



Strategic Plan

2018-2021

OUR PURPOSE

The Nursing and Midwifery Council of New South Wales is a statutory body that was established in July 2010 under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)*. The Council is part of the national registration and accreditation scheme for health professionals. The Council manages complaints about the conduct, professional performance and health of any registered nurse or midwife or nursing / midwifery student with a principal place of practice in NSW.

VISION

The Council efficiently and effectively minimises risks to public safety through its management of complaints, knowledge sharing and promotion of a culture of safety. Through the Council's work, the system, workplaces and nurses and midwives have an increased understanding of and responsibility for professional standards.

MISSION

To protect public safety and maintain professional standards and trust in the profession through the effective regulation of nurses and midwives and the development of collaborative relationships, in a co-regulatory environment.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Council's strategic directions for the next three years will need to be cognisant of a number of current and emerging factors in its operating environment.

REGULATORY MODEL

The Council operates under a co-regulatory model and works in conjunction with Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (as part of the National Scheme) and with the NSW Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC). While this model has now been in operation for a number of years, further changes to the model can be expected.

In addition, a new national code of conduct for nurses and midwives has been developed, and this will need to be incorporated in the implementation of the model.

RESOURCING AND ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

AHPRA collects national registration fees from nurses and midwives, and the NSW regulatory fee component is distributed to the Council to enable the Health Professional Councils Authority (HPCA) to employ staff to perform the Council's role, provide shared services to the Council and other health practitioner councils in NSW and meet other expenses.

A new HPCA organisational structure has been implemented, resulting in some changes to the Council's staffing, which will have implications for the management of Council operations. In addition, planning and decision-making in relation to the use of Council funds occurs within the broader HPCA context, which provides some challenges for the Council in investing in strategies to develop the Council's systems, processes and capabilities.

CASELOAD

The volume of complaints managed by the Council has increased in recent years, as has their complexity. In the future new models of care and changes in nursing and midwifery roles (including role substitution) will impact on practitioner performance and the complexity of complaints managed by the Council. Other developments include the emergence of new specialty practice areas, (some of which are in high risk areas and / or unregulated) and the increasing use of digital health technologies.

The trend towards person-centred care and personal control of health funds and health records will have implications for the Council's role in terms of the potential for increased complaints.

Factors related to the profile of the profession are also creating the potential for increased complaints – such as the ageing nursing and midwifery workforce and increase in overseas-trained nurses and midwives.

The rate of notifications will also be driven by an increased awareness amongst health professionals of their legal obligations to make a notification, which is actively supported by the Council.

While the volume and complexity of complaints is predicted to increase, income for regulatory services is predicted to decrease due a reduction in the size of the workforce. This will present significant challenges for the Council in managing its future workload.

SYSTEM AND WORKPLACE FACTORS

Practitioner health, performance and conduct are also influenced by both the broader system and by workplace practices, such as preparation of university graduates, resource constraints in workplaces and limited supervision and development.

Through its role in managing complaints, the Council has insights into the patterns and trends in complaints that can be related to broader system or workplace factors and is well-positioned to share information and provide advice on issues which need to be addressed. This is a valuable role for the Council and integral to its focus on prevention and early intervention.

FUTURE FOCUS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council's role is complex and the volume of complaints places significant demands on the Council's resources. The Council will continue to focus on further refining and developing its procedures and tools in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations and to strengthen its preventative focus through its work with partners in the regulatory system

The Council's work is directed at empowering and supporting nurses and midwives to take responsibility for professional standards (self-regulation) – this not only supports the development of a culture of safety, it will enable the Council to manage the projected increase in complexity and volume of complaints in the context of predicted future reduced revenue.

This focus will require closer engagement with partners in the regulatory system, supported by education and information (based on data and evidence), to promote system and workplace support for professional standards.

KEY GOALS FOR 2018-2021

The Council’s primary responsibility is to efficiently and effectively manage complaints, in order to ensure public protection and safety. The Council will need to continue its focus on improving the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of its processes and on developing its capability to support this role. The Council also has a key role to play in working with the regulatory system to address the broader system issues that impact on the performance of the workforce. In particular, the Council can support the system by using data and information about patterns and trends in complaints to provide feedback that can inform strategies at both the system level and in individual workplaces.

