

July 28, 2017

## **Confidential support for nurses and midwives in Western Australia**

Nurses and midwives in Western Australia now have access to free, confidential health and wellbeing advice, thanks to a new national service.

Nurse & Midwife Support (NM Support) is the first national dedicated telephone and online service that provides 24/7 access to an experienced team who can provide advice and referral to nurses and midwives about their own health and wellbeing.

With more than 38 000 nurses and midwives across the state, health services in Western Australia are set to benefit from having increased support for their staff.

NM Support is run by Turning Point, a leading addiction treatment, research and education organisation. The service was established following a research project on health issues for nurses and midwives, which included a survey sent to every nurse and midwife in Australia. Of the 10 000 nurses and midwives who participated in the research nationally, many said that they were unaware of the available mental health, drug and alcohol support services that could provide help.

Nurse & Midwife Support Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Mark Aitken said that while nurses and midwives are recognised as the caregivers, they can also face health and wellbeing challenges and need support in receiving care.

“This may include stress caused by work, family problems, relationship issues, as well as alcohol and drug related issues, or mental health concerns,” Mr Aitken said.

He said the service was about providing anonymous, ‘no strings attached’ support that helps nurses and midwives deal with health issues that may affect their personal lives and work.

“Isolation is of particular concern for nurses and midwives working in remote areas of Western Australia, as they may feel they don’t have a large support network around them.”

“I would encourage any nurse or midwife who needs our help to call us today. Put our support number in your phone so it is there if you ever need it. Whether you work in the city or a rural or remote location, you are not alone – help is available.”

Mr Aitkin will meet with the Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer of Western Australia, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Western Australia, and other nursing and midwifery leaders in Perth on August 10 and 11.

The service is now available across Australia and is open to nurses, midwives, students, employers, educators, and concerned friends or relatives.

To access NM Support or for further information, call **1800 667 877** or visit [www.nmsupport.org.au](http://www.nmsupport.org.au)

Media contact: Kate Klingsporn, Media and Communications Officer, (03) 9091 8881 or email [kate.klingsporn@easternhealth.org.au](mailto:kate.klingsporn@easternhealth.org.au)