
- Enhance recognition for the contribution nurses and midwives make to the health system
- Provide an environment for knowledge sharing and professional development.

These initiatives include:

1. The website of the National Council
2. Publications produced by the National Council
3. The production and dissemination of a quarterly review
4. The promotion of innovative continuing education for nurses and midwives
5. The promotion of research in nursing and midwifery
6. The Nurse and Midwife Prescribing Project
7. Master classes
8. The annual National Conference of the National Council
9. A programme of communication and networking at national and international levels
10. Ongoing professional development support for nurses and midwives.

It is worth considering each of these initiatives in turn.

SECTION 3

The Website of the National Council

Since it was first developed in 2001, the website of the National Council has become a major resource for nurses and midwives both here in Ireland and abroad. Not only does it contain all our own publications and presentations from all the master classes we have hosted, it also keeps nurses and midwives up to date with our projects, statistics on clinical specialist and advanced practice roles, forthcoming events and third-level nursing, midwifery and health-related courses on offer throughout the island of Ireland. The website is also a medium for sharing information about practice development. It provides access to the all-Ireland practice and quality development database, developed in partnership with our Northern Ireland colleagues in NIPEC.

Another function of the website is to provide specialist groups with an opportunity to have their own specialist website. Such groups whose websites are hosted by the National Council include the following:

- IADNAM - Irish Association of Directors of Nursing and Midwifery
- ENTRUST - Irish Clinical Nurse Managers' Association
- Mental Health Nurse Managers, Ireland
- Clinical Placement Co-ordinators' Association
- The Irish Nursing and Midwifery Practice Development Association
- Psychiatry of Old Age Nurse Education/Development Group
- Irish Research Nurses' Association
- Irish Practice Nurses' Association
- Irish Association of Paediatric Nurses
- ANAIL - Respiratory Nurse Specialist Association of Ireland
- Irish Diabetes Nurses' Group
- Head and Neck Nurses' Association
- Irish Aphaeresis Nurses' Association
- Irish Association of Critical Care Nurses
- Irish Nurses Cardiovascular Association
- Irish Breast Care Nurses' Association
- Irish Lung Cancer Nurses' Group
- Irish Association of Urology Nurses
- HAING - Haematology Association of Ireland Nurses' Group
- ISCCNA - Irish Stoma Care and Colorectal Nurses' Association

A significant amount of the traffic on the website is from outside Ireland. About 78% of all traffic is from Ireland, 11% from the UK, 2% from Europe and 9% from America and Asia.





In total 274,099 visitors have logged on to the website to date with the total number of hits (i.e. opening or downloading of a document from the website) amounting to 939,756. For the period January to November 2006 the total number of visitors was 20,145 and the total number of hits was 31,071.

The website is developing as a portal website that provides access to a wide range of nursing- and midwifery-related information and contributes to our overall aim of leading and enhancing the professional development of nursing and midwifery in Ireland.

SECTION 4

Publications of the National Council

The National Council has produced a wide range of publications to support its work. The following table provides a list of publications and a brief account of the purpose and content of each one:

2001 Publications



Criteria and Process for the Allocation of Additional Funding for Continuing Education

February

This document outlines the criteria and processes involved in the allocation of additional funding for continuing professional development and education for nurses and midwives.



Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialists - Intermediate Pathway

April

This document outlines the process for establishment of CNS/CMS posts and the criteria that nurses and midwives must meet in order to become CNSs/CMSs.



Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts

May

This document provides a definition of the role of the ANP/AMP and defines the criteria that nurses and midwives must meet to in order to be accredited as ANPs/AMPs.



National Council Newsletter

Issues 1 to 4

The newsletter of the National Council was introduced in 2001 and was intended as a platform for the dissemination of information and analysis of issues of relevance to nurses and midwives in Ireland.

2002 Publications



Guidelines on the Development of Courses Preparing Nurses and Midwives as Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialists and Advanced Nurse/Midwife Practitioners

May

These guidelines were produced to assist providers of continuing/post-registration education programmes for CNS/CMS and for ANP/AMPs. It provides guidelines in relation to development, design and evaluation of programmes.