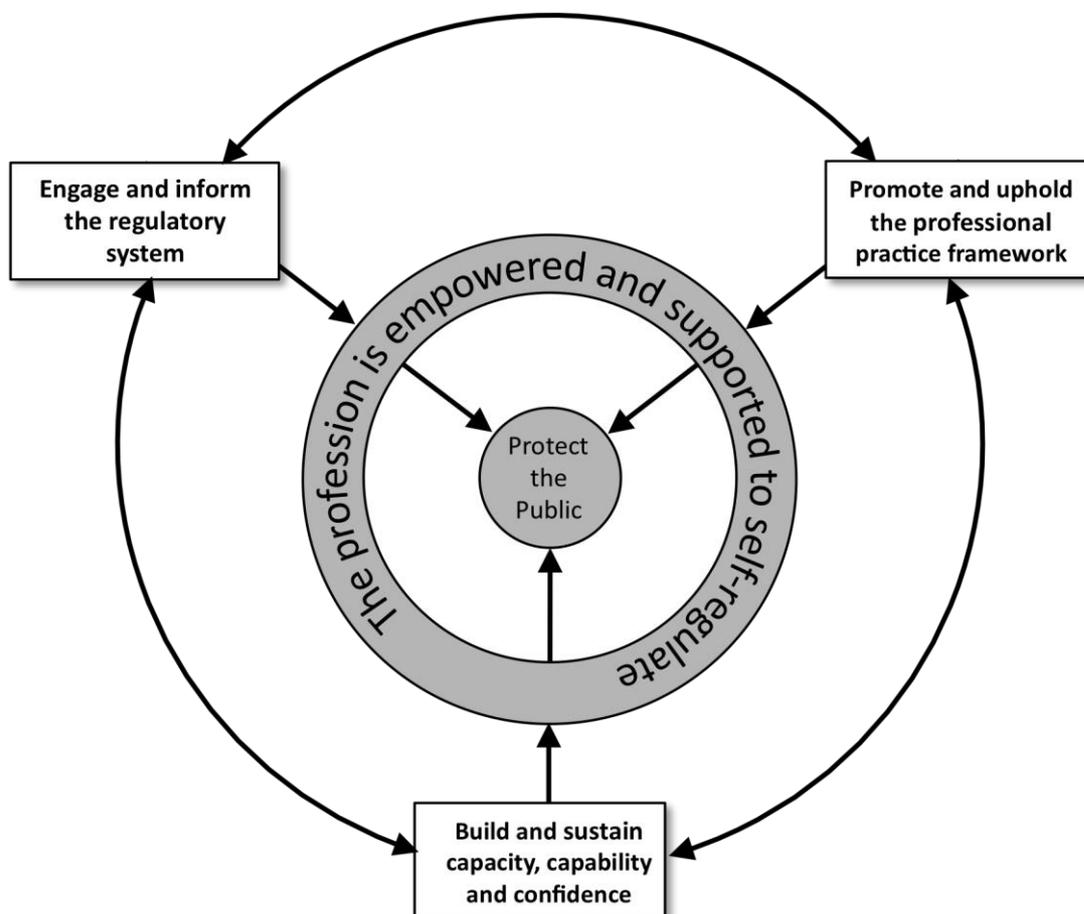
Ultimately, the Council is seeking to support practitioners to self-regulate by informing the system and workplaces and by strengthening its approach to prevention and early intervention.

To achieve this, the Council’s strategic framework for 2018-2021 is based on three key goals:

1. Promote and uphold the professional practice framework
2. Engage and inform the regulatory system
3. Build and sustain capacity, capability and confidence

The strategic framework is illustrated in the figure below.

NMC Strategic Framework 2018-2021



STRATEGIES FOR 2018-2021

NMC will address the key goals for 2018-2021 through the priority strategies outlined below.

Goal	Strategy	Outcome Measures
1 Promote and uphold the professional practice framework	1.1 Effectively manage individual complaints, including strategies to continuously improve and strengthen the complaints management system, processes and tools	The management and resolution of complaints meet established standards for timeliness and accuracy Individual cases are more efficiently and appropriately managed, with responses and treatments targetted to the nature and severity of the case
	1.2 Increase awareness of the professional practice framework, particularly by working in collaboration with partners across the regulatory system	Regulatory system partners, workplaces and registrants are aware of the professional practice framework
	1.3 Strengthen the system, processes and capacity for measuring the efficiency, effectiveness and impacts of the complaints management process	The outcomes and impacts of the complaints management process are measured and reported
	1.4 Develop mechanisms to elicit community feedback to support learning and improvement	The Council provides structured processes to enable community feedback
2 Engage and inform the regulatory system	2.1 Develop a Data Management Plan for collecting, analysing and reporting to regulatory system partners and that identifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key indicators - available NMC and HPCA data sources - available external data sources - key partners to support this role such as external data providers, researchers and the State Data Analytics Centre 	The Data Management Plan is developed and implemented The Council produces data, information and evidence that can inform system and workplace practice
	2.2 Develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan that identifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key stakeholders and their needs and interests - key messages - targeted engagement and communication activities, differentiated by stakeholders where appropriate - processes for evaluating uptake and outcomes 	The Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan is developed and implemented The Council actively engages with stakeholders in a planned and systematic manner Stakeholders have an increased awareness and understanding of the Council's role and approach

Goal	Strategy	Outcome Measures
3 Build and sustain capacity, capability and confidence	3.1 Utilise learning and data to develop capability and improve processes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assessment and audit processes - case discussions and debriefs - orientation programs - mentoring - individual and team development activities 	Councillors and staff actively review and refine policies and procedures Councillor and staff capability is strengthened through development activities informed by learning from review of practices and data
	3.2 Develop and implement tools and resources to support Councillors and staff in managing individual complaints, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a decision making framework (linked to the professional practice framework) - an assessment tool 	New tools and resources are developed and utilised
	3.3 Strengthen processes for collaboration and sharing between HPCA Councils, partners in the NSW regulatory system and regulators across jurisdictions	The Council's processes are strengthened and enhanced through sharing of practices and resources

PRIORITISING AND RESOURCING THE PLAN

The Strategic Plan focuses on a small number of important and achievable strategies and activities. As such, they represent the key priorities for the next three years, and implementation will be prioritised through the development of annual work plan.

In terms of resourcing, implementation of the plan will be largely through the NMC staff, under the responsibility of the Executive Officer. In addition, the Plan will need to be supported by external resources, particularly in relation to activities requiring specialist or additional resources, including:

- development of the Data Management Plan
- development of the Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Strategic Plan covers the three-year period 2018-2021, and will be subject to at least annual review to enable the strategies to be revised in response to changing priorities that reflect changes in the strategic environment, capability and other factors. In addition to annual review, the Council will monitor the implementation and progress of the Plan in the course of its meeting schedule.