To whom it may concern,

I am a mother of 4 and a student midwife. During my first 3 pregnancies I received care from midwives in standard public hospital settings. I was seen by a different midwife at each appointment, rotated through 2 separate shifts with 3 births and then 3 midwives per shift in a 24hr period. In lengthy postnatal stays. It wasn't until I had my 4th child that I decided to seek a midwife to care for me throughout my pregnancy, birth and postnatal period that I realized and recognized how amazing midwives are. They are not nurses and midwifery is by no way an extension of nursing and in turn women going through such a momentous and intimate experience need midwifery to be recognised for its merit as a stand alone profession.

Currently the NMBA does not recognise or represent the importance of midwifery to women in Australia. There is insufficient representation within the NMBA at a high level to speak up for women and give proper representation from midwifery going forward. This is especially important as more and more evidence is showing a greater support and better outcomes for women who choose not only midwifery as their primary care, but also caseload models of care that are not receiving proper funding or recognition by appropriate boards within Australia and therefore impacting a midwives ability to deliver evidence based practice and women are prevented from accessing such services.

Nursing and midwifery are different in philosophy and practice but where they share similarities in that they both aim to deliver contemporary safe and evidence based care. This is however hindered by the lack of representation midwifery has with in the NMBA and it is best resolved by midwifery having a separate board to acknowledge and represent midwives in the state of maternity care in Australia today.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alison Edney