2002 Publications (continued)**National Council Newsletter**

Issues 5 to 8

The newsletter continued to provide information on developments of relevance to nursing and midwifery in Ireland. In this year a series of detailed analyses on the implications of the Health Service Reform Programme was introduced aimed at familiarising nurses and midwives with the details and implications of the reform programme

2003 Publications**Agenda for the Future Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery**

May

A nation-wide consultation process was carried out from March 2002 to March 2003. Workshops were held with directors of nursing and midwifery, directors of the nursing and midwifery planning and development units, and nurses and midwives from all divisions of the register. A call for submissions yielded 105 written responses. The report benchmarks progress to date for general, midwifery, mental health, children's, intellectual disability and older person nursing and sets the agenda for a debate on options, direction and actions for the future. Continuing professional development emerges as the predominant issue in this report for all areas of nursing and is viewed as vital to developing nursing and midwifery practice in modern health structures.

**Guidelines for Portfolio Development for Nurses and Midwives**

September

These guidelines are aimed at individual nurses and midwives working at the forefront of healthcare delivery, for the three-fold purpose of assisting them to identify, reflect upon and record the contribution they make to direct and indirect care, encouraging them to store records of their development in a coherent and structured manner and providing guidance and information on achieving their individual professional goals within the context of the needs of the health service.

**Guidelines for Health Service Providers for the Selection of Nurses and Midwives who Might Apply for Financial Support in Seeking Opportunities to Pursue Further Education**

November

This document was produced to assist managers of health services in the selection of individuals seeking financial support to pursue further education and professional development.

**National Council Newsletter**

Issues 9 to 12

The newsletter continued to disseminate and analyse information of relevance to the profession. In particular, detailed explanations and analysis of the Health Service Reform Programme were featured.



2004 Publications



An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Role of the Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialist

January

This report benchmarks the progress of clinical specialties in nursing and midwifery in Ireland to the present time. Ireland is at an early stage of development of these roles within a formalised framework as set out by the *Report of the Commission on Nursing* (Government of Ireland 1998). The cohorts of CNSs/CMSs in post have clearly embraced the core concepts of the role and have been empowered to improve the quality of care for patients/clients: there is overwhelming support for the effectiveness of the role of the CNS/CMS. It is also clear that there is great potential for the role to develop as it continues to respond to service need. This report outlines critical areas for progress and describes a process for future development of roles at local, regional and national levels. The report makes recommendations regarding role development, continuing professional development, development of posts and annual reviews of posts on a local, regional and national basis.



Report on the Continuing Professional Development of Staff Nurses and Staff Midwives

May

There is growing evidence of the need to link continuing professional development (CPD) with organisational goals. This report examines CPD issues relevant to staff nurses and staff midwives by reviewing: CPD activities of staff nurses and midwives; competency achievement and maintenance relevant to service need and personal professional development; career choice relevant to CPD; and competency of staff nurses and staff midwives. The data collection methods for this report included: a literature review, focus groups and questionnaire. Staff nurses from general, mental health, intellectual disability and children's nursing and staff midwives were invited to participate. Nurses and midwives from cities, towns and rural areas were represented, as were those working in community and in-patient settings. Recommendations are made concerning the development of structures to support CPD for staff nurses and staff midwives.



Framework for the Establishment of Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialist Posts

2nd Edition
November

Building on the 2001 edition and the National Council executive's accumulated experience, this document outlines the process for establishing CNS/CMS posts and the criteria that nurses and midwives must meet in order to become CNSs/CMSs. Core competencies for CNS/CMS posts are provided.



Framework for the Establishment of Advanced Nurse and Advanced Midwife Practitioner Posts

2nd Edition
July

This document, building on the framework outlined in the first edition, outlines the background to the development of ANP/AMP posts in Ireland. It defines ANP/AMP roles and outlines the criteria that nurses and midwives must meet in order to become ANPs/AMPs. It also provides guidance for managers, nurses and midwives who are working through the processes. Templates are provided to assist in the application processes.



National Council Newsletter

Issues 13 to 15

The *National Council Newsletter* continued to be used as platforms for the dissemination and analysis of information relevant to the development of nursing and midwifery within the health services. In particular, detailed analysis of the Health Service Reform Programme continued to be provided.

2004 Publications (continued)



NCNM Quarterly Review

Issue 16

The nature of the information and analysis that had been provided in the National Council Newsletter had developed to such an extent at this point that it was considered appropriate to re-brand it and it is now referred to as the *NCNM Quarterly Review*.

