

2016
February

IN FUSION

PETER FRANK

*HERC Graduate
embarks on a
career in Nursing*

plus...

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ENTERPRISE AGREEMENTS UPDATE

SURVIVING SHIFT WORK

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Branch Secretary Message



Neroli Ellis

Welcome to 2016!

Welcome to the many new graduates embarking on their new career pathways through graduate and Transition to Practice programs in both the private and public sector. Our newest Registered Nurse graduates will be commencing shift work and learning to work in challenging settings with the support of our profession over the next few weeks.

New Registered and Enrolled Nurses and Midwives are certainly welcomed in a professional workforce, which is beginning to see the effects of an ageing profile. Over 700 nurses working in the public sector are over 60 years of age. ANMF is ensuring that nurses of all ages are supported to meet the mental and physical challenges of shift work and to manage fatigue. This edition has many tips on how to handle this transition.

The ongoing issue of double shifts is a worrying trend, which is not being appropriately managed in the short term. With ongoing pressures of increasing demand and the need to fulfill elective surgery targets, demand on beds is at a premium. All beds must be fully funded to provide nursing staff, rather than the short term reactive nature of current staffing which results in double shifts and unsustainable overtime.

The key to safe staffing is ensuring that there are sufficient nurses employed on each ward with the right skill mix, enabling

a complete roster to be posted each month without the need for additional shifts and pre-booking of casuals. ANMF has been party to a Double Shift Working Party and whilst many medium and long term strategies are being considered, there has been no agreement on short term solutions. With minimal closures over the traditional festive break, ANMF has written to the Minister expressing concerns at the lack of resources available to seriously address this critical issue.

Ongoing employment of nurses completing the graduate programs is vital to retain and nurture our own and to enable those who want to remain in Tasmania an opportunity to gain permanency. ANMF is lobbying the Government to enable permanent positions to be offered.

ANMF welcomes the arrival of Dr Alcorn who commences in the new CEO role of the Tasmanian Health Service this month. This important role will lead the strategic changes and new operational structure for the THS. Clearly, reduction in non front line staffing should not occur without consultation for the new operational structure and service strategy.

Finally, ANMF wishes all new graduates all the best in their transition to practice and shift work. ANMF Representatives are on all wards and work sites across Tasmania and are keen to provide local support and will be welcoming you all to our wonderful profession!

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UTAS

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FOCUS - ANMF / HERC Acute Care

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Tasmanian Branch) and the Health Education and Research Centre (HERC) held the inaugural Acute Care Conference on the 26th of November 2015 at the CCAMLR Building on Macquarie street, Hobart.

Over 60 people attended to further their nursing knowledge in topics such as diabetes, rapid patient assessment, wound care, PEG and tracheotomy care. The day included a number of concurrent sessions where attendees were able to choose the most relevant topic to their practice. Participants reconvened in the main room for presentations from key note speakers.

Key note speakers included:

- **Tony Bradley** the Nurse Unit Manager of the emergency department at the Royal Hobart Hospital delivered an interactive talk on the rapid assessment of patients admitted to the emergency department. This session gave participants an in-depth explanation of performing an assessment in an emergency situation.
- **Leanne Smart**, Clinical Nurse Consultant in aged care, delivered an informative presentation on delirium. This included explanation of the recognition, treatment and implications of delirium for patients in the acute care setting.
- **Lea Young**, Nurse Practitioner in Wound Care, delivered a review of current wound care practices. Participants had the opportunity to complete case studies in wound care and appropriate dressing choice during this presentation.

The conference engaged participants through the use of interactive sessions. All invited speakers were experts in their field and all delivered informative and engaging talks on their given topics. It was great to see nurses from all aspects of the profession coming together to further their knowledge in acute care nursing.

Gold sponsors of the Acute Care Conference HESTA and NURSELine provided presentations for conference participants of the services they provide. Their presentations on superannuation and Nursing Agencies were informative and well received.

The conference was a huge success with positive participant feedback. Participants provided several inspirational ideas for the 2016 conference and other CPD sessions. With 2016 quickly approaching ANMF and HERC are looking forward to providing and meeting members education needs throughout the upcoming year.

ANMF and HERC would like to thank all participants and speakers for making the conference a success.



