

From the Head of School

Hello and welcome to this edition of 'Nursing and Midwifery News'. We have all been extremely busy over the past months in both teaching and research. It has been a special pleasure to congratulate a number of staff on grants they have received as a consequence of developing research proposals that draw upon our strong links with industry partners. Among the most recent of these this year have been projects related to:

- **Palliative Care:** \$239,735 from the Department of Health and Ageing as part of funding round three for the Local Palliative Care Grants Program. This is a collaborative project with the school's Palliative Care Research Team, The Department of General Practice and RDNS.
- **Clinical Education:** close to \$200,000 has been received from the Department of Human Services for a total of three projects to investigate weekend and night duty placement of undergraduate students and to look at ways to increase

the capacity of rural areas to accommodate clinical practice for students. These projects were development in collaboration with: Peninsula Health, Bairnsdale Regional Health Service, RMIT University and the East Gippsland Institute of TAFE.

Our rural research and midwifery research team has also received two grants from the Nurses' Board of Victoria: to investigate recruitment and retention of overseas trained nurses from non-traditional countries to rural hospitals in Gippsland, Victoria and to look at experience of rural midwives supporting intellectually disabled women during pregnancy and childbirth. This latter area has also received funding from the APEX Foundation.

The continued effort of staff to continue to pursue collaborative research that has high practical and clinical utility is of great credit to them and to the school. My congratulations to them all.

Tony Barnett – Head of School

Development of a combined Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Emergency Health (Paramedic) course

The Schools of Nursing and Primary Health Care have recently established a Course Advisory Board to guide the development of a four-year double degree – the Bachelor of Nursing/ Bachelor of Emergency Health (Paramedic). Subject to approval of the university and NBV.

This proposal aims to support the development of a multi-skilled health workforce that is responsive to Australian population health needs, national workforce policy direction and reflects trends in undergraduate health

professional teaching through the development of innovative health services programs. The proposed course aims to progress the concept of inter-professional education that prepares students for current and future workforce needs within an expanded multi-skilled scope of practice. In this new role graduates will see themselves as a new health professional (nurse paramedic or paramedic nurse), rather than choose between life as a nurse or a paramedic. Enquiries meredith.mcintyre@med.monash.edu.au or bill.lord@med.monash.edu.au

Inaugural Vivian Bullwinkel Fellow joins the Palliative Care Research team



Dr Judi Greaves has been appointed as the inaugural Vivian Bullwinkel Postdoctoral Research Fellow as part of the school of Nursing and Midwifery, Palliative Care Research Team.

Dr Greaves will investigate the diversity of palliative care practice in Australia and the related implications.

The aim of this study is to provide recommendations for policy, planning and service delivery to enhance the provision of palliative care in Victoria.

Dr Greaves will commence in June and brings with her an extensive background in palliative care nursing.

She will draw on her research experience with Dr Paul Glare of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, her clinical background in community palliative care in Perth, and her PhD research on the fundamental meaning of palliative care.

Understanding the needs of Veterans at their end of life

The Vivian Bullwinkel Chair in Nursing, Palliative Care, Monash University, has almost completed the first phase of a study to understand the needs of veterans as they approach the end of their life. The aim of this study was to find what is known about the needs of veterans at the end of life; in particular their usage of palliative care services; and to contribute to policy direction for improvement of end of life care. This work was based on anecdotal reports from health professionals working in

palliative care services, which suggested that caring for veterans at the end of their life requires particular skill, especially in relation to psychological and spiritual aspects of care. This work will strengthen the access of veterans and their carers to palliative care services.

The Vivian Bullwinkel Memorial Fund, established by Monash University to support research in palliative care nursing, will hold an upcoming Gala Dinner at the Melbourne Museum. The dinner will provide

a memorable evening with special guests including General Peter Cosgrove; Lieutenant Georgeina Whelan, RAN; Professor Margaret O'Connor AM, Vivian Bullwinkel Chair in Nursing, Palliative Care and Ms Ita Buttrose AM as the Master of Ceremonies.