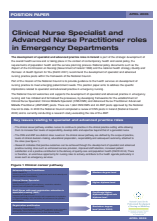
2005 Publications



An Evaluation of the Extent and Nature of Nurse-Led/Midwife-Led Services in Ireland

April

The terms of reference for the study were to: examine the literature pertaining to the nurse-led/midwife-led care services, identify the extent of nurse-led/midwife-led care services in Ireland and to make recommendations on future areas for developments for nurse-/midwife-led care in Ireland. The methodology employed consisted of focus groups, questionnaire and a literature review. The diversity and multiplicity of the nurse-/midwife-led services in place suggest that nurses and midwives are able to respond to patient/client need in a flexible and appropriate manner, allowing the development to occur within a multidisciplinary context. To date these initiatives have been driven by service need and a desire by nurses and midwives, both at senior and clinical levels, to improve the quality of the patient/client care. It is also evident that as these services develop they are being audited and measured for clinical effectiveness and patient satisfaction. It is recommended that a business plan approach is adopted to aid the development of nurse-led/midwife-led services - a template to assist this is provided.



Clinical Nurse Specialist and Advanced Nurse Practitioner Roles in Emergency Departments: Position Paper

April

This position paper reviews progress of specialist and advanced practice in emergency departments to date, identifies key components of role development for specialist and advanced nursing practice within an emergency context and outlines the areas that require further development in order to enhance service. A focused needs assessment tool for managers is provided.



Agenda for the Future Professional Development of Public Health Nursing

June

A nation-wide consultation was carried out from November 2004 to February 2005. Workshops were held with directors of public health nursing, assistant directors of public health nursing, public health nurses engaged in clinical practice and other key stakeholders. The main concerns expressed by participants related to role clarity, workload demands, variation in service provision and delivery of care, the clinical career pathway, leadership, skill-mix and multidisciplinary team working. The report benchmarks progress to date and sets an agenda for future actions.



Nursing and Midwifery Research Priorities for Ireland

June

Drawing upon the national *Research Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland*, a study to identify the research priorities for nursing and midwifery in Ireland was carried out under the auspices of the National Council. The report was compiled by a team of researchers from University College, Dublin led by Dr Therese Meehan (Meehan, 2005).



2005 Publications (continued)



Review of Nurses and Midwives in the Prescribing and Administration of Medicinal Products - Final Report

June, jointly with An Bord Altranais

This report is the culmination of a three-and-a-half year project conducted jointly by the National Council and An Bord Altranais. The report includes an updated literature review, legislative issues, policy developments, activity trail, education programme, current healthcare policy and recommendations. The report identified the need for nurses and midwives in Ireland to expand their medication management practices to include prescribing medications where appropriate.



Review of Nurses and Midwives in the Prescribing and Administration of Medicinal Products - Summary

June, jointly with An Bord Altranais

This document provides a summary of the main report (see above).



The Development of Joint Appointments: A Framework for Irish Nursing and Midwifery

September

This document provides guidance in the form of a framework for institutions and individuals involved in making joint appointments between services, voluntary organisations, educational institutions and/or other organisations. The report provides an overview of national and international literature and experiences. The need for clear structures and supports are identified as critical success factors. The National Council has created a framework to assist those involved in planning such roles.



Service Needs Analysis for Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialists and Advanced Nurse/Midwife Practitioner Posts

September

This paper identifies factors necessary for a service to conduct a needs analysis to determine whether specialist or advanced levels of nursing and midwifery practice are required to deliver a high-quality service. A business case template is provided.



Preliminary Evaluation of the Role of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner

September

This report shows that ANP roles have been successful wherever they have been introduced. The posts are located over a wide variety of care areas, indicating that roles have developed in response to health service need. The strong clinical focus of the ANP role identified in the study suggests that one of the original aims of the Commission on Nursing (Government of Ireland, 1998), namely, the retention of expert nurses in direct patient care, has been achieved.



NCNM Quarterly Review

Issues 17 to 20

The *NCNM Quarterly Review* continues to be used as a platform for the analysis and dissemination of information of relevance to the profession in the context of developments within the health services.

