



14th April 2011

To whom it may concern

I am writing to alert your committee to difficulties I have encountered when dealing with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency.

I am a registered nurse and completed a post graduate certificate in advanced nursing practice (Rural & Remote) in November of last year. I followed the process outline on the AHPRA website to have my registration endorsed as a rural and isolated practice nurse and submitted the necessary documentation in early February of this year.

On the 21st March 2011 I received a letter dated 22nd February from [REDACTED] (Registration and Assessment Officer AHPRA) requesting that I submit further documentation to support my application. The documents requested were statements of service from 2 employers I had had within the previous 5 years to prove the recency of my professional practice.

The AHPRA requirements, as per their website, to prove recency of practice for a registered nurse are certified documents demonstrating at least 3 months full time employment in the preceding 5 years. I had exceeded this requirement with another employer I had during this 5 year period and had submitted a certified document detailing this employment with my initial application.

On receipt of this letter I immediately contacted AHPRA by telephone to query the necessity of submitting the requested further documents. I was extremely unhappy with the response I received when I queried this, the only response I got was that I must supply evidence of recency of practice. When I attempted to explain that I had already supplied ample evidence of this, I was repeatedly told the same thing. When I asked to speak to someone who had actually looked at the documents I had supplied I was told there was no point and that I had to supply what they had requested. Throughout this conversation I attempted to ascertain why there was a disparity between the web sites stated requirements, and what they were asking of me but was unable to elicit an answer.

I then (23rd March) decided to email AHPRA with my queries in the hope that someone with adequate knowledge of the requirements would look at my email. To date the only response I have received has been an automated email stating my query has been escalated in the queue.

As one of the companies I worked for during this time is based overseas I knew that it would be a protracted lengthy process to access the original document they were requesting, and as of the date of this letter I am still waiting to receive it.

My main issue is that the requirements for my endorsement have been greater than what is clearly stated on the website and that no-one was prepared or able to answer my queries in a satisfactory or timely manner. There is a shortage of qualified remote and rural nurses in Australia and this delay has meant for me personally that I have missed employment opportunities during this period.

I appreciate your time and hope that you are able to suggest ways AHPRA can improve its processes to answer practitioners queries in a more appropriate manner and to expediate endorsements to registration . I can be contacted via the email address stated if you would like further clarification on any of the points I have discussed.

Yours sincerely

