

My name is Anna McGregor I have practiced as a Maternal & Child health Nurse for 18 months, in metropolitan Melbourne.

I am a registered midwife and nurse with AHPRA. I completed my nursing training at the Alfred Hospital in 1976 and Midwifery in 1979. When hospital based training stopped, whilst raising my family I went back and did Bachelor of Nursing Conversion at RMIT in 1994, I sat the International Board of Lactation Consultants exam in 1995 and recertified in 2000, I then went on to do Graduate Certificate in Health Science (Psychiatric Nursing) in 1997 at RMIT. In 2001 I completed a Graduate Diploma of Counselling at Victoria University and in 2003 I completed Nurse Immuniser course at La Trobe University and recertified in 2006 & 2009 and finally completed a Graduate Diploma in Child & Family Health.

I am particularly concerned about the recommendations regarding the removal of the Midwifery qualification as a prerequisite to become a Maternal & Child Health Nurse.

I am strongly opposed to this removal as this has given me a critical body of knowledge and professional skills I use in my daily work.

One example where I used my Midwifery skills was when I had a mother who was suffering from postnatal depression and I was able to offer ongoing support she required, this illness has the potential of impacting on the family and child development.

Another was when a mother had to be readmitted to hospital due to complications from delivery – mothers may only have 48 hrs in hospital and there are many things which can occur requiring my expertise from my midwifery training.

I believe it to be vitally important to complete post graduate studies to become a Maternal & Child health nurse, as it rounds off the training in nursing & midwifery. I can remember having my own children being a midwife and thinking I have no idea beyond the first week of life about child development, feeding, parenting, immunisation, postnatal exercise, maternal emotional health and wellbeing, safety and illness. All these topics are covered in our new parent groups facilitated by Maternal & Child health nurses, we debrief about labour and deliveries with both mothers and fathers, a nurse without midwifery would not have the knowledge to conduct these sessions.

I strongly believe the requirement to be a midwife, registered nurse and completion of post graduate child and family health study is critical to my ability to provide very high quality care to new families in Victoria, which is widely considered the best service in Australia. I have had first hand comments from relatives of mothers I have visited from other states complementing me on the wonderful early support offered in Victoria to our new mothers.

I have found it invaluable that all my skills that I have gained in over 30yrs contribute and the thought of not having a midwifery qualification as an absolute minimum would place mothers, babies and families at risk.

I encourage the Productivity commission to hold public consultations with Victorian Maternal & Child Health Nurse colleagues.

I thank the Commission for considering my comments and hope that the wonderful service we provide in Victoria can be adopted by the other states in Australia.