2006 Publications



Guidelines for Portfolio Development for Nurses and Midwives

2nd Edition
February

These guidelines are aimed at individual nurses and midwives working at the forefront of healthcare delivery, for the purpose of assisting them to identify, reflect upon and record the contribution they make to direct and indirect care, encouraging them to store records of their development in a coherent and structured manner and providing guidance and information on achieving their individual professional goals within the context of the needs of the health service. This publication provides an update on the original document published by the National Council in 2003. The document provides 14 sample record sheets and is accompanied by a CD containing Microsoft Word versions of the record sheets and an Adobe Acrobat pdf version of the *Guidelines*.



Report on the Baseline Survey of Research Activity in Irish Nursing and Midwifery

February

This report provides a picture of nursing and midwifery research activity in Ireland for the period December 2002 to 2004. A number of recommended actions support the recommendations of the national *Research Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland* (DoHC 2003, p.9). Other recommendations are set out for building upon the baseline established by this project.



A Guide to Sharing Practice and Quality Developments with Other Colleagues

June

This publication is intended to help nurses and midwives prepare details of practice and quality developments for inclusion on the National Council's all-Ireland on-line practice and quality database.



Measurement of Nursing and Midwifery Interventions: Guidance and Resource Pack

September

This is a two-part document. Part one contains a report on a study of nursing and midwifery interventions and the measurement of their outcomes taking place in Ireland. Part two contains the *Guidance and Resource Pack*, which aims to assist nurses, midwives and services to select and assess nursing and midwifery interventions as part of a quality improvement initiative. The document is accompanied by a CD containing Adobe Acrobat pdf versions of the two books.



Improving the Patient Journey - Understanding Integrated Care Pathways

September

This publication aims to promote the use of integrated care pathways by nurses and midwives in order to improve the patient's journey.



NCNM Quarterly Review

Issues 21 to 24

The *NCNM Quarterly Review* continues to be used as a platform for the analysis and dissemination of information of relevance to the profession in the context of developments within the health services.

SECTION 5

The Quarterly Review

In addition to these publications, the National Council publishes a quarterly review (*NCNM Quarterly Review*), containing articles on items of interest to nurses and midwives, including updates on developments within the Health Services. The *Quarterly Review* is disseminated to all nurses and midwives on the Register (ca. 60,000) four times a year. It has developed a reputation as an authoritative and instructive source of information on many issues of relevance to the development of professional practice for nurses and midwives in Ireland.

Over the past two years the *Quarterly Review* has contained a detailed ongoing analysis of the Health Service Reform Programme, including detailed analysis of the implications for nursing and midwifery of the strategic analyses and reports that have been produced as part of the Health Service Reform Programme.



SECTION 6

Continuing Education

The National Council has an important role to play in providing nurses and midwives with additional continuing education opportunities that enhance their ability to maximise their potential in their chosen clinical career pathway. Over the past six years the Council has disbursed a total of €13.5 million that has been used to fund 641 such initiatives as professional and service developments, courses, seminars and workshops. Over 20,000 nurses and midwives have benefited directly and indirectly from these initiatives.

The funds are disbursed on the basis of applications received via the NMPDUs and assessed in accordance with a set of criteria that has been agreed by the National Council. Awards made are subject to conditions such as:

- Acknowledgement of the support of the National Council in any documentation related to the programme
- Delivery of the programme as described in the submission plan
- Timely submission of progress reports
- Submission of evaluation report on completion of the programme
- Availability of project details to other regions/services on a national basis, if requested, and on the National Council's website
- Sustainability of the outcomes of the project.

Once an award has been made and an initiative has commenced, the promoters are required to submit one or more six-monthly progress reports to confirm that the project is proceeding in line with the project plan outlined in the application. A final evaluation is then required to be submitted on completion of the project. In this way accountability in the use of funds is ensured.

Below are five examples of the projects that have been supported by the National Council:

Regional Practice Development Project for the Development of Gerontological Nursing:

Each health region was given funding for this project in order to develop, improve, enhance and standardise gerontological nursing practice over a two-year period. Evaluations of these programmes have indicated that they have been extremely successful. Various initiatives have been successfully implemented including: the development of evidence-based regional guidelines for nursing older people; the development of CNS posts within care of the older person settings and the implementation of the Essence of Care benchmarking framework.

