

Early Childhood Development Workforce Study

Productivity Commission

Locked Bag 2

Collins St East

Melbourne, Victoria 8003

02/09/2011

To whom it may concern,

Re: Early Childhood Development Workplace Study

We are writing as Speech Pathologists working for a rural district health service to express our concern regarding draft recommendation 12.3 suggesting the removal of midwifery as a qualification pre-requisite for Maternal and Child Health Nurses. As we are paediatric Speech Pathologists we work very closely with the Maternal and Child Health Nurses in our region and feel that their knowledge of midwifery is critical in engaging the mothers and allowing them to provide appropriate care for mothers particularly of high needs families. The paediatric feeding component of the midwifery qualification is also crucial for Maternal Child and Health Nurses and allows them to make appropriate decisions and referrals to specialist services.

The midwifery knowledge qualification has allowed the Maternal and Child Health nurses to provide care for both the mother and the child. The relationship formed has allowed the mothers to engage with us and other related health services as the parents accept the advice and recommendations from the nurses.

We would encourage you to consider these comments and hope that you have consulted with a wide variety of services who work closely with the Maternal and Child Health Nurses regarding this issue.

Leonie Baker, Marney Twining and Rebecca Richmond

Speech Pathologists

Swan Hill District Health