



Bord Altranais agus
Cnámhseachais na hÉireann
Nursing and Midwifery
Board of Ireland

Being a Board Member

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1. About the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), formerly called An Bord Altranais, has two main objectives:

- To protect the public.
- To protect the integrity of the practice of nursing and midwifery.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board is the statutory body which sets the standards for the education, registration and professional conduct of nurses and midwives. We advise on how nurses and midwives should provide care to patients, their families and society.

Our functions in safeguarding the public involve establishing and maintaining the Register of Nurses and Midwives. We also establish procedures and criteria for assessment and registration. Additionally, we approve education programmes and further education programmes.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board sets standards of practice and provides support for registered nurses and midwives. This includes developing, publishing and reviewing:

- A code of professional conduct and ethics.
- Guidance on professional conduct.
- Guidance on maintaining professional competence.

Through our fitness to practise functions, the Nursing and Midwifery Board is responsible for considering complaints against nurses and midwives.

2. What is the Board of the NMBI?

The Board of the NMBI has 23 members with a lay majority of 12.

Of the remaining 11 members, eight are registered nurses and midwives elected by the professions. The elected members represent the general, children's, psychiatric, intellectual disability, public health and midwifery disciplines. They represent the areas of nurse training, administration and clinical practice.

A further 3 nurses and midwives are appointed by the Minister for Health. All Board members act in a non-executive capacity. There are a number of committees which report to the Board and support the activities of the Board in the governance of its functions.

The Board has a 'lay majority' (more lay members than nurses or midwives). This is viewed internationally as one of the best ways of making sure the public interest is at the centre of all that we do.

3. What are the Committees of the Board of the NMBI?

The Board has established three statutory committees, in addition to a number of other committees. The Fitness to Practise Committee (1985) was established prior to the commencement of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011. This Committee deals with all fitness to practise complaints received before then.

These committees assist the Board in the performance of its functions. Each committee is supported by an NMBI officer of relevant expertise.

The statutory committees are:

- Midwives Committee.
- Preliminary Proceedings Committee.
- Fitness to Practise Committee (1985).
- Fitness to Practise Committee (2011).

The non – statutory Committees are:

- Audit and Risk Committee.
- Governance and Finance Committee.
- Registration Committee.
- Education and Training Committee.

4. What are the functions of the Board?

The Board is responsible for overseeing the governance and strategy of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland, including finance and risk; staffing; legal decisions and strategic planning.

In addition to corporate governance, the main functions of the Board are to:

- Establish and maintain the register of nurses and midwives and the Candidate Register
- Establish procedures and criteria for the assessment and registration of nurses and midwives and the candidate register
- Issue certificates of registration and renewal of registration
- Act as the competent authority for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications of nurses and midwives awarded in or recognised by Member States (EU & EEA).
- Approve programmes of education and further education for registration purposes and keep these programmes under review
- Specify standards of practice for registered nurses and midwives; including the establishment, publication, maintenance and review of appropriate guidance on
 - professional conduct and ethics for registered nurses and registered midwives;
 - professional competence of registered nurses and registered midwives;
 - a code of professional conduct for registered nurses and registered midwives.
- Specify criteria for specialist nursing and midwifery posts.

- Establish committees to inquire into complaints.
- Make decisions and give directions relating to the imposition of sanctions on registered nurses and registered midwives

5. What is the term of office?

Normally, members hold office for a term of not more than five years from the date of appointment and cannot remain a member for more than two consecutive terms.

6. What skills do you need to be a member of the Board?

The variety of issues to be dealt with will require Board members that can add value through knowledge, experience or expertise gained in their current or previous roles. Members would be expected to bring their professional experience and skills to bear in order make sound decisions and to provide leadership.

This will involve the ability to balance a strategic view of key decisions with a specialist or expert perspective, while being committed to the principle of collective decision making. A patient/ service user focus is essential as our mandate is to protect the public.

Membership also requires understanding and experience of what it takes to develop a well-run, responsive and high performing public sector organisation.

All Board members should be committed to public service. They will be expected to act with integrity and the highest professional standard and to promote fairness, transparency and accountability.

Board members should ideally:

- Have a track record of effective judgement, decision making, initiative and analytical thought
- Demonstrate experience in identifying solutions to complex issues and understanding their impact and implications
- Possess excellent interpersonal and teambuilding skills with proven ability to build relationships with many different stakeholders
- Display excellent oral and written communication skills, with the ability to negotiate and challenge when necessary
- Possess a strong sense of ethics, integrity and probity
- Have the ability to bring objectivity and scrutiny to the governance of the organisation.

In addition, members should:

- Be familiar with the business and regulatory environment in which the Nursing and Midwifery Board operates

- Have experience of Board membership and/or public administration experience.

7. What is the time commitment?

Membership of the NMBI Board requires high levels of engagement. Members will be expected to attend up to 11 Board meetings each year (approx. 17 days) and members may also be nominated to serve on committees or sub groups.

Members will be required to devote as much time to their duties as necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties. This will include time in preparation for Board meetings and attending and preparing for committee meetings, stakeholder events and other ad hoc meetings as required. As a member, it is assumed that you can meet this time commitment.

Members are obliged to comply with the relevant provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016). This Code includes a description of the role and responsibilities of board members.

8. Is the role voluntary?

Board members serve on a part-time basis and there is no remuneration for those employed in the public or civil service.

Members can claim travel and subsistence allowances which will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings or to transact Board business. This is in accordance with approved public sector rates.

Meetings are usually held in the NMBI offices in Blackrock, Co Dublin. Most communication with the Board is electronic and members must be willing to accept communications through electronic means.

9. Is training provided?

Appropriate training is provided to all members.

10. Further information

Stateboards.ie has prepared a self-assessment questionnaire of competencies for anyone interested in becoming a member of a state board. To access, please visit:

<http://stateboards.ie/stateboards/questionnaire/24.htm>

For more information on the Nursing and Midwifery Board and our work, please visit our website www.nmbi.ie. You can also email ceo@nmbi.ie with your questions.

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