Population Health in Community Nursing:

This two-year project involves the development of a population health model of community nursing within a number of regions and aiming to (1) identify sources of information on health and health needs and (2) develop a tool for capturing and organising the resulting data.

Regional Nursing Practice Development Project: Intellectual Disability Nursing:

This two-year project taking place in a number of regions is aimed at empowering and supporting nursing staff to lead changes in service provision by equipping them to develop and implement evidence-based practice within the intellectual disability services.

Clinical Audit Skills for CNS/CMS and the Development of a CNS/CMS Resource Pack:

This involves a number of projects aimed at improving the clinical audit skills of CNS/CMS. They have taken place in a number of regions and a resource pack for CNS/CMS has been developed.



Support for the Development of ANP/AMP Roles:

In total the National Council has funded thirty-six continuing education projects relating to the development of ANP/AMP roles. These projects have facilitated needs assessment for ANP/AMP roles, development of job descriptions and site preparation for the implementation of posts.

SECTION 7

Nursing and Midwifery Research

A joint appointment between the National Council and the Health Research Board provides the resource for the implementation of the *Research Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery in Ireland* (Department of Health and Children, January 2003). Since the five-year framework was implemented eighteen of its twenty-one recommendations have either been completed or are in progress.

In 2005 *Nursing and Midwifery Research Priorities for Nursing and Midwifery for Ireland* (National Council, June 2005) was published. This report was compiled by a team of researchers in UCD under the direction of Dr Therese Meehan on behalf of the National Council. The report is the first of its kind in Ireland and breaks new ground in the promotion of nursing and midwifery research.

In addition to the implementation of the *Strategy*, the joint appointee has a wide remit across the spectrum of research activity from generation to utilisation. One of the initiatives generated include the Junior Clinician Scientist for Nursing and Midwifery. This initiative aims to release a CNS/CMS or ANP/AMP to undertake a PhD or master's degree by research on a part-time basis and to provide training for the provision of short courses on finding and appraising evidence.

A database of nursing and midwifery research is in the early stages of development. In addition, funding was gained through the Health Research Board in 2005 from the European Union's *Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development*. This funding enabled the implementation of an international collaborative project (of which Ireland was a partner) concerned with scoping nursing and midwifery research in Europe.

SECTION 8

Nurse and Midwife Prescribing

The Review of Nurses and Midwives in the Prescribing and Administration of Medicinal Products was a three-and-a-half-year project jointly undertaken by the National Council and An Bord Altranais. Initiated in 2001, the review included:

