



14<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011 I received a letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 (23<sup>rd</sup> 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