We invite you to contact Ms Melinda Warnecke, Monash University Medical Foundation 03 9905 5971 or via email melinda.warnecke@med.monash.edu.au for further information and Gala Dinner tickets

The School of Nursing and Midwifery farewells

Farewell Glenn

Glenn Doolan recently resigned from his position as Assistant Head (Gippsland campus) School of Nursing and Midwifery and will be missed by Monash staff locally and internationally.

He is currently writing up his thesis for Doctorate of Public Health through the Department of Preventive Medicine, Monash University at the Alfred Hospital (Level 3, Burnet Tower). His thesis is titled 'An investigation into Occupational Exposure Using Self Reports and a Job Exposure Matrix (JEM) in relation to prostate cancer from an Australian case-control study.'

Glenn intends to spend the next 12 months completing his investigation, brushing up on his clinical skills, being more active professionally and becoming physically fitter after 16 years of mainly sitting at a desk or standing over a hot OHP.

Farewell Jenny

Jenny Oates also resigned after a long association with the School of Nursing and Midwifery beginning in 1988 with Chisholm as a lecturer in primary health care and then becoming part of Monash University in 1991. Jenny experienced the transition of the School of Nursing into the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences and the amalgamation with the School of Nursing at Gippsland campus. Jenny has chaired every meeting of the school and attained the position of Deputy Head of School before returning to a role as Senior Lecturer in Community Health. She is looking forward to a sea change shaped around semi-retirement, a mobile food business in the tourist south coast area of New South Wales and some work back in Melbourne. In describing her work with student nurses over the years, Jenny says *"its been a privilege"*.

Farewell Bernard

Bernard Hornblower has also left Monash University to take up a position as Staff Development Manager at Beleura Private Hospital. Last year he dabbled with agency shifts and found that he missed the patient contact and teaching at the coalface. Although sad to leave the university he is finding the needs of staff demanding and with four graduate nurses (three of which are Monash Peninsula graduates), who commenced at the end of February, exciting and challenging.

The role involves a lot more "just in time learning" as is required by not only nursing but all hospital staff. This is a challenging teaching strategy which keeps clinical educators on their toes.

Farewell Trish

Trish David leaves the School of Nursing and Midwifery after five years at Gippsland and she says she will leave behind some wonderful colleagues and take with her some very fond memories. Trish has been excited to be a part of great innovations such as the Bachelor of Midwifery, the redevelopment and growth of the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery. She is proud to have been a part of putting Monash Midwifery on the map, through curriculum development and innovation, and through her representation on national and international midwifery committees.

However, there comes a time in all things when change is important for personal growth and happiness, and she moves back to her first love: being with women in childbearing and a new challenge of working in private healthcare, in an Assistant Director of Nursing/Midwifery position at Masada Private Hospital in St Kilda.

Vice-Chancellor's Undergraduate Research Scholarship



Loretta Garvey was warmly congratulated by staff and students after being awarded the Vice Chancellor's Undergraduate Research Scholarship for 2006.

The scholarship is awarded to students of exceptional calibre who have demonstrated a high level of research potential and who are undertaking a substantial research component in their final year. It includes the payment of CSP liability and fees for the year and a further \$6500 as research allowance. Loretta's research project involves an examination of the factors which influence decision-making by graduate nurses initiating medication at Southern Health

and is expected to have a significant impact on safe medication management for graduate nurses. Loretta's success follows a track record of high achievement; having won The Dean's Award in both second and third year for obtaining a high distinction (HD) in more than 75% of her subjects. Loretta is also an entrant in the 2006 National Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) Award – student category.

Profile Frances Walker – a career in correctional health services

When Frances Walker graduated from the Southland Polytechnic (now called Southland Institute of Technology) in Invercargill, New Zealand with her Diploma of Comprehensive Nursing, she had no idea she would one day be working for Monash University in the role of lecturer.

