



30 January 2009

Korea FTA Task Force
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent
Barton ACT 0221

Australia –Republic of Korea free trade agreement (FTA)

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the potential impact of a free trade agreement between Australia and the Republic of Korea.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) was established in 1992 as the peak body to develop a national approach to regulation of nurses and midwives. The ANMC is gazetted by the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship as the relevant assessing authority for nurses and midwives who wish to migrate to Australia using the skilled migration program.

Nurses and midwives are assessed using the ANMC standards and criteria consistent with the registration and/or enrolment requirements of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authorities (NMRAs). The ANMC assesses overseas trained nurses against these standards ensuring that each applicant can demonstrate competency.

In applying for a skills assessment to the ANMC applicants must include transcripts of initial nursing / midwifery education, professional reference from a current employer, verification from their current registering authority that the person has no negative actions or conditions placed upon their registration and finally, evidence of English language proficiency.

The ANMC supports the process for any proposed FTA negotiations; however ANMC is opposed to any government movement as part of a free trade agreement which may impact negatively on the integrity of the regulatory process. Regulation is about the protection of the public; as such Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authorities maintain the need to assess the ability to practise of nurses and midwives who have not been educated in Australia, against the same standards expected of Australian nurses and midwives. All nurses and midwives in Australia and overseas nurses and midwives are required to meet the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council

Competency standards. When internationally educated nurses and midwives do not meet these standards they must complete a competency program approved by the State/Territory Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authority. In this way the Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authorities ensure the continued provision of standards of nursing and midwifery care which protect the public.

I trust that this information may be useful to the Department in future negotiations with the government of the Republic of Korea.

Yours sincerely

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