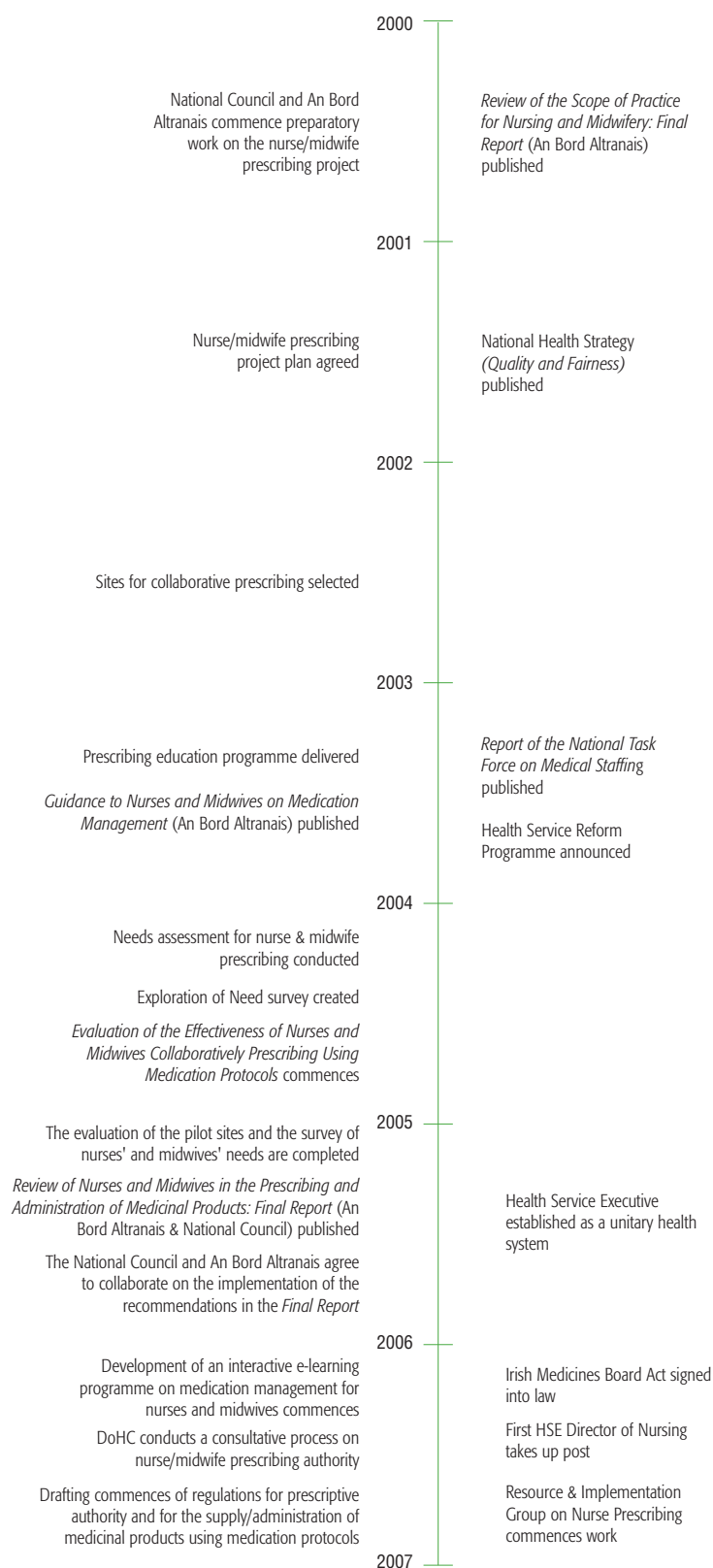
- A comprehensive review of medication management by nurses and midwives and related issues
- A series of medication management seminars, focus groups and discussions with nurses and midwives
- An assessment and survey of the need for nurse and midwife prescribing in Ireland
- An evaluation of collaborative prescribing by nurses and midwives at selected pilot sites.

The project team employed jointly by the National Council and An Bord Altranais has continued to support the recommendations of the Review. Two documents have been agreed as part of this process and are ready for production once the process of preparing legislation has been completed. These are:

- The Requirements and Standards for Educational Programmes for Nurse and Midwife Prescribing
- Guidelines on Protocol Development for Nurse and Midwife Prescribing.

Six-monthly progress reports on the implementation process are submitted to the boards of the National Council and An Bord Altranais.

Timeline



SECTION 9

Master Classes

The National Council organises a series of spring and autumn master classes. The master classes are delivered by nurses and midwives who are experts in their area of practice at home and abroad. To date the National Council has hosted many speakers from Ireland, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. One highlight, out of many, included a series of master classes targeted at directors of nursing and midwifery entitled *Nursing Leadership in the Politics of Health*. The series was delivered by Professor Mary Chiarella, former Chief Nurse of New South Wales, author and international expert in health law, nursing ethics and nursing legal issues, nursing professional practice, politics and policy in nursing. The feedback from this series of classes, and indeed all of the master classes to date, has been extremely positive.

Of all the master classes perhaps those that are most well received are those delivered by Irish 'entrepreneurial' nurses and midwives who have discussed how they developed their ANP role. The practice areas that are addressed include care of the older person, intellectual disability, midwifery, critical care, psychiatry, diabetes, oncology and health policy. Each master class is evaluated and ideas and suggestions for further classes are sought from participants.