Born and educated in New Zealand and initially wanting to work in the aeronautical industry, she instead chose nursing as a career and after completing her training went to work for the Templeton Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand. The Templeton Centre was a 74-hectare facility and worked with physically and intellectually disabled children and young people (aged birth to 28 years). After her contract expired, and wanting to expand her knowledge of other countries, she “jumped the ditch” to begin nursing work in Melbourne.

After a brief time working with some of Melbourne’s nursing agencies Frances went to work at a 700-bed maximum security Prison in Laverton. Frances was one of a group of nurses specially employed to set

up the correctional health service for the male prisoners moving to the new Port Phillip Prison after the closure of Pentridge Prison in central Melbourne. She was instrumental in developing the night duty procedures and worked in a variety of areas within the prison, including emergency care, medical/surgical care, psychosocial care, outpatients area care (GP, small procedures, nurse clinics, psych clinics, etc) as well as distribution of medication and methadone (synthetic heroin) to the prison population.

After a short break to visit a number of countries in Europe, she went to work in the Gippsland area at Fulham Correctional Centre. After a short time at this medium security prison Frances switched to psychiatric nurse training at Traralgon, Victoria. It was at this time Frances became aware of Monash University as they were the education partners for the Graduate Certificate of Nursing (Mental Health) that Frances was to complete as part of her work responsibilities. Frances was then

‘hooked’ on learning and rapidly completed her Master of Nursing qualification while working as a community psychiatric nurse in Traralgon, and graduated in March 2004. Shortly after this she was offered and commenced employment with the School of Nursing and Midwifery as a lecturer in mental health.

Frances reports her highlights as working with the undergraduate students, completing a Graduate Certificate in Health Professional Education, Third year Co-ordination and being selected for a trip to Papua New Guinea to help the local university staff develop the curriculum for distance nursing education in mental health. Frances has enjoyed many aspects of her work and is leaving us at the end of her contract to travel overseas, this time further afield, in the United Kingdom. She hopes to continue the close friendships she has made here during her short stay with us and can be contacted through her email address of flw1971@yahoo.co.nz.

Hanan travels from the Sultanate of Oman to study at Monash

Hanan Almaani is pictured with Charanjit Singh, Coordinator of the Post-Registration Bachelor of Nursing course and Virginia Plummer, lecturer in acute care. This is her story.

I did my Diploma of Nursing in Muscat Nursing Institute in Sultanate of Oman in 1999. The course was for three years and I was trained in many hospitals within the Muscat region. Soon after graduation, I worked in the Ministry of Defence Hospital. I worked in many wards and departments including theatre, where I worked for five years until I successfully gained a scholarship to complete a degree in nursing. I chose to come to Australia to study for my

degree, because it is one of the most popular countries for study, well-known for the high quality level of education and research. Australia is a beautiful country and the people are friendly.

During my study, at I worked in Frankston Hospital for six weeks while undertaking the acute nursing care unit. I got the chance to see what new techniques and methods of treatment are available. I was very impressed with the pain management and no lifting techniques. In the mental health rotation, I got the chance to see how patients are followed and managed through their case managers outside the hospital environment. It was a very good experience. I enjoyed my course at Monash University.

From an international student’s perspective, I found the university supportive with its staff and facilities. The educators were so helpful and the students can get a lot of support and access to different facilities within the university. I hope to get another chance to do higher studies at Monash in the future. My advice to all international students is to enjoy the course and have fun.



International Midwives Day, 5 May and International Nurses Day, 12 May

Nurses at Peninsula celebrated these two special days by inviting their colleagues from the health precinct to a special morning tea of muffins, cakes, tea and coffee in the foyer of the School to celebrate Midwives Day. The theme of the day was supported by purple décor and the gerbera flower. On International Nurses’ Day, which has been celebrated internationally since 1971 in honour of Florence Nightingale’s birthday, staff and students cooked up a sensational sausage sizzle and served OT’s, paramedics, physio’s and other colleagues in super style.



