

SUBMISSION:

Inquiry into the administration of health practitioner registration by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

The terms of reference for this Inquiry that are relevant to this submission include:

- (a) capacity and ability of AHPRA to implement and administer the national registration of health practitioners
- (b) performance of AHPRA in administering the registration of health practitioners
- (c) impact of AHPRA processes and administration on health practitioners, patients, hospitals and service providers
- (g) response times to individual registration enquiries
- (j) any other related matters

I am a triple certificate Registered Nurse with the following qualifications and training:

Training:

- Registered General Nurse - Alfred Hospital, Melbourne
- Registered Nurse Midwife - Royal Darwin Hospital
- Psychiatric Nurse - Wolston Park Hospital (Brisbane)

Qualifications:

- Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Clinical Nursing (Critical Care) - Melbourne University
- Post Graduate Diploma in Public Health - Curtin University
- Masters of Health Service Management - Curtin University
- Masters of Nurse Practitioner (Emergency) - University of Adelaide (current study)

My concerns are:

- Last year my registration with the South Australian Nurses Board for **General, Midwifery** and **Psychiatric (Mental Health) Nursing** qualifications was taken over by AHPRA, and in the process I lost my Psychiatric Nursing Registration.
- I have been registered in the above 3 areas (General, Midwifery and Mental Health) since 1995, in various states that I have worked (QLD, VIC, WA and SA), and now that registration has gone to AHPRA, and individual State Nursing Boards have ceased to exist, I am registered as A General Nurse and Midwife, and have lost my Psychiatric Nursing Registration.
- I have queried this with AHPRA by phone and email, and their replies have been wholly unsatisfactory
- By email they take days (1-2 weeks) to reply and give even less of a response to my questions

concerning separate recognition and registration for psychiatric nurse training.

- By phone reply they have not answered my question of why I am not still registered as a Psychiatric Nurse except to say that it is covered by General Nurse Registration. This is entirely unacceptable and insulting.
- It appears to me that if AHPRA are unable to answer questions such as mine then they lack the competence to undertake and maintain national registration.
- Their responses seem to indicate that they have no idea or concept of the effort, time, money or skill in obtaining triple registration; I may as well be trying to communicate with a call centre in the Philippines or India
- In fact, it (Psychiatric nursing) should not be covered by General Nurse Training (or General Nurse registration), as it is a separate area of nursing. I completed 18 months psychiatric nurse training, training and working in Acute psychiatric care, adolescent psychiatric nursing, drug and alcohol nursing, forensic nursing, chronic schizophrenia research, and psycho-geriatric nursing, all highly specialised areas.
- In addition I completed approximately 850 hours of class-time and sat multiple exams in order to complete psychiatric nurse training. Whilst I do not have the numbers for General nurses who have trained at university and completed a few hours of mental health class time and experience, I know anecdotally that it minimal
- It is wrong, in fact ludicrous to suggest that a General trained nurse has the same training, knowledge, skill or experience as a Psychiatric nurse.
- Registration with AHPRA should therefore acknowledge and respect this separate area of psychiatric nurse training, and maintain separate registration for Psychiatric / mental health nurses, just as they do with midwives
- Having been a triple certificate nurse (General, Midwifery and Psychiatric nursing) for 15 years, I feel I have been robbed, cheated and down-graded. This is insulting and degrading.
- I have worked in a number of hospitals in a number of states, and typically I am the only triple certificate nurse in the department. Occasionally there has been a second nurse with similar training. When there are 100-150 nurses in a department, it gives me a great feeling of pride that I have undertaken triple training, not to mention that such training gives me the knowledge and skill to work confidently and competently in all situations.
- I will not be the only person in this situation.
- I would like this matter addressed in detail and I would welcome a chance to input further on this matter

Mr Jamie Johnstone RN RM RMHN etc