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CDNM Celebrates International Day of the Midwife 2026

On International Day of the Midwife (IDM), the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand) “CDNM” celebrates the essential role of midwives in delivering safe, equitable, accessible, and person-centred care across pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

A strong and sustainable midwifery workforce is critical to achieving positive maternal and newborn health outcomes. Responding to advocacy by CDNM, the Australian Government implemented work to support this. Initiatives include: expanded midwife MBS items and referrals; continued support for the Midwife Professional Indemnity Scheme; the Primary Care Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program; and commencement of the Commonwealth Prac Payment for midwifery and other students to assist study completion and build this necessary workforce.

Despite these helpful developments, various systemic and structural barriers remain, adding to ongoing workforce pressures. These challenges are highlighted in the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia’s 2024 “[Midwifery Futures: The Australian Midwifery Workforce Project](#)” and are reflected in CDNM’s 2023 Position paper “[The future of the midwifery workforce in Australia](#)”. These issues underline the need to further support in midwifery workforce growth, distribution and development, especially through: enhanced pipeline and retention strategies; increased access to full scope of practice models; and approaches that grow and support the Indigenous midwifery workforce.

The 2026 IDM theme “One Million More Midwives” clearly recognises the need to build this workforce, the important role of midwives within healthcare and their significant position as leaders in primary health care services worldwide. CDNM aligns with this theme and is undertaking targeted research into strategies that support inclusivity and diversity in midwifery education across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. This important work, undertaken through CDNM’s Midwifery Advisory Committee, is nearing completion with reports and publications forthcoming.

CDNM’s Board Director, Midwife and Chair of the Midwifery Advisory Committee, Professor Fiona Bogossian, said: “Through strong midwifery leadership in entry to practice and postgraduate midwifery education, we can ensure midwives have the influence to work independently and collaboratively to provide safe, respectful care and improve health outcomes in the communities they serve.”

CDNM marks this IDM with the release of our updated [position statement](#) on registered nurse and midwife entry to practice education, reinforcing the importance of the higher education sector in preparing and sustaining the midwifery workforce through culturally safe, high-quality education, research and leadership development.

Information to join the IDM 2026 global call for One Million More Midwives is available [here](#).

About CDNM

The Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand) (CDNM) is the peak organisation representing universities and other higher education institutions that offer undergraduate and postgraduate programs in nursing and midwifery throughout Australia and New Zealand.

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