Tony Bradley provided a very informative presentation to the participants about Rapid Assessment Skills.



Cindy Weatherburn, ICU Liaison Nurse, Dept. of Critical Care at the RHH engages participants with her presentation about Acute Tracheostomy Care.



Thank you to our Gold sponsor, HESTA Superfund who attended the conference and gave a presentation to the participants.

Conference 2015

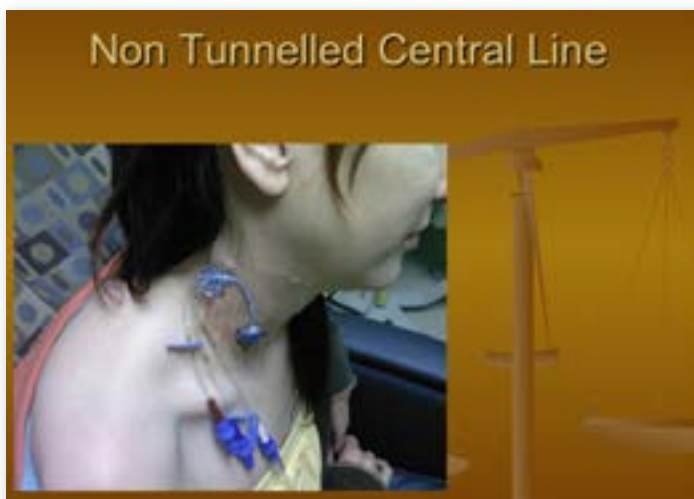
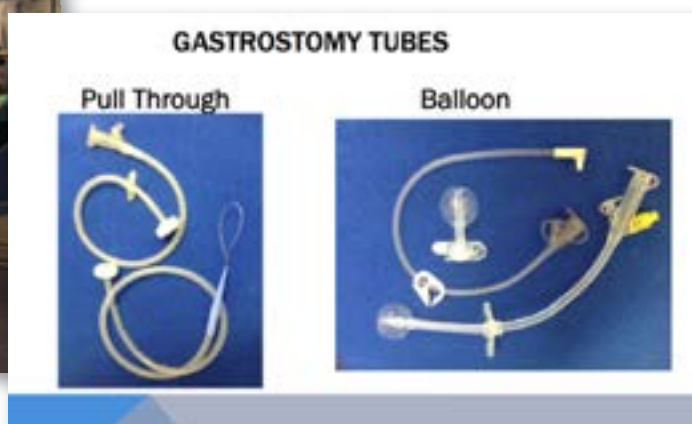


Lea Young, Nurse Practitioner in Wound Care at the RHH delivered a review of current wound care practices.

Snapshot of Lea Young's presentation about Wound Care.



Margot Hickman, CNC Gastronomy Care & Enteral Feeding at the RHH, gave a great presentation to participants about Care of PEG Tubes.



Michael Sullivan, CNC, CVAD at the RHH, provided participants with an informative presentation about Vascular Access - A Practical Approach.

HERC Graduate embarks on a career in Nursing

Peter Frank graduated from the Health Education and Research Centre (HERC) at the ANMF, in November 2014. He completed a Certificate III in aged care. After working in the aged care industry he has decided to move forward and has applied for a Bachelor of Nursing to become a registered nurse.



Deciding to have a career change was what led Peter to studying with the Health Education and Research Centre (HERC) at the ANMF. After successfully applying for a Certificate III he commenced studying with enthusiasm, keen to learn all he could.

Peter was very impressed with the facilities and the course content. He was also pleased with the support he was provided by HERC staff. "The teaching staff were excellent. They were supportive and happy to chat about assignments," Peter states. When asked how he rated the course Peter had nothing but praise for the preparation

of the content which he believes equipped him with all of the necessary skills to commence in aged care.

After finishing his time at HERC he secured a job at Southern Cross Care Tasmania Fairview Rise and currently works in the areas of Leisure and Lifestyle. This is combined with several shifts in personal care which gives him a good balance when looking after the residents.

Peter decided that his future was in nursing. This inspired him to take the next step and he began to investigate studying the Bachelor of Nursing. Having family members who are Nurses also inspired him. When Peter began to consider studying further he was also encouraged by his Facility manager.

