

ORIGIN OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY COUNCIL OF NIGERIA

- Early roots – The story begins in 1930 with the Midwives Ordinance, which created the defunct Midwives Board to regulate midwifery education and practice. A few years later, the Nursing Council of Nigeria was set up by the Registration of Nurses Ordinance of 1947 to oversee nursing education and registration.
- Mergers & evolution – Over the decades, various amendments (e.g., 1957, 1959, 1966, 1970, 1974) refined both bodies. Finally, Decree No. 89 of 1979 merged the Nursing Council and the Midwives Board into a single entity: the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN). This decree gave the NMCN its legal mandate to regulate all cadres of nurses and midwives in the country. The NMCN now handles accreditation, registration, licensing, and discipline for nursing and midwifery across Nigeria.
- Re establishment – The council was later re-affirmed by Act Cap. No 143 of 2004, solidifying its status as a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Health.

Key milestones

- 1930: Midwives Ordinance → Midwives Board
- 1947: Nursing Council of Nigeria founded
- 1979: Decree 89 merges the two bodies into NMCN
- 2004: Re-established under Act 143, confirming its regulatory powers

The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria is the only professional Council for all grades and Cadres of Nurses and Midwives in Nigeria. It is the only legal and administrative, corporate and statutory body charged with specific functions to perform on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure the delivery of safe and effective Nursing and Midwifery care to the public. NMCN is the regulatory body that oversees nursing and midwifery professions in Nigeria. It was established to ensure standards, accredit schools, register practitioners, and maintain discipline. It was created by Decree No. 89 of 1979 and later reaffirmed by an Act of Parliament in 2004. The council plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality of healthcare services in Nigeria by ensuring that nurses and midwives are qualified and competent.

DUTIES & FUNCTIONS OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (NMCN)

The primary objectives of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria are to ensure high quality of Nursing and Midwifery education in Nigeria, maintain high standard of professional nursing and midwifery practice and enforce discipline within the profession.

Broadly, the Council's functions are related to those of designing, implementing and evaluating various nursing and midwifery educational programmes, of indexing, examination, registration, certification, licensure of professional nurses and midwives and monitoring standards of nursing and midwifery practice in the Country.

Specifically, the Council's functions are listed below:

- Index all categories of nursing and midwifery students on commencement of their training.
- Develop and review periodically, the different curricula utilized for the education of all categories of Nurses and Midwives.
- Co-operate with recognized bodies interested in conducting new schemes for Basic and Post Basic Education of Nurses and Midwives such as: National Universities Commission, World Health Organization, etc.
- Accredite all training institutions and clinical practice areas utilized for the education of all categories of Nurses and Midwives in Nigeria.
- Conduct Professional Examinations for all categories of Nurses and Midwives in Nigeria.
- Establish and maintain Registers of all persons qualified to practice the discipline of Nursing and Midwifery in Nigeria.
- Conduct Registration interviews for Nurses and Midwives trained outside Nigeria who are seeking to practice in Nigeria.
- Issue and update Professional Practicing Licenses every three years to all cadres of qualified Nurses and Midwives.
- Issue Professional Certificates to all cadres of Nurses and Midwives at the end of their training.
- Revoke and/or Restore Professional Certificates as applicable.
- Determine and maintain standards of knowledge and competencies in Nursing and Midwifery Education and Practice in Nigeria.
- Organize and Conduct Mandatory Continuing Professional and Educational Development Programmes for all cadres of Nurses and Midwives.
- Conduct and Promote Research in relevant areas of Nursing and Midwifery.
- Maintain discipline within the Nursing and Midwifery profession in Nigeria through the Nurses and Midwives Tribunal.
- Prosecute illegal Training Institutions.
- Regulate and control the practice of Nursing and Midwifery in all its ramifications.

The Registrar of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) is Alhaji Ndagi Al-Hassan, who was confirmed to the substantive position in July 2025. He is the chief executive of the council and has been confirmed to the permanent role by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

KEY FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA NURSES AND MIDWIVES (NANNM)

Professional Development:

NANNM organizes continuing professional education and certification programs for nurses and midwives across Nigeria. These programs aim to enhance clinical skills, leadership capabilities, and knowledge of the latest advancements in healthcare.

Policy Advocacy:

The association works with the Nigerian government, international organizations, and healthcare stakeholders to shape policies that improve maternal and newborn health outcomes, nursing education, and healthcare worker conditions.

Research and Innovation:

NANNM encourages and supports research initiatives that aim to improve healthcare delivery. The association promotes evidence-based practices in nursing and midwifery to ensure better patient outcomes, and members' research is published in the Nigerian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery (NJNM).

