



# Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors Act 1979

## 1979 CHAPTER 36

### *The Central Council*

#### **1 Constitution of Central Council**

- (1) There shall be a corporate body known as the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting.
- (2) The Council shall consist of the number of members, being not more than 45, prescribed by the Secretary of State by order.
- (3) Of the members of the Council—
  - (a) the majority shall be members of the National Boards established by section 5 below and be nominated by the Boards (in equal numbers) in accordance with Part I of Schedule 1 to this Act; and
  - (b) the other members shall be persons appointed by the Secretary of State.
- (4) The Secretary of State's appointments shall be made from among persons who either are nurses, midwives, health visitors or registered medical practitioners, or have such qualifications and experience in education or other fields as, in the Secretary of State's opinion, will be of value to the Council in the performance of its functions.
- (5) The Secretary of State shall have especially in mind the need to secure that qualifications and experience in the teaching of nurses, midwives and health visitors are adequately represented on the Council.
- (6) The Council shall have—
  - (a) a chairman appointed from among its members (initially by the Secretary of State and, as from such later day as he may by order appoint, by the Council itself); and
  - (b) a deputy chairman appointed by the Council from among its members.

- (7) Part II of Schedule 1 to this Act shall have effect with respect to the constitution and administration, etc. of the Central Council.

## **2 Functions of Council**

- (1) The principal functions of the Central Council shall be to establish and improve standards of training and professional conduct for nurses, midwives and health visitors.
- (2) The Council shall ensure that the standards of training they establish are such as to meet any Community obligation of the United Kingdom.
- (3) The Council shall by means of rules determine the conditions of a person's being admitted to training, and the kind and standard of training to be undertaken, with a view to registration.
- (4) The rules may also make provision with respect to the kind and standard of further training available to persons who are already registered.
- (5) The powers of the Council shall include that of providing, in such manner as it thinks fit, advice for nurses, midwives and health visitors on standards of professional conduct.
- (6) In the discharge of its functions the Council shall have proper regard for the interests of all groups within the professions, including those with minority representation.

## **3 Standing committees of Council**

- (1) The Secretary of State shall by order constitute as standing committees of the Council a Midwifery Committee and a Finance Committee.
- (2) The Council shall consult the Finance Committee on all financial matters.
- (3) The Secretary of State may by order constitute other standing committees of the Council and (to the extent prescribed by the order) require the Council to consult them on, or empower them to discharge functions of the Council with respect to, other matters including in particular—
  - (a) training;
  - (b) clinical nursing studies ;
  - (c) mental nursing ; and
  - (d) occupational health nursing.
- (4) An order constituting a standing committee of the Council—
  - (a) may provide for persons who are not members of the Council to be appointed as members of that committee ; and
  - (b) shall provide for a majority on the committee to be persons who work or have worked in the professional field with which it is primarily concerned.

## **4 The Midwifery Committee**

- (1) Of the members of the Council's Midwifery Committee the majority shall be practising midwives.

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*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).*

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- (2) The Council shall consult the Committee on all matters relating to midwifery and the Committee shall, on behalf of the Council, discharge such of the Council's functions as are assigned to them either by the Council or by the Secretary of State by order.
- (3) The Council shall assign to the Committee any matter involving a proposal to make, amend or revoke rules under section 15 below; and—
  - (a) the Committee shall consider the proposal and report on it to the Council;
  - (b) the Council shall take no action on the report until they have consulted the National Boards with respect to the matters dealt with in it.
- (4) The Secretary of State shall not approve rules relating to midwifery practice unless satisfied that they are framed in accordance with recommendations of the Council's Midwifery Committee.
- (5) Any matter which is assigned to the Midwifery Committee otherwise than under subsection (3) shall be finally dealt with by the Committee on behalf of the Council, so far as the Council expressly authorise the Committee to deal finally with it; and the Committee shall make a report to the Council as to the way in which they have dealt with the matter.