"My facility manager has encouraged me to commence the Bachelor of Nursing. All of the senior staff at the facility are supportive. Fairway Rise has an excellent culture of assisting new graduates and there are always offers of help". Peter states. In addition to this, Southern Cross Care House is also supportive and have encouraged him to apply for a funded scholarship.

Peter is looking forward to the challenges that studying will give him over the next few years. Once he finishes he is certain that he will be staying in Tasmania and using his studies to further his career.

Whilst he is enjoying his time in aged care he knows that becoming a Registered Nurse will open up new horizons and career paths which may lead to a move in a different field. Peter acknowledges that being a Registered Nurse will assist him in the ability to secure full time work.

Peter is keen to keep expanding his future knowledge through study and is looking forward to an exciting nursing career underpinned by his expanding knowledge. "I will definitely continue with education and training and see where it takes me. I will be staying in Tasmania and continue with nursing."



RBF Diploma of Nursing STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The two lucky students, Brent Lees (Left) and Andrew Finau (Right) who both won a \$7,500 RBF scholarship towards their Diploma of Nursing (HLT51612) study were asked:

How did you feel when you found out you were successful and what your RBF scholarship will do for you and the community?

Brent Lees: *I was thrilled to be offered the RBF scholarship through ANMF/HERC, the opportunity was something that for me meant I could focus directly on my studies and have some of the financial stress of study relieved. The RBF scholarship has given me the opportunity to expand on my education in the health care sector, which is something I have wanted to do for a long time. In my previous years working as a community support worker I always knew that I wanted to do more to help the community and for me the RBF Nursing Scholarship is helping me to achieve this goal! For me, I have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to achieve greatness so thank you so much RBF, ANMF/HERC!*

Andrew Finau: *I was speechless with a big smile on my face. I was so happy to find out I got the scholarship. It will go a long way to help me become the nurse I always wanted to be.*



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FOCUS - future of nurses in aged care: – Uniting Agewell

Care Manager Debbie Evans of Strathaven Uniting Agewell (UAW), knows the importance of having Registered and Enrolled Nurses in Aged Care. It is this knowledge and her experience in Aged Care that has inspired her to ensure that new graduates are welcome and prepared to work within her facility. Debbie sees the importance of this support for new graduates and understands that through this investment she is investing in the future of Aged Care.

UAW offers a comprehensive ongoing mentoring program for its new graduates. This includes a one day induction for New Graduates prior to their commencement.

The induction covers the key items of, infection control, manual handling and orientation to the facility.

New graduates are then buddied with more experienced nurses for 3 to 4 days.

UAW provides quality education resources on site in the form of, in-house training, comprehensive online programs, access to the Aged Care Channel and additional training by their own Education Department. UAW also pays for any external training suitable for nurses to their work area.

Debbie ensures that policy, procedures and practice standards are readily available and accessible to all new staff. Reinforcement of these and follow up by Debbie at regular intervals is provided to ensure that these are understood and followed.



Debbie Evans

One-on-one sessions with the care manager are provided until the new graduates are comfortable in their new environment. New graduate skill sets are evaluated and further education and training is completed so they can specialise in an area of their choosing.

GRADUATE NURSE TRANSITION PROGRAM

CALVARY HEALTH CARE TASMANIA – LAUNCESTON



Graduate nurses Alice Davies (Left- front) and Claire Larissey (Right) working on the surgical ward administering fragmin.

Calvary Health Care Tasmania offers a dynamic 12 month Graduate Nurse Transition Program.

Our primary vision is to provide excellence in nursing care with a key focus on developing each and every individual within our organisation. The program we offer ensures graduates receive the development and training opportunities to facilitate this.

We are the only private hospital in Launceston and have two campuses in close proximity to one another, with approximately 150 beds. We offer

a diverse range of specialist services / units including 7 theatre suites and a high dependency unit, general surgical, medical, orthopaedics, gynecology, oncology, urology, plastics, endoscopy, day surgery and palliative care.

The graduate program is specifically designed to meet the needs of a first year registered nurse. Our hospital offers you professional support and development opportunities achieved through study days, tutorials and supported clinical practice.

