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CDNM Celebrates International Nurses Day 2026

The Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand) “CDNM” marks this International Nurses Day (IND) by celebrating the essential role of nurses in delivering safe, effective, person-centred care grounded in evidence, ethics and professional values.

The 2026 IND theme “Our Nurses. Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives” underlines the need for nurses to be educated and work in environments that embed critical thinking and clinical expertise alongside developing and supporting them – individually and as leaders. Such environments are respectful and culturally safe. They are evidence-informed, encourage lifelong-learning and support quality care.

CDNM’s [strategic priorities](#) directly align with this vision. Alongside advocacy efforts, CDNM is undertaking a range of activities to support a thriving nurse education and research sector. Initiatives include: work on quality Professional Experience Placements (PEP), clinical supervision education, Nursing and Midwifery Research Week, and a commitment to strengthening pathways for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori nurses. We acknowledge the role of our partners, Anmac, CATSINaM and Wharangi Ruamano in this work.

CDNM welcomes recent developments that have supported nurses to work to their full scope of practice, particularly the new Designated Registered Nurse Prescribing role. This is a significant advancement for the profession and will reshape nursing education and workforce. We also welcome governments’ progress in implementing key recommendations from the Scope of Practice (SoP) Review. Additionally, we acknowledge the vital Commonwealth Prac Payments reform, introduced last year to ease financial stress on nursing and other students undertaking mandatory placements.

Despite these advances, nursing workforce pressures remain, especially in certain settings. To fully harness the potential of this workforce and provide the care Australians need, sustained action is needed. Effective entry pathways, enhanced student retention, culturally safe learning and work settings and promoting rural education and practice are key to achieving this. To build our future nurse leaders, it is also vital that registered nurse education delivery remains in research-rich environments – such as universities and other higher education institutions.

CDNM’s Chair, Professor Brendan McComack, said:

“Empowered nurses are the foundation of a sustainable healthcare system. When nurses are enabled to work to their full scope of practice, their impact is greatest.

We welcome recent government and profession-backed measures to support this and look forward to working with government, health services and key partners to make it a reality.”

CDNM marks this IND with a [video message](#) from Professor Brendan McCormack, who highlights the importance of empowerment in creating a sustainable, impactful nursing workforce.

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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