



## > Health Workforce Australia: National Training Plan - Clinical Advisory Group Meeting

On 9 November 2011 Health Workforce Australia (HWA) held a meeting in Sydney which brought together representatives from stakeholder groups who had participated in the series of clinical advisory meetings held during October. As reported in the October National News these meetings considered nursing and midwifery workforce issues for the following specific areas:

- mental health nursing;
- acute and critical care nursing;
- aged care nursing;
- enrolled nursing; and
- midwifery.

Participants in this combined meeting were presented with information which will be included in the final report from HWA due to be sent to Health Ministers mid December 2011. The ANF has stressed that strategies are urgently needed to drive improvements in the data, so that well-informed decisions can be made about the nursing and midwifery workforce; and that an on-going clinical advisory group should be established to continue to advise HWA on nursing and midwifery workforce issues.

## > Australian Council on Social Services (ACOSS) Forum and AGM

As a member organisation, the ANF was represented at the ACOSS Forum and Annual General Meeting held in Sydney on 18 November 2011. The Forum topics included:

- *An adequate standard of living for all? Economic inequality, payment and employment policy reform.* This session addressed a ranged of perspectives on social security and employment policy, with a view to developing strategies for future advocacy by ACOSS. This topic is of interest to ANF members who deal with the adverse health effects of economic and employment inequality in their daily practice.
- *Evaluating the gender diversity of not-for-profit sector leadership.* This session launched the inaugural gender audit of community services developed by YWCA Australia, ACOSS and Women on boards to track gender diversity in the sector, particularly at leadership levels, and to celebrate the Centenary of International Women's Day. This topic is of interest to ANF members because despite making up over half the health workforce, nurses and midwives experience issues in breaking into senior executive leadership positions in the health and aged care sectors.
- *Developing the sector: for what and by whom?* This session considered issues related to resourcing the not-for-profit sector to ensure viability in provision of services and advocacy for marginalised individuals and communities. ANF members either work in this sector or rely on being able to refer people to the services provided.

ANF members are encouraged to visit the ACOSS website to peruse the range of social justice issues on the agenda - [www.acoss.org.au](http://www.acoss.org.au).

> Health Workforce Australia (HWA) Health Professions Standing Advisory Committee

The HWA Health Professions Standing Advisory Committee was established in April 2011. The ANF represents nursing and midwifery on this committee. The third meeting of the Committee was held on Friday 4 November 2011 in Adelaide. All HWA Standing Advisory Committees (SAG's) are chaired by a HWA Board member, with the Chair of this SAG being Professor of Nursing, Mary Chiarella. The purpose of the HWA SAG's is to engage key stakeholders in providing high level advice and inputs on a national level to HWA's work program and act as a cohesive sounding board for testing and responding to HWA programs and initiatives. The next meeting of the Health Professions SAG is scheduled to be held in February 2012.

> Health Workforce Australia (HWA) Short Term Employment Demand Expert Reference Group

Health Workforce Australia (HWA) undertook a project earlier in the year at the request of the Jurisdictional Policy Committee, to consider and advise on options to respond to the employment demand arising from increasing numbers of new nurse graduates and medical interns. Consulting firm KPMG was engaged to assist with this review. An Expert Reference Group (ERG) for Nursing and Midwifery was established at the beginning of the year to provide advice on this project. The ANF is represented on the ERG. The Final Report to Health Ministers in July 2011 provided a review and analysis of the short-term imbalance between demand for positions by students completing their studies in 2011 against supply of positions across all employment sectors in 2012 and an overview of potential solutions. Further project work on recommendations from the report has been undertaken. The ERG was reconvened by HWA on 15 November 2011 to provide advice on the development of a web-based information portal. It is anticipated that the portal will be established before the end of 2011.

> Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement Programs Reference Group

The PRG meeting for the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA) was held in Canberra on Friday 25 November 2011. The Fifth Agreement between the Australian Government and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia commenced on 1 July 2010. The ANF Federal Office has been invited by the Minister for Health and Ageing to serve as a member of the PRG representing nursing and allied health until 30 June 2015. The PRG consists of a number of representatives from peak groups and experts, both within and external to the pharmacy sector. The role of the group is to provide advice on the policy dimensions of the pharmacy programs, including their scope and evaluation requirements. Issues for discussion at the November meeting included: the Home Medicines Review Program, the Section 100 Support Allowance, the Research and Development Program, the 5CPA Program Evaluations and 5CPA new initiatives - Medication Charts, Continued Dispensing and MedsCheck/Diabetes MedsCheck. PRG meetings for 2012 will be held in April, August and November.

