

To The Productivity Commissioner.

My name is Trish van der Oord and I have practiced as a Maternal and Child Health Nurse in Rural Shires for 30 years, working with families within my role as a Maternal and Child Health Nurse, Lactation Consultant, and more recently as an Immunisation Nurse.

I am registered as a midwife and nurse with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority. I completed my Training in Maternal and Child Health through Tweddle 1975. I have continuously studied & added Family Therapy. The exorbitant cost of Maternal and Child Health post graduate studies would at this point be a prohibitive factor if myself and my family were considering this field of tertiary study presently. Fortunately I completed the program of study necessary for me to practice competently in this role.

It is the recommendations 12.3 and 12.2 of the Early Childhood Development Draft Report that concerns me, in particular the removal of the midwifery prerequisite for Maternal and Child Health Nurses. The service, which I am proud to deliver is dependant in the thorough study criteria and educational preparation so far required of clinicians in this field.

Midwifery has enhanced my clinical skills and have recently drawn on midwifery knowledge dealing with women both in the puerperium with birth related issues such as a woman who experienced a post partum haemorrhage at home, breast feeding issues as well as many other scenarios over my practical years.

Counselling women post a traumatic delivery happens on a regular basis. Health promotion during pregnancy are constantly addressed as a result of midwifery training. It is crucial that all Maternal and Child Health Nurses are Midwifery trained nurses, providing strong foundations for evidenced based clinical judgement. Holistic and family centred care has evolved from my tertiary studies. Possession of these qualifications is not a barrier to Maternal and Child Health Nursing, rather the basis of quality care.

I hold Practice nurses in high regard for their specific service provision, however education of practice nurses is neither standardised or accredited and thus the suggestion that practice nurses may substitute maternal and child health nurses is unacceptable.

I also strongly support the value of expanding the scholarship programs and have experienced the enormous amount of work and high standard of clinical expertise exhibited by our recent graduates. Given the shortage of services which includes GP in our rural environment.

The current study schedule offers our families high quality care when GP is simply not available, unobtainable. With the current Maternal & Child Health Service expertise our families and importantly our children are well supported & looked after. We need more suitably qualified nurses, that scholarships help provide. Not the same old nurses working till 75 yrs of age.

I am very concerned about the limited consultation undertaken by the Productivity Commission with Victorian Nurses, our service is widely respected and I would be grateful if the Commission would meet with myself and my colleagues to expand

knowledge of the depth of service provided by current nurses.

Yours Sincerely,

Trish van der Oord
Maternal and Child Health Nurse
Moirra Shire Council.