Welfare of Nurses and Midwives:

The association is dedicated to improving the welfare of its members by negotiating better salaries, working conditions, and benefits. It also provides legal assistance in workplace disputes or cases of unfair treatment.

Health Outreach and Advocacy Programs:

NANNM is actively involved in public health outreach programs, such as campaigns on family planning, maternal and child health, gender-based violence, and disease prevention (e.g., HIV/AIDS, malaria)

Collaboration with International Partners:

NANNM collaborates with international organizations like the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), International Council of Nurses (ICN), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) to align its activities with global best practices and standards

How National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) Was Formed

The National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) is a professional-cum trade union organization recognized by the Trade Unions (Amendment) Act of 2005. It is a non-governmental and non-profit organization authorized to organize all professional nurses and midwives who are trained, registered and licensed to practice Nursing Profession at all the levels of healthcare delivery system, namely primary, secondary and tertiary both in public and private sectors in the country.

The first organization of nurses in Nigeria is known as the Nigeria Union of Nurses (NUN), which was formed in 1938 and registered in 1943. The union was said to be led by one Mr. Kuti (a nurse) as honorary Secretary General (SG). In 1944, the late Nathaniel Cole was appointed the first General Secretary of union. Mr. Cole was later joined by Mr. S. S. O. Ekezie, Mr. Ayoola Adeleke and Mr. Clement Njoku. In 1957, an organization known as the Professional Association of Trained Nurses of Nigeria (PATNON) was formed at the University College Hospital (UCH) in Ibadan by a small group of nurses who were trained in the United Kingdom. Later in the year, PATNON changed its name to Nigeria Nurses Association (NNA). The existence of Nigeria Union of Nurses and the Professional Association of Trained Nurses of Nigeria polarized the unionization of nurses as each group claimed to be the authentic umbrella body of nurses in the country. Apart from the two prominent organisations mentioned above, there were other mushroom associations, which sprung up due to the prevailing situation at that material time. These include the Professional Association of Trained Midwives of Nigeria (PAMON), the Nigeria Association of Nurse Tutors (NANT) the Professional Health visitors of Nigeria, the Nigeria Industrial Nurses Association, the Guild of Registered Nurses of Nigeria and the Community Nurses Association of Nigeria.

The disunity amongst nurses became more pronounced in the Udoji Award of 1976 because they sang discordant tones on issues of their common interest. However, the huge loss in the Udoji Award became the unifying factor for the nurses emerged wiser and mindful of the fact that united they stand, divided they fall. Therefore, on the 8th of December 1977 at the famous City Hall in Lagos, the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) was formed as a single umbrella body of all nurses and midwives in the country. It was formed for the members of the nursing and midwifery profession to speak with one voice and to work for a common cause, and the people who were central to the formation of the Association were Mr. E. O. Adelowo (now late), HRM Oba (Apostle) Moses A. Olabode, PA. S. O. Ikotun (now late), Mrs. Adetoun Bailey, Chief (Mrs.) A. A. Taiwo, Mrs. Remi Ayida, Mrs. Julie Anigbo, Mrs. Josephine Anyamene, Mr. Kola Oyedepo, M. I. D. Musa and Mrs. Hanatu Omale as well as nationwide Chief Nursing Officers and Principals of School of Nursing and Midwifery across the country.

Interestingly, in 1978, two female nurses Comrade E. Hannatu Omole and Mrs. Julie Omigbo emerged as the pioneer president and deputy president of the Association respectively. Also elected at that time were Mrs. Jaiyesimi as treasure, Mr. Richmond Amande as Financial Secretary and Mr. Kola Oyedepo as National coordinator. Comrade Hannatu Omole was succeeded by Comrade Josephine A. U. Anyamene in 1982. She held forth in the capacity for one term, spanning for four years. In 1986, Comrade Job G. Micah was called to action as the new president of NANNM. Comrade Job G. Micah was succeeded by Alhaji Abdulsalami A. Shiru in 1991. He served as president of the Association for only one year, and was succeeded by Comrade Lawrence O. Awowoyin in 1992. Comrade Awowoyin continued where his predecessor stopped. He served for eight years.

In 2000, Comrade Pat Emembolu Eze emerged as the new president, and was succeeded by Comrade Linus Abdulkadir Sabulu in 2004. He died in October 2005 in the ill-fated Bellview plane crash. Comrade F. O. Omorogbe, the National Deputy President of the Association, spent about seven months in office before the by-election that ushered in the Administration of Comrade Lawal Hussaini Dutsinma in 2006.

The current National President (Chairman) of the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) is Comrade Haruna Mamman (RN), who assumed the presidency of the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives (NANNM) on November 15, 2024, following an official handover and is actively leading the association in advocating for improved welfare and working conditions for Nigerian nurses and midwives, engaging with the Ministry of Health on crucial allowance and relativity issues.