



Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
Senedd Health,
Welsh Parliament,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff,
CF99 1SN

By email: SeneddHealth@senedd.wales

16 May 2023

Dear Mr George,

I am writing to share [the Nursing and Midwifery Council's \(NMC\) response to the Department of Health and Social Care's \(DHSC's\) consultation](#), concerning draft legislation for regulating anaesthesia associates (AAs) and physician associates (PAs). This draft Order will also form a template for replacing the existing legislation that sets out how other health and care professionals are regulated, including nurses and midwives registered with the NMC.

The draft Order marks the next step in introducing positive change to our legislation. We have long called for this change because our legislation, written in 2001, has failed to keep pace with changes in society and nursing and midwifery practice.

In our role as the regulator of almost 39,000 nursing and midwifery professionals in Wales, and more than 771,000 professionals across the UK, it is vital we have the tools available to regulate well. Through regulatory reform, we hope to have more modern, flexible legislation that better enables us to protect the public we serve, and support the professionals who are at the core of Welsh health and care services.

The draft AAPA Order provides a clearer, more coherent approach to regulation. It largely aligns with our aspirations for regulatory reform and would provide us with the flexibility to pursue further improvements.

However, certain key functions outlined in the draft legislation require greater clarity, while others remain unduly restrictive. In parts, the drafting is overly complicated and could lead to confusion, ambiguity and some of the central benefits of the proposed reforms remaining out of reach.

The AAPA Order consultation document indicates that the DHSC plans to begin working with us, alongside the General Medical Council and Health and Care Professions Council, to develop a subsequent set of legislation to replace our existing frameworks.

We look forward to working with the DHSC and our partners to make sure these reforms enable us to better support nurses and midwives to provide safe and effective care to people and communities.

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We're the independent regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England. Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing.

Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362)

We will be back in touch with you in due course to notify you of next steps for our engagement on this reform programme.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact public.affairs@nmc-uk.org.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew McClelland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Matthew McClelland
Executive Director of Strategy and Insight