Overview of Master Classes Hosted by the National Council

YEAR	MASTER CLASS
2002	Dr Maureen Coombs, Consultant Nurse (Critical Care): <i>The Consultant Nurse in Critical Care - From Rhetoric to Reality</i>
2003	Professor Kevin Gournay, Professor of Psychiatric Nursing: <i>Developments in Evidence-Based Mental Health Nursing</i>
2003	Valerie Small, Advanced Nurse Practitioner (Emergency): <i>The Development of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner Role</i>
2004	Rick Owens and Rick Robson, Valuing People Support Team: <i>Valuing Interdisciplinary Working</i>
2004	P J Boyle, Clinical Nurse Specialist (Asylum Seekers' Health): <i>Developing Culturally Competent Health Services</i>
2005	Mary Wilson, Pre-Assessment ENT/Maxillofacial Sister: <i>The Development of Nurse-Led Pre-Assessment Clinics for Surgical Patients</i>
2005	Professor Frances Hughes, Director of the Centre of Mental Health Research, Policy and Service Development: <i>Political Development of Nurses: Key to Leading the Health Agenda</i>
2006	Professor Brendan McCormack, Director of Nursing Research and Practice Development: <i>Person-Centred Practice with Older People - Models, Methods and Outcomes</i>
2006	Professor Geraldine McCarthy, Professor of Nursing: <i>Research Support for the Advanced Nurse Practitioner: From the Third-Level Perspective</i>

SECTION 10

The National Conference

The annual conference of the National Council is held in November of each year. The one-day conference is repeated over two days in order to cater for the demand for places. Each year 1,000 nurses and midwives attend this conference to listen to presentations from Irish and international experts in nursing and midwifery on the latest professional developments in the various branches of the profession. The conference is usually opened by the Minister for Health and Children and addressed by the Secretary General of the Department of Health and Children and, in the last two years, by the Chief Executive of the Health Service Executive.

The conference also includes poster presentations by nurses and midwives from all over the country. Each year the number of poster presentations on display at the conference has increased, peaking most recently at over 150. The poster presentations are a testament to the initiative and innovation of nurses and midwives in developing their practice within the Health Services as part of multidisciplinary teams.



SECTION 11

Communication

In order to be effective, the National Council needs to develop and sustain close links and partnership relationships with a wide range of stakeholder groups and organisations. With this in mind the Executive of the National Council organises regular meetings and briefing sessions with representatives of the following organisations:

- The Department of Health and Children
- The Health Service Executive
- The Interim Health Information and Quality Authority (iHIQA)
- Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units (NMPDUs)
- An Bord Altranais
- Irish Nurses' Organisation
- Psychiatric Nurses' Association
- SIPTU
- Irish Universities Association (Heads of Schools of Nursing and/or Midwifery)
- Centres for Nurse Education
- Irish Association of Directors of Nursing and Midwifery
- Irish Clinical Nurse Managers' Association (Entrust)

In addition, the Executive of the National Council meets regularly with the directors of nursing and midwifery. Regular briefing sessions for the directors are organised on a regional basis in collaboration with the NMPDUs.

The Executive of the National Council also meets regularly with representatives of specialist groups of nurses, many of which use the website of the National Council to host their own specialist website (see Section 3 - The Website of the National Council).

The Executive of the National Council is frequently called upon to exchange knowledge, experience and resources with nursing and midwifery organisations and authorities on an international basis. As a result of this, for example, the nursing authorities of New South Wales and New Zealand have requested permission to use the CNS/CMS Questionnaire developed by the National Council in order to replicate the study in their own countries. Similarly, in Queensland, the Prime Minister and Minister for Health have met representatives of the Executive of the National Council to discuss the Council's CNS/CMS and ANP/AMP Framework documents and the International Council of Nurses (ICN) in Switzerland have requested permission to publish the documents of the National Council on their official website.

SECTION 12

Additional Professional Development Support for Nurses and Midwives

Through the day-to-day work of the professional development officers of the National Council and other members of the Executive a range of additional professional development support activities for nurses and midwives are provided. These include seminars, open days, site visits, telephone, e-mail and written correspondence.

This support is provided in such areas as:

- continuing education
- research
- career progression
- job descriptions
- management advice and support.

SECTION 13

Conclusion

Over the past six years, the National Council has built up a store of expertise and resources that are unprecedented in the history of nursing and midwifery in Ireland. The National Council has built on its mandate contained in the Statutory Instrument No. 396 of 1999, and on the seminal work of the *Report of the Commission on Nursing* (1998). The National Council has enthusiastically embraced its role as a leader in the professional development of Irish nursing and midwifery in line with the emerging and changing needs of the health services of this country.

This analysis of the achievements of the National Council is intended to provide a platform for the planning of the work of the Council in the years to come.



National Council for the
Professional Development
of Nursing and Midwifery

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta d'Fhorbairt
Ghairmiúil an Altranais agus
an Chnámhseachais