

Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Jobs and Skills Australia Amendment Bill 2023 [Provisions]

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) would like to thank the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on the **Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2023**.

As the national leader of the nursing profession and as a highly respected Registered Training Organisation, ACN has viewed the amendments through a nursing lens. However, comments relating to nursing would be pertinent to other professions whose work to support the community is fundamental for a fully functioning society.

In the comments on the following pages, ACN provides suggestions for the Amendment Bill. ACN fully supports the appointment of the Jobs and Skills Commissioner, Jobs and Skills Deputy Commissioners, and Ministerial Advisory Board.

If you have further enquiries regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Linda Davidson, National Director – Professional Practice, on

Yours faithfully

Neil Haynes FCA FACN(Hon)
Chief Operating Officer
Australian College of Nursing

31 March 2023

ACN response to the Jobs and Skills Australia Amendment Bill 2023

ACN members believe the Jobs and Skills Amendment (JSA) Bill adequately covers the scope of the JSA Commissioner, JSA Deputy Commissioners and Ministerial Advisory Board.

ACN Fellows and members support the Amendment Bill but make the following suggestion impacting the membership of the Board. Schedule 1 Amendments, subsection 16B can be found on pages nine and ten of the [Jobs and Skills Australia Amendment Bill 2023 document](#).

Part 3 – Establishment and functions of the JSA Director and staff assisting

16B Members of the Ministerial Advisory Board

(4) A person is not eligible for appointment to the Ministerial Advisory Board unless the Minister is satisfied that the person has:

- (a) substantial experience or knowledge in at least one of the following fields:
- (i) VET;
 - (ii) higher education;
 - (iii) industry;
 - (iv) employment;
 - (v) industrial relations (including trade unions);
 - (vi) labour market analysis;
 - (vii) workforce planning;
 - (viii) economics;
 - (ix) governance;
 - (x) any other appropriate field of experience; or

(b) lived experience of disadvantage in the labour market; or

(c) experience as a representative of people with a lived experience of disadvantage in the labour market

ACN members support the requirements for persons being appointed to the Ministerial Advisory Board. ACN recommends that the Board should always have representatives from the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education sectors on the board. This will ensure that those representatives have the power to effect change in their representative education and training sectors.

It may also be appropriate to target recruitment to the Board from specific industries where skills shortages have been identified.

ACN would like to attract more First Nations representation in nursing. Therefore, recommends that an identified First Nations position on the Board would be appropriate to reflect the importance of the Voice to Parliament.

There is currently a global nursing shortage which also has an impact on Australia's healthcare sector. ACN supports skilled migration but also wants to ensure Australians can access education to ensure a steady pipeline of nurses for the future.

Other impacts on the sector include:

- too many nurses leave the sector early
- lack of housing in remote and rural Australia acts as a disincentive for nurses to take up rural opportunities
- rigid shift times and working hours do not encourage nurses back into the workforce

These factors affecting workforce attrition have been extensively investigated by ACN. Further information relating to these workforce issues is outlined [in ACNs Pre-budget submission 2023-2024](#). ACN looks forward to opportunities to work with Jobs and Skills Australia to tackle shortages in the nursing sector.