

8th July 2024



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Rt Hon Wes Streeting
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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Dear Wes

RE: Report by Nazir Afzal and Rise Associates on the internal culture of the NMC

Our sincere congratulations on your appointment as the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

We very much look forward to working with you and supporting you in your endeavours to repair, strengthen and rebuild the NHS and social care.

We are writing today to alert you to a deeply serious matter concerning the professional regulatory body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The review of the internal culture of the NMC, led by Nazir Afzal and Rise Associates, will be published tomorrow. It is a damning report of the profoundly poor culture and practices within the organisation, which are impacting on its very purpose - to protect the public.

The nursing profession has lost confidence in the NMC and no longer believes that it can safeguard the public. Moreover, there are significant concerns for the welfare of the whistleblowers who have raised ongoing concerns to no avail within the organisation. These concerns have also been raised with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) who seem powerless to act on them beyond the scope of an annual review.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council has been dysfunctional for decades with significant issues around culture, the management of fitness to practise cases and the exercise of its regulatory functions. In 2012 the NMC received a grant of £20m from the Department of Health and Social Care to enable the fitness to practise case backlog to be addressed. Despite this work, the backlog has been allowed to build up again with more than 400 cases awaiting initial screening and thousands awaiting hearings.

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Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Professor John Unsworth OBE, Chair. Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, Chief Executive
Registered charity number 213128. Founded in 1887

We believe in the best possible nursing for patients at home; we work with nurses and decision-makers to make sure that good quality nursing is available at home for everyone when they need it.

Rt Hon Wes Streeting

RE: Report by Nazir Afzal and Rise Associates on the internal culture of the NMC continued

The QNI is therefore calling for an urgent independent review of the NMC and the performance of its regulatory functions. Such a review is essential to restore public confidence and the confidence of the profession. It should include how the NMC manages fitness to practise cases, engages with the profession on standards and how standards are assured for individual entry to the register.

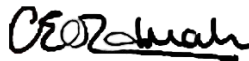
We are concerned that the Nursing and Midwifery Council will do little to address the issues highlighted by the whistleblowers; the NMC has already spent a considerable sum of money employing a reputation management company to help them manage the fallout from their own review of their culture. This suggests that they are more concerned about how the organisation is perceived than how it operates.

We consider that an independent review is the only way to demonstrate to the public and the profession that the serious nature of the longstanding internal issues are not only recognised, but also that you are prepared to take immediate action to start to restore the NMC to a regulatory body in which the profession and the public can have full confidence.

Yours sincerely



Professor John Unsworth OBE
Chair



Dr Crystal Oldman CBE
Chief Executive