Our graduate program offers:

1. A twelve month contract
2. Clinical nurse educator support
3. Your own preceptor
4. One week supernumerary orientation
5. Regular study days, tutorials and practicals
6. Opportunity to complete Clinical Hours (Transition to Practice) UTAS

This year (2016) we have accepted 16 graduate nurses to complete our transition program. Graduate nurses will be placed over both St Vincent's and St Luke's Campuses in theatre suites and on the wards. We are looking forward to supporting these graduates in their first year of practice and the opportunities that will be developed throughout the year.

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NEW GRADUATE - PRIMARY HEALTH

VERONICA TATE - REGISTERED NURSE, TRANSITION TO PRACTICE PROGRAMME, FIRST ROTATION, PRIMARY HEALTH

There are a vast array of challenges that face our nurses commencing their careers, from the difficulty of securing a graduate nurse placement due to the limited number of positions and the competitiveness to secure.

It can see many new graduates thinking outside the box and looking at numerous options for employment, and it has seen new graduate nurse Veronica Tate finding herself working in the primary health sector at George Town Hospital. She has found this to be a rewarding area to work and it has provided her with a stepping stone to provide a strong foundation to her nursing career and enable her to develop into other areas.

Veronica has felt extremely well supported by her fellow senior staff members who mentor her and provide her with assistance every shift. She describes her support as follows

"I feel I am very well supported. I know what I am expected to achieve as a graduate and my clinical coordinator is just a phone call or email away. The staff at George Town Hospital are also very supportive; they treat me as a member of the team, rather than as 'the grad'. They let me work things out on my own, but are always available to help and guide when needed. They are all very welcoming, understanding and helpful.

There are regular video conferences for the grads which allow us all to catch up and discuss how we are all going and share our experiences.

I also have access to various resources both in the workplace and online which have been very helpful." Veronica comments.

Veronica has seen herself grow in her clinical decision making skills and has relished the clinical responsibilities handed to her, such as being in charge after hours with the support of the senior RNs on that shift. She describes this as her best experience of being a graduate working in Primary Health so far.

"My best experience as a grad so far was the day I acted as the RN in charge. It was amazing to experience that kind of leadership, team work and trust. It gave me a huge boost in self-confidence; being asked for my professional opinion and knowing that my fellow co-workers trust my judgement." She says.

Veronica is a passionate new graduate and has a refreshing outlook on the nursing profession, she describes her career growth as follows:

"Having recently graduated from student to RN I believe I have grown in many ways. I feel like I have a handle on things; I am more confident in my role as an RN and working within my scope of practice. Communicating with various health professionals is becoming second nature, I have a better understanding of the various health services and I feel more comfortable in speaking up and advocating for my patients.

My knowledge continues to grow each and every day." Veronica states.

"Nursing provides such a broad area to work within; you can travel, specialise, change wards/ specialties and specialise again... and that is one of the many aspects of nursing which attracted me to this career."

Looking to the future Veronica has a very broad outlook on her nursing aspirations, she like many others is attracted to nursing for its diversity and flexibility. Veronica has no idea where she will be in her career in five years time, and this excites her for the possibilities are endless. "Nursing provides such a broad area to work within; you can travel, specialise, change wards/ specialties and specialise again...and that is one of the many aspects of nursing which attracted me to this career."

Veronica's next graduate placement sees her working at the Launceston General Hospital on ward 5D trying her hand at the ever challenging Oncology ward and she is excited about the new learning opportunities that await her, we wish her all the best for the future in her nursing career.





SHIFT WORK – SOME TIPS FOR NEW GRADUATES

For those graduates who about to commence shift work, it is important that you familiarise yourself with your workplace enterprise agreement/award in order to ensure that your roster and working conditions are compliant.

Shift work provisions in enterprise agreements and awards in both the private and public sector are similar but it is important that you read the fine detail in order to understand your roster and whether it complies with your award/agreement.

For the purposes of this article we will focus on the shift work provisions found in the Nurses and Midwives (Tasmanian State Service) Award which applies to nurses and midwives working in the public sector. Let's look at some of its key provisions:

Part V – Hours of Work and Overtime – Section C – Special Conditions – Shift Workers Only.

Subclause (d) Shift rosters – your shifts are to be rostered, in advance, across a 28 day roster shift cycle.

The 28 day roster cycle is to stipulate 8 rostered days off (days of non work) and the shifts to be worked (and an ADO if you are a full time employee).