Completing an honours degree: trials and tribulations

By Kristen Ferguson

Honours in Nursing degrees are relatively new yet they have been identified as a vehicle for stimulating the growth and expansion of a research culture in nursing. Moreover, these degrees encourage novice nurses to contribute to the body of nursing knowledge and to be instrumental in developing an evidence-based practice culture. In recent years Monash University established a four-year Nursing Honours program. This program articulates with the Bachelor of Nursing, although the program of study for Honours students deviates in the third year. I have been one of the lucky students to be part of this Honours program during its first year at Monash University, Gippsland campus. Currently nearing the conclusion of the program I have engaged in a reflection process and identified the highs and lows I have experienced during my time as an Honours student.

At the conclusion of the third year of the traditional Bachelor of Nursing degree I experienced elation at finally completing the pre-registration degree and registering as a nurse with the Nurses Board of Victoria. I remember feeling fearful about the challenges I was likely to face during my graduate year. I soon realized that these fears were not unfounded. I very quickly

learnt how to manage infusions, drain tubes, monitor patient-controlled analgesia, prepare and care for pre-op and post-op patients, shower and get to lunch on time! Learning how to prioritize and simply get through the day were my major accomplishments.

My burden as a novice practitioner was doubled by the fact I was also a novice researcher. Much of the Honours work during the third year of the Bachelor of Nursing degree was concentrated on developing the research proposal. When the time came for me to commence my Graduate Nurse Program, I also had to submit my ethics application and start the groundwork for actually conducting the project. The greatest difficulty I had was that I simply did not know who to ask for help out in the field. I had moved from Gippsland and was completing my Graduate Nurse Program at a metropolitan hospital. Hence I did not know who it was appropriate for me to seek help from.

While it has been a struggle to learn how to negotiate the path of both novice practitioner and novice researcher, the journey has not been without its high points. The support that I have received from my supervisors and the School of Nursing and Midwifery has been tremendous.

Palliative Care Research Team Grant Success

The Palliative Care Research Team of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Monash University, Peninsula campus, was recently awarded \$240,000 by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, under the Local Palliative Care Grants Program.

The grant will be used to research improving "after hours" palliative care planning in urban and rural Victoria, for patients, their carers and health professionals. The project will be undertaken within the Palliative Care Research Team in collaboration with the School of Primary Health Care and the Royal District Nursing Service.

Anecdotal feedback indicates that the provision of after hours palliative care can be problematic, for a number of reasons. Inadequate and inconsistent care at night may cause distress to patients and families and result in unnecessary hospital admission. Little work has been undertaken to examine this aspect of palliative care service delivery

and its effectiveness in maintaining support for patients and carers in their home environment. Therefore, it is the aim of this project to examine after hours palliative care services and develop care planning strategies that will better meet the needs of patients, families and health professionals for patients receiving care at home.

It is expected that one of the strategies developed will be a more efficient use of existing services, supplemented by funding through the Enhanced Primary Care Items of the Medicare Schedule, which aim to support care planning.



Generous donation to Sri Lanka tsunami



Robyn Kirby and Gayani Samarawickrema thank you for your generosity in supporting Sri Lanka after the tsunami by donating medical, nursing and counselling textbooks. It took some time to pack the books securely and have them freighted to Sri Lanka however they arrived safely in October. They have now been unpacked and very gratefully received by the Medical Faculty of the University of Kelaniya in Colombo. A thankyou letter from the university and photographs of the unpacking of the boxes in Sri Lanka was received.

"Dear Robyn, Gayanai and Friends at Monash, A big thank you to all the kind-hearted people who so generously donated... Most of the books in our library were damaged by seawater and could not be salvaged". Thank you 'most especially for all the kind thoughts associated with this generous act', Nirma Samaramickrema

Inaugural Conference

Incorporating the 1st Annual General Meeting



8th - 9th September 2006
Melbourne, Australia

STRENGTH IN WORKING TOGETHER

Invited Speaker

Professor Jane Seymour
Sue Ryder Care Professor
Palliative Care and End of Life Studies
University of Nottingham, UK

Focusing on collaborative approaches, clinical initiatives, innovative care settings and policy and service delivery, this meeting will be a unique opportunity for palliative care nurses and nurses with an interest in palliative care to come together to learn, exchange ideas and collaborate.

