

Independent Culture Review July 2024

This report tells you what it is like to work at the Nursing and Midwifery Council and how it affects the work they do



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About the Nursing and Midwifery Council



This report is about the **Nursing and Midwifery Council**.

In this booklet we will call them the **NMC** for short.



The NMC checks to make sure all **nurses** and **midwives** in the UK and **nursing associates** in England are safe to work.



Nurses help people who are sick, injured or need care.



Midwives help people to give birth.



Nursing associates are health staff who work with nurses in England.

The NMC:



- Checks nurses, midwives and nursing associates have all the training they need to do a really good job.



- Makes sure nurses, midwives and nursing associates follow the rules for their jobs.



- Deals with **complaints** about nurses, midwives or nursing associates.

A **complaint** is when you let someone know you are unhappy about something.



- Keeps a list of all the nurses and midwives in the UK and nursing associates in England. The list is called a **register**.



To have a job as a nurse or midwife in the UK, or a nursing associate in England, you must be on the register.



To be on the register, you must show the NMC that you meet all of their rules.

Why we were asked to do a review



A **review** means looking at something to find out more about it.



There have been reports of problems in the workplace at NMC. Things like bullying and **racism**.

Racism is being treated badly because of things like:



- The colour of your skin.
- Speaking a different language.



A lot of staff are very unhappy. They are very stressed and upset.



This makes coming to work horrible for some people. They don't really want to work here and it makes them feel bad.



This means the NMC can't do its work properly.

It might not be able to keep staff and patients safe.



The NMC wants to do something about this.



The NMC asked us to do a review about how people feel about working at the NMC.



We are Rise Associates. We are an organisation that is **independent** from the NMC. This means we do not work for the NMC.



The review team was led by Nazir Afzal. Nazir is a top lawyer in the UK.



Together we looked at what staff thought about working at the NMC.



And we came up with some ideas about changes that the NMC could make.



The NMC will use what we find out to try to do things better.

What we did



We spoke to a lot of staff about working at the NMC. We asked them what they thought and how they were feeling.



We sent out an online survey to all NMC staff.



We looked at reports about working at the NMC.



We looked at information about staff. Things like why they were off work sick and why they left their job at the NMC.



We went to look round the NMC offices.



Staff could also send us an email or a letter to tell us what they thought.



Nearly all of the staff wanted to have their say.



We want to make sure all staff can tell us how they feel.



This report tells you what big things we found out.

Big thing 1: Checking nurses and midwives are doing a good job



If the NMC get any complaints about nurses or midwives not doing a good job, they will look into it.

They check to see if the nurse or midwife is still safe to work. This is called a **fitness to practise case**.



Some complaints are really serious. The person might not be safe to work.



Other complaints are not very serious at all and nothing needs to be done.



There are more than 6 thousand complaints at the moment.



NMC staff are having to work really hard to try to deal with all of the complaints.

This is really stressful.



People told us about lots of problems with how the NMC deals with complaints.

The NMC takes too long to tell a nurse, midwife or nursing associate what they will do with the complaint about them



Some nurses and midwives are waiting for 4 or 5 years for a decision.



This is very stressful.



Some nurses who might not be safe to work are allowed to keep working until a decision is made.

This means patients might not be safe.

Fitness to practise cases are really stressful



Some NMC staff do not treat nurses and midwives who have a complaints against them with respect.



Some nurses and midwives feel very stressed about the complaint against them.

They are having to take time off work to deal with their mental health.



Some nurses have sadly ended their life while the NMC had a fitness to practise case against them.

Less serious complaints are taking the same amount of time to look at as serious complaints

This might mean:



- Some nurses who have done nothing wrong spend years being stressed and worried.



- Some nurses who are doing a good job are told to stop working until a decision is made.

Fitness to practise cases could be dealt with in a better way



Some nurses think more nurses and midwives should help to look at fitness to practise cases.



This would help staff to make the best decisions about the compliant.



Some nurses did not agree with decisions about fitness to practise cases.

They said that the NMC does not look at times when nurses and midwives behave badly outside of work. Things like:



- Making people do sexual things that they don't want to do.

Or



- Driving a car when they have drunk too much alcohol.



This means some nurses or midwives who might not be safe to work are allowed to keep working.



The NMC is not honest and open when things go wrong

A nurse told us about a time when a wrong decision was made about a complaint.



This meant a nurse who was not safe to work was allowed to keep working. Because of this, some patients were hurt.



The NMC did not say sorry or learn from their mistakes.

Big thing 2: How staff are treated at work

Racism

Staff from Black and ethnic minority groups told us:



- There is a lot of racism at NMC. It is not taken seriously.



- People from Black and ethnic minorities are not treated fairly when they apply for jobs.



People from Black and ethnic minority groups also told us staff could be rude and say nasty things. They don't say the same things to white people.



This is because staff do not know enough about other people's race, culture or background.

Bullying



Sometimes when people are horrible, their manager does not do anything about it.



Sometimes people who are being bullied are moved to a different job instead of being supported properly.



Black and ethnic minority staff often leave the NMC to get better jobs. This is because of bullying and bad behaviour.



Disability and illness

Staff with disabilities or illnesses said they were not always treated properly.



Staff who had disabilities said managers did not make **reasonable adjustments**.



This is when services make changes to meet a person's needs.

Things like wide doorways for wheelchairs or giving information in a way that people can understand.



People who were very ill but still came to work said they were not supported properly.



They said they were given too much work to do when they were poorly.



Sometimes managers treated people like they were doing a bad job instead of being ill.

Big thing 3: How the NMC is run

Training

Training is very important. It helps staff have the skills to do their job well.



It also helps organisations to keep getting better.



Staff said training was not taken seriously or seen as important.



They were not given chances to try new or different jobs in the organisation.



Values

Values are things an organisation believes in and how they behave.



Staff said that the NMC has values that sound good. Things like:

- We believe in working together.



- We treat people with kindness and we are fair.



- We have big plans and ideas to do the best work we can.



But staff said these things are not true. They said that the NMC does not do these things in real life.

Good things we found out



It is important to remember that there are lots of really good people working at the NMC.



Lots of staff know what to do if they see bad behaviour. They know how to tell someone about it.



A lot of staff support each other.



A lot of people said their manager was good.



Some staff feel they can talk to their manager about any worries.



Some white staff get upset when racism happens to Black and ethnic minority staff.



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But a lot of staff are very angry with the NMC.



They want the NMC to put things right and do things better.



They want the NMC to do the things they say they will in their values.

About this easy read report



Easy Read UK has helped us to write this easy read report.

www.easyreaduk.co.uk



Kirkles Involvement Network worked with Easy Read UK and checked this report.



The pictures in this report came from Photosymbols, Ing Image and the NMC.

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