Of the eight days of non work on your roster cycle, at least two of those days must be consecutive. Employees however can agree to alternate arrangements. (It is however ideal that the days off be consecutive to ensure sufficient time for adequate recovery etc).

You may be rostered to work day, afternoon and night shifts.

The ordinary hours of a shift worker are an average of 38 hours per week, excluding meal breaks. Daily hours for shift workers are not to exceed 8 in any one day, 48 in a week, 88 in a fortnight and 152 in 28 days.

You can not be rostered to work more than 8 shifts in any 9 consecutive days within the roster cycle.

Your place on the roster can be changed with the giving of one week's notice – if notice is not given then overtime is payable.

The roster itself can not be changed unless 28 days notice is given by your employer.

Your unpaid meal break must be taken between the start of the fourth hour and the end of the sixth hour. If you are not able to take your meal break due to not being relieved, then you are to be paid at overtime rates until you are relieved.

If you are interrupted during your meal break and you are required to work, the uncompleted meal break is counted as time worked and you are then entitled to take a meal break as soon as practicable. If you are unable to take the meal break during the remainder of your shift, you are to be paid at overtime rates for the interrupted meal break.

If you have any queries or concerns about your roster, please discuss these with your line manager.

ENTERPRISE AGREEMENTS UPDATE

HUON ELDERCARE INC. HACSU ANMF GENERAL STAFF AGREEMENT 2015

- Wage increases – 3% per annum or the FWC annual wage increase, whichever is higher, with the first increase backdated to 1 July 2014 and the second increase backdated to 1 July 2015.
- Allowances – increased as per wage increase percentages.

TANDARA LODGE COMMUNITY CARE INC. GENERAL STAFF ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT 2015

- Wage increases – 3% per annum with the first increase backdated to 1 July 2014 and the second increase backdated to 1 July 2015.
- Allowances – increased as per wage increase percentages.

ESKLEIGH FOUNDATION INC. NURSING AGREEMENT 2015:

- Wage Increases – 3% per annum with the first increase backdated to 1 July 2014.
- In charge allowance – increased to \$24.60.
- Preceptor allowance – increased to \$2.46 per hour.
- Meal allowances (when travelling) – increased.
- Remote Call – minimum amount per shift increased to \$13.76.
- Annual leave – cashing out provision inserted.
- Uniform allowance – increased as per wage increase percentages.



On the HEARTBEAT for FEBRUARY:

“How to you support new graduates in your workplace?”



BERNARD TALAO

Educator Medical Ward - NWRH

“Make them feel welcome and part of the team, make them aware that in our workplace they are free to ask any questions and there is no dumb question. Make them aware that they can rely on me and ask for help.

I make sure that they know that I understand how they feel about starting a new career. I always think about my graduate year, the first day I stepped on to the ward, new environment, different people and personalities, how I felt on that day. This always help me support the new graduates mentally, emotionally and with knowledge and skills because I sort of know what they need.”



MICHELLE FRANKCOMBE

Transition To Practice Coordinator - THS-NWR Burnie

“I do a daily round of the ward areas to touch base with them and assist them as required. This can provide a great opportunity for informal teaching and learning. I like to encourage a supportive and open

working relationship with the grads to better support them in their Transition.”



DEBBIE EVANS

Care Manager of Strathhaven Uniting Agewell (UAW)

“By providing them with the necessary training and skills to ensure they are comfortable in their environment”.



SURVIVING SHIFT WORK

New Graduates have to overcome many challenges when they commence nursing. Shift work is one stressor which nurses face through their career. If you were to ask a nurse, midwife or carer to list the five most difficult things about their work, shift work would probably make that list.

People get sick at anytime of the day or night. Hospitals run around the clock. Nurses are required to be there to care. For some nurses their shift work requirement means that they will have to work a combination of shifts which start and finish in a 24 hour period.

Nurses work hard to complete their training and it is imperative that when they commence working that they provide themselves with good self care. A good work life balance is important and is the key to enjoying days off away from work.

According to MedSurg Nursing one of the problems with night shift work is the subjective state of fatigue which can lead to problems with how alert you are, how you concentrate, your vigilance, your ability to make judgement calls, your mood and your performance.

The Western Australia Office of Road Safety states that night shift workers get an average of two hours less sleep per 24 hours than day workers. This may result in sleep deprivation which can affect your mood, health and work safety.

