

## Bill Summary

# The National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Bill, 2023

- The National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Bill, 2023 was introduced in Lok Sabha on July 24, 2023. It repeals the Indian Nursing Council Act, 1947. The Bill provides for the regulation and maintenance of standards of education and services for nursing and midwifery professionals. Key features of the Bill are:
  - **National Nursing and Midwifery Commission:** The Bill provides for the constitution of the National Nursing and Midwifery Commission. It will consist of 29 members. The chairperson should have a postgraduate degree in nursing and midwifery and have at least 20 years of field experience. Ex-officio members include representatives from the Department of Health and Family Welfare, National Medical Commission, Military Nursing Services, and the Directorate General of Health Services. Other members include nursing and midwifery professionals, and one representative from charitable institutions.
  - **Functions of Commission:** Functions of the Commission include: (i) framing policies and regulating standards for nursing and midwifery education, (ii) providing a uniform process for admission into nursing and midwifery institutions, (iii) regulating nursing and midwifery institutions, and (iv) providing standards for faculty in teaching institutions.
  - **Autonomous boards:** The Bill provides for the constitution of three autonomous boards under the supervision of the National Commission. These are: (i) the Nursing and Midwifery Undergraduate and Postgraduate Education Board, to regulate education and examination at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; (ii) the Nursing and Midwifery Assessment and Rating Board, to provide the framework for assessing and rating nursing and midwifery institutions; and (iii) the Nursing and Midwifery Ethics and Registration Board, to regulate professional conduct and promote ethics in the profession.
  - **State Nursing and Midwifery Commissions:** Every state government must constitute a State Nursing and Midwifery Commission where no such Commission exists under state law. It will consist of 10 members.
    - The members will include representatives from the health department, from any nursing or midwifery college of the state, and nursing and midwifery professionals.
- Functions of the State Commission include: (i) enforcing professional conduct, code of ethics and etiquette, (ii) maintaining state registers for registered professionals, (iii) issuing certificates of specialisation, and (iv) providing for skill-based examination. Appeals against decisions taken by state commissions may be filed with the Ethics and Registration Board. Decisions taken by the Board will be binding on the State Commission unless a second appeal is filed with the National Commission.
- **Establishment of nursing or midwifery institutions:** Permission of the Assessment and Rating Board would be needed to establish a new nursing and midwifery institution, increase the number of seats, or start any new postgraduate course. The Board must decide on the proposals within six months. In case of disapproval, an appeal can be made to the National Commission and a second appeal can be filed with the Central Government.
- **Practicing as a professional:** The Ethics and Registration Board will maintain an online Indian Nurses and Midwives' Register, containing the details and qualifications of professionals and associates. Individuals must be enrolled in the National or State Register to practice nursing or midwifery as qualified professional. Failure to comply may result in imprisonment of up to one year, a fine of up to five lakh rupees, or both.
- **Advisory Council:** The central government will also establish the Nursing and Midwifery Advisory Council. The chairperson of the National Commission shall be the chairperson of the Council. Other members include representatives from each State and Union territory, Ministry of Ayush, the University Grants Commission, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, the Indian Council of Medical Research, and nursing and midwifery professionals. The Council will provide advice and support to the National Commission in matters concerning nursing and midwifery education, services, training, and research.

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