

An update on our future!

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Dear nursing and midwifery colleague,

I am writing to update you on our funding position. As you are aware our current funds expire on 30th June 2013. I am pleased to advise we have secured funding for an additional 12 months from the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA).

Naturally, we are very disappointed that at this stage we do not have ongoing funding. As you may recall, in August 2011 the NMHP put the following Resolution to the NMBA; "To grant the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia permission to advise AHPRA to introduce a precise dollar levy on nurse and midwife registrants in any state or territory which wishes to implement a nursing and midwifery specific health service based on the NMHPV model. This dollar levy may vary from state to state depending on the individual states requirements and would only be implemented by these states in favour of such a service.

All funds accrued through this levy will be quarantined for nurses and midwives in that state or territory for this specific purpose. This will provide assistance to nurses and midwives throughout Australia, wherever they may work."

On 20th September 2012 Anne Copeland, NMBA Chair advised that the NMBA will grant the NMHP 12 months funding to allow time to find an alternative funding source. All NMBA contact and support for the NMHP will be severed at the conclusion of this 12 month funding period, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

The NMBA, despite recognising the benefit of the NMHP, does not see its role to support an industry specific health service in any Australia state or territory. We were informed that its role is to regulate the profession and manage impaired nurses and midwives. The NMBA is satisfied that generic support services, such as employer contracted and funded 'employee assistance programs' are adequate in supporting the health and wellbeing of our over 300,000 colleagues across Australia.

Whilst the NMHP is grateful for the 12 month grant, we are aware that the NMBA does have the discretion to provide financial support for health programs and we are therefore extremely disappointed that it has chosen not to exercise its discretion in this instance.

The NMHP is particularly disappointed that the NMBA has been unable to recognise and embrace an opportunity to lead a first world initiative in response to a critical industry challenge; attracting, maintaining and retaining a healthy nursing and midwifery workforce.

Despite this setback we are committed to continuing to support our colleagues in Victoria who play such an integral role in our health service.

We will continue to work to find a viable funding source ensuring this critically important service remains well beyond 30 June 2014. I will keep you informed of our progress.

On behalf of the Team and our Board of Directors I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very safe and healthy festive season. The NMHP will be open across the Christmas and New Year period except for public holidays.

For advice and guidance on matters related to nurse and midwife health call the office on (03) 9415 7551.