

29<sup>th</sup> August 2011

The Productivity Commissioner  
LB2 Collins Street East  
MELBOURNE, VIC, 8003

To Whom It May Concern:

**RE: Productivity Commission Education and Training Workforce:  
Early Childhood Development**

I would like to express my concern at recommendations 12.2 and 12.3 of the Early Childhood Development Draft Report.

I am currently studying a Masters in Child, Family and Community Nursing, leading to a qualification that allows me to work as a Maternal Child Health Nurse. Prior to this I completed a four year double degree in nursing and midwifery. My degrees in nursing and midwifery provided me with the sound knowledge and skills to work effectively with women and families in a holistic manner. During my clinical placements completed as part of my Masters degree, every Maternal Child Health consultation that I have witnessed has required thorough midwifery knowledge and experience that has enhanced the quality of the service to the family. I feel that only by completing these two degrees, and then working towards a further qualification in maternal child health nursing, could I possibly provide the high quality care and expertise required for this specialised role.

I am also concerned about the possible reduction in the number of scholarships available to nurses and midwives wishing to complete further studies in maternal child health nursing. I obtained a scholarship this year to study that had a considerable impact on my decision to take up my place in the course. I know that I speak for the majority of my fellow students when I suggest that only by obtaining a scholarship would they have been able to complete the course.

I hope you will consider my submission. Please do not decrease the quality of service provided by Victoria's maternal child health nurses by removing midwifery as a mandatory prerequisite to practice. Child health, maternal health and family wellbeing will suffer if midwifery is optional. Scholarships should also be considered an integral part of encouraging more students to study maternal child health nursing. Australia needs more maternal child health nurses, and financial concerns are a considerable barrier to study.

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Castles