



Australian Government

**Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing**

Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Reference Group

Terms of Reference 2026

1. Purpose

The Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Reference Group (NMSRG) was established to enable key nursing and midwifery peak bodies to provide comment and advice to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the Department) and the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer (CNMO) on system, policy and strategic issues.

2. Role and Function

- Provide a strategic nursing and midwifery perspective to the Department and CNMO on relevant key policy issues as they arise
- Facilitate the exchange of information and advice on national nursing and midwifery policy and programs between the Department and the NMSRG
- Facilitate wide dissemination of information to the nursing and midwifery professions

3. Membership

Membership is on a representative basis. The Group will include:

- Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (Chair)

And one (1) representative from each of the following organisations:

- Aged and Community Care Providers Association Ageing Australia
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses
- Australian College of Midwives
- Australian College of Nurse Practitioners
- Australian College of Nursing
- Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Healthcare
- Australian Digital Health Agency
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
- Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association
- Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives
- Consumers Health Forum
- Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand)
- CRANAPlus
- Defence Force Nursing
- Department of Veterans' Affairs – Nursing
- Deputy Rural Health Commissioner
- National Enrolled Nurse Advisory Council
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
- Vocational Educational Sector – Nursing
- two (2) representatives from the Australian Council of Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers (ACCNMO)
- two (2) representatives nursing or midwifery from the Private Hospital sector nominated by Australian Private Hospitals Association and Catholic Health Australia

The Chair can co-opt members as required.

4. Terms of Appointment

Each member is appointed based on their individual skills, knowledge and expertise and holds their appointment at the discretion of their organisation and the Department.

5. Proxies

Where a member is unable to attend a meeting, proxies **will be** allowed. The Chair must be notified in advance of the expected attendance of the proxy. A proxy attendee will be required to complete all relevant onboarding paperwork prior to attending a meeting.

6. Operation

The Chair will preside at all meetings at which they are present. If the Chair is absent from the meeting, a Deputy Chair will preside.

The NMSRG will meet a minimum of four (4) times per year. Meetings can be face to face or virtual.

The NMSRG may be terminated at any time at the discretion of the Department.

7. Quorum

Meetings will only proceed when there is a quorum of 50% of the members plus one (1).

8. Deliverables

At each meeting, the NMSRG will discuss and debate key policy initiatives drawing on their understanding and knowledge of health systems and care delivery.

9. Remuneration

Members will be expected to meet their own travel, accommodation and associated costs.

Remuneration and expenses **may** be paid to a member who is either:

- An unfunded or non-salaried representative of a peak agency or non-government organisation; or
- An individual who would be earning an income if they were not attending the meeting.

10. Secretariat

The work of the NMSRG will be supported by a Secretariat provided by the Department.

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- developing, in consultation with the Chair, agendas for meetings and other business involving the Department
- distributing of agenda and associated material,
- arranging venues and catering for meetings,
- verifying reimbursement of eligible expenses and
- carrying out annual conflict of interest and deed of confidentiality checks.

11. Confidentiality

Members may, on occasion, be provided with confidential material. Members are not to disclose this material to anyone outside NMSRG and are to treat this material with the utmost care and discretion and in accordance with terms of their confidentiality agreement.

12. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest is defined as any instance where a member, partner or close family friend has a direct financial or other interest in matters under consideration or proposed matters for consideration by NMSRG. A member must disclose to the Chair any situation that may give rise to a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest and seek the Chair's agreement to retain the position giving rise to the conflict of interest. Where a member gains agreement to retain their position, the member must not be involved in any related discussion or decision-making process.

A member is not to participate in committee business until the Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll form has been completed.

Proxies may only attend a meeting when they have signed a Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll form.

What conflicts should be declared?

Actual conflicts of interest, where an individual has an interest (whether financial or non-financial) or an affiliation that affects or will affect their ability to perform work under the Appointment fairly and independently has previously worked for, or received funding or gifts from, a company being recommended for a contract

A Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, Privacy and Secrecy Deed Poll form **MUST** be completed by all Members on an annual basis; however, this can be updated at any time as required.