> Telehealth Advisory Group

The Telehealth Advisory Group (TAG) was established by the Australian Government to advise the Department of Health and Ageing on the rollout, implementation, training and evaluation of the *Connecting Health Services with the Future* (Telehealth) initiative. The ANF is represented on the TAG. This initiative, which commenced 1 July 2011, provides financial support for online videoconferencing to connect patients in rural, remote and outer metropolitan areas to specialist services. Funding allows for health professionals to provide support at the patient-end of the online consultation. The medical specialist, consultant physician or psychiatrist can be on one end of the consultation with the patient on the other. Where it is determined that clinical support is required there is a rebate for the practice nurse, nurse practitioner, general practitioner, midwife or aboriginal health worker to also be in attendance. This is an important step towards connecting the patient with the broader health care team for the provision of more accessible, integrated, collaborative care. The fifth meeting of the group was held on Wednesday 30 November 2011 in Brisbane. Items for discussion included: after

hours access; the evaluation and review plan; analysis of claims data; and updates on the Telehealth Technical Standards, training and support for practitioners, professional standards development and compliance requirements. The Department released an Invitation to Apply for funding for the training and support component mid November with applications due to close on Tuesday 13 December 2011.

> **Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards Working Group Sub-Group**

Work has continued this month on the development of a Green Paper for consultation with the profession on the revision of the RN Accreditation Standards. ANF Federal Office is represented on the Working Group established to undertake the review of these national standards. A sub group of the Working Group met on November 14 in Canberra to progress work on the consultation paper which will be circulated for comment from the profession mid December. Feedback is due by the end of January 2012. Once again the ANF urges the State and Territory Branches and all members to keep informed of this project and participate in providing written comment to consultation papers. It is essential that the Bachelor of Nursing program continue to be conducted in the university sector to ensure that our professional standards on nursing and midwifery education are maintained.

> **Respecting Patient Choices National Reference Group**

The second meeting of the Respecting Patient Choices (RPC) National Reference Group for 2011 was held on Monday 21 November. ANF Federal Office is represented on the NRG. This group is responsible for the oversight of the RPC Program, a national project supported by the Australian Government through the National Palliative Care Program. The project aims to continue to build the evidence for advance care planning in Australia, using the RPC model, and to raise the awareness of advance care planning among health care professionals and the community. At the meeting a report was given of the 'Making Health Choices' project. This project involved the development, trial and evaluation of a sustainable model for implementing advance care planning in residential aged care facilities (RACFs) throughout Australia. An implementation model and education package were piloted and evaluated in 19 RACFs in Victoria with the resultant project recommendation of a staged implementation of the ACP program across the residential aged care sector Australia-wide. The International Society for Advance Care Planning is currently planning for their third International Conference to be held in Chicago, May 2012. For details go to: [www.acpelsociety.com/society.asp](http://www.acpelsociety.com/society.asp).

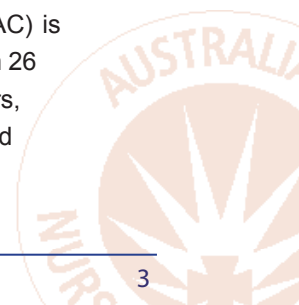
> **Joint ANF/RCNA Pandemic Influenza Working Group**

The last meeting of this Working Group for 2011 was held via teleconference on 23 November 2011. The Group noted that, although at low levels, strains of influenza virus (including H1N1 2009) are still active in pockets across the globe. The essential message to nurses and midwives is to maintain vigilance regarding influenza infection by: obtaining vaccination for themselves and promoting vaccination against influenza to the public. The group was advised of the report Review of Australia's Health Sector Response to Pandemic (H1N1) 2009: Lessons Identified, which is available from: [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/panflu/publishing.nsf/Content/review-2011/\\$File/lessons%20identified-oct11.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/panflu/publishing.nsf/Content/review-2011/$File/lessons%20identified-oct11.pdf)

The Joint Working Group will be following up with the Australian Health Protection Committee as to what actions will ensue from the Recommendations of the Review.

> **Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) Review of Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards**

As reported last month the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) is conducting a nine month project to review the Registered Nurse Accreditation Standards. On 26 October the ANMAC held the first of a scheduled two consultation forums for key stakeholders, in Sydney. The ANF Federal Office representatives attended in the capacities of: Board



member of ANMAC and Chair of the Education Sub-committee; member of the ANMAC Accreditation Standards Review Working Party; and, representing the ANF as a major stakeholder. Feedback from this initial consultation will inform the preparation of a Green Paper which will be circulated to stakeholders for comment before the end of the year. A second consultation forum will then be held in April 2012. The ANF urges the State and Territory Branches and all members to keep informed of this project and participate in providing written comment to consultation papers. This is our opportunity to show solidarity by re-stating the union's view that the Bachelor of Nursing program continue to be conducted in the university sector, and to ensure that our professional standards on nursing and midwifery education are not eroded for economic gains.

The full submission, found under 'Submissions' on the Federal Office website outlines specific issues of concern relating to: pseudonymous healthcare identifiers, serious invasion of privacy, and, authentication.



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**LEE THOMAS**  
Federal Secretary



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvonne".

**YVONNE CHAPERON**  
Assistant Federal Secretary

For more information about any of the above items contact your ANF state or territory Branch, the NSW Nurses Association (ANF NSW Branch) or the Queensland Nurses Union (ANF QLD Branch).