

REGISTRATION PROCESS

I. INTRODUCTION

The NCNM has policies and procedures for the various categories of registration. The attention of persons who intend to apply for registration as a Professional (Nurse/Midwife) is drawn below.

Following Law N° 25/2008 of 25/07/2008, there are categories in which a person may register in the nursing /midwifery profession. Those are:

1° “Nurse or Midwife”: A person who having pursued and successfully completed all educational courses and recognized by the National Council after having successfully passed licensing exams prepared and/or organized by the National Council in collaboration with the relevant organ.

Registrable Nurse/ Midwifery Cadres

2° “Registered Nurse”: A person who holds at least a baccalaureate or first degree, licensed to practice without direct supervision from any other Nurse, and who respects his/her responsibilities and assumes accountability.

3° “Associate Nurse”: A person who holds an advanced certificate of secondary school education level or its equivalent. He/she works under direct or indirect supervision of a registered Nurse. In any case, an associate Nurse remains accountable for his/her performance and shall be answerable to a registered Nurse for all the tasks assigned.

4° “Registered Midwife”: A midwife who holds at least a baccalaureate or first degree, licensed to practice without direct supervision from another midwife and is authorized to provide necessary supervision, care and advice to women during pregnancy, labour and post-natal period. She conducts deliveries, cares for the newborns and breast feeding infants and provides reproductive health and counseling services to women, families and the community in general.

5° “Associate Midwife”: A midwife who holds an advanced certificate of secondary school education level or its equivalent. She works under direct or indirect supervision of a registered Midwife. The associate Midwife shall remain accountable for his/her actions at all times and shall be answerable to the registered Midwife for the tasks assigned.

None shall practice under any of the categories stated above unless he or she is duly registered and licensed by the NCNM. The categories only provide for the registration and licensure of persons who meet the academic and professional requirements.

II. WHY REGISTER?

Different stakeholders benefit from registration, certification and licensure of nurses and midwives.

a. Individual

i. Peer recognition of qualification and experience

The recognition by the NCNM that a professional (nurse/midwife) meet the minimum requirements expected of a professional extends to one's colleagues and other practitioners in the profession.

ii. Public confidence in professional competence

Professional recognition instills a sense of confidence in the minds of the public, namely that a person meets minimum levels of competence. Furthermore the public feels assured that a person's competence has been assessed by knowledgeable professionals in one's field of expertise and can therefore practice safely.

iii. Eligibility for Membership to Professional Associations

Organizations, such as the Nursing or Midwifery Association(s) may require that a person must be registered as a professional before being granted membership.

b. Employer

i. Confidence in professionalism of staff

Since not all employers have been educated and trained in nursing or midwifery, registration and licensure are widely regarded as additional and objective indication of competence.

ii. Recourse in the event of improper conduct

Employers or clients may lodge a complaint of improper conduct in the event that a nurse or midwife whose name is recorded in the register conducts himself /herself unprofessionally. This conduct may include but not limited to incompetence, negligence and gross misconduct. NCNM investigates complaints and takes appropriate action.

iii. Image and Respectability of the Organization

The public and clients respond well to the fact that an organization employs professional staff as a matter of principle.

iv. Compliance with statutory requirements

Legislation holds employers and practitioners responsible for the safety of their clients. By appointing an appropriately registered person, the employer not only takes appropriate action aimed at safeguarding public safety, but also complies with statutory requirements.

c. Profession

i. Recognition amongst other professions

NCNM is a professional regulatory authority in Rwanda established through the legislation and is recognized as a professional body authorized to confer professional status on those registered under such registration system. Systems of professional registration are common across the world and are generally recognized.

ii. Public recognition of competence and adherence to minimum standards

For the same reason as in inter-professional recognition, the informed public recognises the value of professional registration, mainly because this affords them an additional measure of protection and "peace of mind".

d. Country

i. Safety, Health and Interests of society protected

Apart from precautionary measures taken by the State in its own right, registration serves as an additional safeguard against unsafe practices. This is the nursing/midwifery profession's contribution towards promoting public safety, health and interests. In this context, NCNM sees itself in partnership with the Government.

ii. Preservation of professional standards

The National Council of Nurses and Midwives (NCNM) considers every application for registration carefully and assesses it against the requirements for registration. There are different categories of registration. Reference made to the law Establishing National Council of Nurses and Midwives, the NCNM sets Registration Standards and Policies.

III. REGISTRATION PROCESS

There are specific registration application processes that apply to registration. An application will pass through **eight stages**, as outlined below. The time it takes to process applications for registration varies according to the complexity of the application. Routine applications for renewal of licensure take less time to manage and assess than more complex registration applications.

Stage 1: Application

When an application for registration form is submitted, it is reviewed internally for completeness.

Stage 2: Submission

The supplied information is assessed against registration standards and policies. At this stage the applicant may be required to supply further information or undergo tests or examinations regarding competency and where necessary, health issues.

Stage 3: Assessment

An application is administratively checked for completeness. If incomplete the applicant is advised of the deficiency which must be rectified as soon as possible.

If the Registrar accepts the application with conditions or rejects the application, the applicant is informed at this stage. The applicant may at this stage choose to make a submission to the NCNM Board of Directors.

Stage 4: Submission to the NCNM Board of Directors

Following Stage 3, the response from the applicant is considered and a final decision is made by the NCNM Board of Directors if the applicant chose to submit his/her objection.

Stage 5: Cases for Referral

Complicated cases are referred to the NCNM Registration Committee for resolution and the committee makes a recommendation to the NCNM Board of Directors for approval.

If the application is straight-forward and the recommendation is to register, the Registrar may register the applicant without referring to the NCNM Board of Directors.

A recommendation is then made which may be, to register, register with conditions, or reject.

Stage 6: Decision by NCNM Board of Directors

The Board of Directors may accept the recommendation or take different action. The Board of Directors' decision will either be to register, register with conditions, or reject the application.

Stage 5: Registration, Certification and Licensure

Registration is finalized and relevant documents (letters, certificates, licenses) are prepared and issued to the applicant.

Stage 7: Tribunal

If applicants do not agree with the final decision of the Board of Directors, they may take their case to a tribunal for arbitration.

Stage 8: Withdrawal of Incomplete Application

If a required response from the applicant is not received within a reasonable period, the application is closed/ withdrawn and *marked* as 'incomplete'.