The ANMF (Federal Branch) policy on Fatigue Prevention states that:

Nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing (care staff) have a right to a safe and healthy workplace environment and to perform their work without health and safety risks from fatigue. Information on the factors contributing to fatigue and ways to combat these factors can be found at the following link.

http://anmf.org.au/documents/policies/P_Fatigue_prevention.pdf.

The ANMF supports its members in the prevention of fatigue through the Federation's work health and safety and industrial activities, including through provisions in Agreements on work hours, breaks, overtime, on-call, staffing levels and workloads.

It's both your responsibility and that of your employer to ensure that you are able to manage your risk of fatigue effectively.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Sleep

They Sydney Morning Herald reports that Associate Professor Shantha Rajaratnam, from Monash University faculty of medicine, nursing and health science says that night shift workers don't usually sleep well during the day because their body clock is trying to keep them awake.

It is essential to avoid fatigue that you get as close to 7-8 hours of sleep as possible. Sleep deprivation can lead to a greater risk of accidents at work or on the road. This can put your life at risk as well as endanger those near you or in your care.

If you are sleeping during the day after (or before) night shift there are some simple tips you can follow:

- Ensure that the room you are sleeping in is dark and cool (dark, cooler conditions allow you to fall asleep and stay asleep).
- Try to ensure that your room is as soundproof as possible. If this is not easy try white noise (the sound of a fan or air

conditioner), there are some very good Apps that have white noise to assist you to fall asleep. Ear plugs are another way of shutting out noise.

- Turn your phone off or down so you can't hear incoming calls or messages. Put a sign on your door to alert visitors and let your close friends/family know your schedule to ensure that you will not be disturbed.
- Allow yourself plenty of time to rest, avoid the temptation of booking in appointments (or lunches with friends!) during your rest time.
- Work out what suits you best – some people need to go straight home to sleep, others might find staying awake for a few hours before going to bed gets them a better sleep.
- Do not tell yourself 'I can't do this' work out how you can ... speak to other nurses for tips and advice. We have all had to learn to work night duty.

Stimulants

- Avoid smoking – smoking can lead to a less restful sleep, possibly due to the effects of the stimulant nicotine.
- Avoid coffee or other drinks containing caffeine especially in the few hours leading up to when you are planning to go to sleep. It can be quite difficult to go to sleep straight after night shift, especially when the sun is up let alone fighting the stimulant effects of caffeine.

Getting Home

- If you feel too tired to drive home, DON'T. Most shift workers have heard of at least one story where a colleague has driven home and fallen asleep at the wheel. Call a taxi or friend or catch a bus if it is a safe time of the day/night.
- Carpool where possible.

Healthy eating/drinking

- What you eat before, during and after your shift can significantly affect your ability to work. Food can directly affect your energy levels and your stamina.
- Avoid junk food high in carbohydrates which may result in you feeling increasingly tired.
- Drink plenty of water while at work to ensure you maintain hydration. Avoiding this is often a trap nurses and care staff fall into due to the fact that they just don't allow the time to drink and go to the toilet. It is increasingly difficult to remain high functioning when you are dehydrated. Keeping hydrated with water will help prevent headaches due to dehydration.
- Avoid drinking alcohol immediately before going to sleep.

As long as hospitals and aged care facilities provide 24 hours care, shift work is here to stay. As a nurse, midwife or carer employed to work different shifts it is essential that you find a work/life balance to achieve longevity in your career considering the points discussed. It is important to remember to be kind to yourself and your body so that you are well rested and can provide the optimal care we all strive to give to those in our care.

Transition to practice in THS-NORTH WEST REGION

MICHELLE FRANKCOMBE - TRANSITION TO
PRACTICE COORDINATOR - THS - NWR Burnie

Graduate Nurses are a valuable part of the workforce in THS - North West Region and we facilitate three Transition to Practice intakes each year. Transition to Practice is an important source of recruitment for THS-North West and this is reflected by a 75% retention rate of Transition to Practice Nurses at North West Regional Hospital in 2014.



Graduate RN Deanne Barclay (Left) discussing thickened fluids with Speech Pathologist Amy Turner (Right).

