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The Australian College of Nursing welcomes amendment to Border Protection Act

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) welcomes the amendment to the *Determination of Immigration and Border Protection Workers* under the *Australian Border Force Act 2015* by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. The amendment has removed restrictions on health professionals speaking out on cases of physical or sexual abuse or medical negligence that occur at Australian offshore detention centres.

ACN has previously raised concerns regarding the fragmented health care in immigration detention centres.

Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN, CEO of ACN, welcomed the amendment and said, “ACN believes the removal of reporting restrictions will improve the safety, health and emotional wellbeing of asylum seekers at off-shore detention centres. ACN supports the amendment as it will allow health and medical professionals to voice their concerns without fear of incrimination.”

The amendment will ensure that nurses are able to fulfil their professional and ethical obligations under both the Nursing and Midwifery Board (NMBA)’s *Code of Professional Conduct* and *Code of Ethics* for nurses in Australia.

ACN considers asylum seekers to be vulnerable to dehumanisation and its consequences, such as stigma, discrimination and exclusion. For this reason ACN believes that the nursing profession has a moral obligation to protect asylum seekers’ human rights, including their right to quality health care.

Adjunct Professor Ward said, “Nurses are ideally placed to act as advocates for quality and safe care, and should never be restricted in raising concerns regarding patient care and wellbeing. The amendment is a positive move.”

To view ACN’s position statement on *Quality Health Care for all Refugees and Asylum Seekers*, please click [here](#).

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Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward, CEO of ACN.



Australian
College of
Nursing

Advancing nurse leadership

Notes to the Editors:

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurse leaders and its aim is to ensure that the Australian community receives quality nursing care now and in the future. ACN is a membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties. ACN is also the Australian member of the International Council of Nurses headquartered in Geneva.

ACN, an organisation not afraid to intelligently challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, is a well-connected and educated national body that drives change with people of influence to enhance the delivery of health services to the Australian community. ACN advances the skills and expertise of nurses to provide leadership in their contribution to the policy, practice and delivery of health care.

A membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialities, ACN's membership includes many nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics and researchers.

What is the role of ACN to media?

- ACN provides trusted, well supported information about Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN has a number of media-savvy spokespeople within the organisation who can comment on Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN offers media with an alternative voice to that of an industrial relations perspective.
- ACN is in-the-know and can comment on health care matters of interest.
- ACN can respond to media requests in a timely manner and with subject/clinical expert's available on-hand for further discussion.
- ACN regularly responds to government updates pertaining to Australia's health care system.

What role does ACN play?

ACN is here to act and deliver results as agents of change. They are working towards a brighter future through advancing nurse leadership to enhance the delivery of health care to all. The organisation provides nurse leaders with access to relevant information, support and education that will enhance Australia's reputation on the world stage.

Social media channels:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acnursing>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/acn_tweet

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/australian-college-of-nursing>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/acn_nursing