



Australian Womens
Health Nurse
Association Inc.

WWW.Womenshealthnurses.asn.au

17th June 2019

The Australian Womens Health Nurse Association (AWHNA) are providing the following comments for submission based on terms of reference (The Review) and consultation forums attended by AWHNA members.

Independent Review of Nursing Education: *Educating the Nurse of the Future* (The Review)

When educating the Nurse of the future, and in considering greater focus on Primary Healthcare, will enable improved access to health literacy for consumers and communities. Early intervention and preventative strategies such as screening for risks and promoting better health outcomes, will aim to keep people out of hospital.

Supporting Specialist areas of nursing in community settings will encourage increased interest with a wider diversity of people taking up nursing, and promote already existing Nurse Specialties within our communities e.g. women's health, breast health nursing, respiratory nurses, aged care etc. The emphasis on acute setting specialties, like intensive care nursing, surgical nursing etc. is a factor affecting choice of nursing for many people as an occupation, including men. Rural, remote and regional Registered Nurses form essential links in multi-disciplinary teams (seen locally &/or via telehealth), being crucial in maintaining links between consumer, family, health care providers and our communities. NSW State Health Plan –Towards 2021 has several priorities that would guide nursing education into the future (<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/priorities/Documents/strategic-priorities.pdf>).

Transition to practice programs including placement of undergraduate/post graduate nurses within Nursing Specialty areas in regional, rural and remote communities, has beneficial gains for all. Rotation through several specialty areas, for example, child and family health nursing and women's health streams would provide opportunities with long term learning potential and skill development, preparing and meeting nursing competencies, growing personal self-confidence, all whilst receiving 1:1 clinical supervision, mentorship, coaching, preceptorship and guidance. In Developing a **unique** post graduate rural program and pathway over **two years placement employment** with a specialised nurse working in the specialty nursing field, followed by recognition of specialist skills, experience and the opportunity for further studies, potentially leading to **long time employment (growing our workforce)** and continuum of healthcare into these communities.

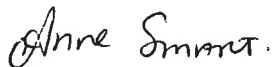
A nurse training model that connects health promotion, prevention, treatment and care would encourage more graduates wanting work out of metropolitan centres and into rural regional areas including remote nursing. In developing further partnerships between LHD's and training institutes, will aim to encourage this training, education and career development, having a **holistic model** of health care appealing to both male and female nurses. Upgrading pathways will forge encouragement for further highly recognized CNC and Nurse Practitioner roles within health, supporting review of pay scales which appear to remain a major issue for nurses, who start at a significantly lower level of income, in comparison to other 'equivalent' university degrees of similar content and timeframes.

Whilst keeping nursing education at a University level and on par internationally, partnerships with LHD'S and the Ministry, require more involvement and creative innovative realistic ways to sustain growing the Nursing workforce beyond initial first educational qualification. With a high percentage of our senior nursing staff retiring in upcoming years, succession planning for specialised areas of nursing requires all partners collectively cooperating for beneficial gains for all. An example includes the **Three Rivers University Department of Rural Health** (part of CSU) which aims to improve recruitment and retention of health professionals, including nurses, in regional rural and remote areas. Whilst providing support for the students, information and training is also provided for the rural clinicians who are working with the students.

The AWHNA, having a large rural membership, looks forward to hearing and seeing the final report from the **Independent Review of Nursing Education: *Educating the Nurse of the Future* (The Review)**

As a peak and highly recognised organisation, AWHNA *supports* Women's Health Nurses and Registered Nurses working in specialised areas of Women's Health, and collaboratively with organisations that work to improving educational needs, health and wellbeing of our Australian nurses, and undergraduate nurses....*belonging well together!*

With Kind Regards and Gratitude



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