

My name is Ebony Shalders. I am currently employed as an Endorsed Enrolled Nurse in Coffs Harbour. I am married with two young children.

I feel compelled to write to you regarding the unfortunate state of affairs in relation to Endorsed Enrolled Nurses seeking to become Registered Nurses.

It is obvious to me and many others I have spoken to, that there is currently no incentive for EENs to further their studies and become Registered Nurses. Many EENs contemplating such a move find themselves in the same position as I do: they are mature-aged nurses with families who find it difficult or impossible to take on the burden of the 640 hours of unpaid work placements required and the cost of travel and accommodation to undertake these placements. Having to take on this many hours of unpaid work is hard to swallow considering I am already working in an acute care setting.

There is one conversation with a colleague that sticks with me. She is a mother of 4 and was employed as an EEN in a public hospital. She made the transition to RN from EN. After 2 years working as an RN, she is still financially struggling to catch up from all the unpaid work she had to attend.

It could also be argued that these placements offer little to aspiring EN's that they could not gain in their day to day work as an EEN in their current acute care work place. As EN's we use our clinical judgement on a daily basis and besides handing our S4 and S8 drugs it's sometimes hard to see the difference between the two titles.

It is easy to imagine that if the cost and length of the Conversion Course was brought down EENs would be attracted to it in greater numbers.

It is also obvious that more RN's are needed in our hospital. If you are to look for employment on the NSW health website, mostly if not all of the positions vacant in Coffs Harbour are for RN's. This is keeping myself and others casually employed as EN's with no employment security.

I look forward to hearing your feedback

Yours Sincerely,

Ebony Shalders (EEN)