The aim of the program is to provide structure and support to facilitate the transition as a beginning level Registered Nurse. The program has been developed in order to provide the opportunity for a new beginning Registered Nurse (Graduate) to safely meet the demands of having up-to-date knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and abilities that underpin effective performance in providing safe and satisfying care within a patient-centred environment.

The program is competency-based, with a focus on experiential learning needs driven education and continuous debriefing. As a result, the program embraces the principles of adult learning, encouraging graduates to identify their own learning needs, as they work towards developing and maintaining competence to practice. It is anticipated that the structured and supportive program will facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge, which in turn will enable the graduate to practice collaboratively with medical and other health professionals, as determined by and in consultation with the patient.

Graduates are placed and supported across our THS-North West Region inclusive of NWRH, MCH, Mental Health, Smithton District Hospital and HealthWest.

During the past two years additional placements have been included in our area as part of the Tasmanian Government's election commitment to increase Transition to Practice placements.



Graduate RNs Rowena Rowlands (Left) and Amy Clark (centre) planning the essential care for their patient with RN Lauren Watkinson (Right)



Graduate RNs Sophie Allwright (Left) and Emily Lucas (Right) role playing at the Swallow Assessment Training day

Our graduates commence with a three-week orientation which gives them time to adjust to the setting, become familiar with our systems and processes and begin to integrate into the workplace.

Following this they are viewed as our colleagues and it is all systems go! This is when the fun and the real learning begin. Being a graduate nurse is a tough gig – it requires a lot of support and encouragement from everyone in their workplace.

As CNE-Transition to Practice it is my job to ensure that these junior nurses successfully transition into safe and capable Registered Nurses. While it is my role to lead the support provided to them, many other staff also assist to help them build their confidence in the clinical setting. They are also exposed to a range of clinical experiences, and are required to undertake much reflection.

THS-North West also supports the graduates in a total of six study days throughout the year. These study days are a great way for the graduates to come together and build support networks with their peers while also enhancing further learning.

One such study day was the Swallow Screen Assessor course held recently and facilitated by THS-North West Region Speech Pathologists Amy Turner and Annika Barry.

This course is designed to provide nurses with the knowledge and skills to perform a swallow screening assessment to identify and implement nursing management of dysphagia in adults with neurological impairment. As you can see from the pictures there is a lot of information to digest, some role play and a bit of fun as well!

Graduate Nurse: Transition from Student to Registered Nurse



MERREWYN (MEL) REABURN
REGISTERED NURSE, YEAR ONE GRADUATE NURSE.
MEDICAL WARD, LAUNCESTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

How have you found the transition from student to registered nurse?

I have actually loved it! It has been nice to reap the benefits for all the hard work that goes into nursing school, such as finally getting paid, that my free time is actually my free time and I genuinely like my job. I also enjoy the lifestyle of shift work as I regularly get four or five days off in a row. So I would definitely like to stress to people who are currently studying around the clock trying to finish their degrees that it is worth it.

What advice would you give to those just starting their new positions as Registered Nurses?

I would advise them that if they feel inadequate remember that this stage of your career is only temporary and you will very quickly gain confidence and experience. I would also say do not forget that you are surrounded by many different forms of support networks from senior nurses, doctors, emergency teams, allied health and transition program coordinators, so you will never be alone. Do not be afraid to ask questions and jump in and learn new skills when the opportunity arises. Finally, capitalise on the support network you can create with other graduates. They will be going through the same thing and are a fantastic debriefing resource. Make sure you go on regular catch ups with them and even start a Facebook group to keep in touch with them.

Have you felt supported as a newly Registered Nurse in your workplace?

I have felt supported. In my first position as a nurse the ward team nursed so I always had someone to ask questions and query things with, such as medication orders. I also knew I could contact the transition to practice coordinator over anything. I did find the odd person who was not interested in graduate nurses however the amount of great people who were happy to answer questions or help far surpassed the disinterested people having a negative impact on my experience. In my second position, which I have only been within for a short time, I feel supported and there is a great staff culture.

What information do you think would be useful for a newly graduated nurse?

Two things spring to mind. I think it would be valuable to have the experiences of other nurses when they transition into practice as this will give new graduates something to relate to. I also think it would be valuable to include any resources in which new graduates can capitalise upon that are a platform to debrief within.



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