

2017-07/002

T:F321.01

28 July, 2017

International Council of Nurses (ICN)
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Switzerland

By email: icn@icn.ch

Tēnā koe

RE Draft Position Statement: Safe Nurse Staffing levels (“the statement”)

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the above. We have consulted members and staff, including professional nurse, and policy, research, and industrial advisers. NZNO strongly supports the ICN having a position statement on safe staffing that describes and endorses the elements underpinning the relationship between safe nurse staffing levels and positive patient outcomes. This is an appropriate area for the ICN to provide an informed position on, and will be useful for both individual nurses and national organisations.

The draft statement has been received very positively, along with some suggestions as follows:

- the statement should reference all nursing scopes, including enrolled nurses (ENs), not just registered nurses (RNs);
- “patient acuity” does not capture other factors which affect patient requirements, such as complexity and dependency;
- the statement should clarify the distinction between those working within a regulated or an unregulated framework;
- the statement should affirm that safe staffing levels require nursing leadership /nurse executives to have control of nursing budgets, not only to be “engaged” and/or have a role at Board level; and
- the position statement should explicitly state that at a country level, a nationally consistent safe staffing methodology and approach should be adopted in-order to provide not only a health but also an economic perspective on the value and impact on safe staffing and nursing, including an ability to undertake benchmarking.

Finally, we recognise that “skills shortages, financial cutbacks..., and substitution” provide a relevant context and rationale for the statement for middle to high income countries (MHIC), but we suggest that the inequitable distribution of nurses globally and the migration of nurses from low to high income countries provides another.

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The statement should recognise and address both imperatives, particularly given internationally recommended strategies¹ to replicate health workforce models in MHIC in low income countries.

We trust the above is useful and look forward to the position statement being finalised.

Nāku noa, nā



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NEW ZEALAND NURSES ORGANISATION (NZNO)

NZNO is the leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand. NZNO represents over 47,000 nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora and health workers on professional and employment related matters. NZNO is affiliated to the International Council of Nurses and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions.

NZNO promotes and advocates for professional excellence in nursing by providing leadership, research and education to inspire and progress the profession of nursing. NZNO represents members on employment and industrial matters and negotiates collective employment agreements.

NZNO embraces te Tiriti o Waitangi and contributes to the improvement of the health status and outcomes of all peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand through influencing health, employment and social policy development enabling quality nursing care provision. NZNO's vision is *Freed to care, Proud to nurse*.

¹ eg World Health Organization. 2016. Working for health and growth: investing in the health workforce. [Report of the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth](#).