For further information and registration details
visit www.pallcare.org.au

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Iga Warta cultural immersion camp

A week-long Iga Warta cultural immersion camp has been available to nursing students for two years now thanks to the initiative of Associate Professor Marlene Drysdale in providing nursing students the opportunity to attend in conjunction with first year MBBS students.

Medical students have been able to take up this program as part of their 'selectives' unit for a number of years. This initiative has facilitated the opportunity for the development and implementation of inter-professional learning activities surrounding Indigenous health, culture and society, rurality and remoteness. The immersion in Indigenous culture and between the two health disciplines has assured this program's resounding success with participants.

Students travel by bus to Adelaide and then on to Iga Warta in the Northern Flinders Ranges. This long bus trip brings home to students the tyranny of distance and access issues related to healthcare service provision. The trip is packed with activities such as visits to Aboriginal Health Services



and other sights of significance. Iga Warta is owned and run exclusively by members of the Adnymathanha community. The owners have developed a unique program that allows students to stay as part of the community, and in doing so immerse themselves in Aboriginal lifestyle and culture. This allows them to experience how the living culture of the Adnymathanha people is as relevant today as it was before the arrival of non-Aboriginal people.

Numbers are steadily rising, and this year will see the full contingent of 20 nursing students from all year levels and 20 medical students attending. This year's group will be headed for Iga Warta in late September. By all accounts this will be a life-changing experience and a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Enquiries: Michelle Richardson, Coordinator Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Rural Health Practice (CMDS). Email: michelle.richardson@med.monash.edu.au

Pictured below: Elder Cliff Coultard demonstrates to the students how to remove ticks from lizards



The redesign and blending of roles in Health Services

Ms Libby Wilson, Executive Director of Nursing Services at Peninsula Health, recently addressed academics at Peninsula campus to present her findings arising from a Travelling Fellowship to the United Kingdom. In 2005, Ms Wilson travelled to Manchester, South Hampton and South East London and examined the redesign and blending of professional roles arising from the NHS Plan for Health Care Reform 2000.

This plan was set in the context of an increased demand for healthcare, a need to reduce the number of inappropriate attendances and an exacerbating shortage of nurses as they extend their practice to take up some aspects of the medical practitioner's role.

She outlined the 9 levels of the new career framework for health, from initial entry jobs through to the most senior staff to ensure that the service was meeting the needs of the work required both now and in the future.

The framework enjoyed the early support of the health service unions. Drawing on the expertise of former Victorian Michael Walsh, CEO Manchester Health Service and Debra Humphries of South Hampton, Libby facilitated discussion with academic staff on the blended roles of the future for undergraduates and post-graduates in Australia.

The evolving role of the campus nurse



**Diana Schumacher
RN, BSN
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Campus health services no longer simply focus on the primary health of the student population

but have the opportunity to emphasise the prevention of illness and the promotion of wellness. These health promotion activities may include workshops or informal sessions on healthy lifestyle, cancer prevention, drug and alcohol awareness, sexual health, skin protection, weight management, travel health issues and other issues.

The evolving role of the campus nurse is that of an independent practitioner in collaboration with a GP in areas of immunisation assessment and provision, wound management, wellness promotion, travel health advice, risk management and referrals to other services to name a few. The campus nurse still provides health care in a traditional modality such as immunisation, pathology collecting, pregnancy testing, blood pressure monitoring and ear syringing for example but gone are the days of the campus nurse as a first aider, 'doctor-helper', task-oriented worker, and sick bay attendant. Utilisation of skills mix makes good financial, professional and practical sense in the current system of medical care.

Practice development: Creating a culture of effectiveness in healthcare

Joan Yalden

International Practice Development Team

In April this year following the Commonwealth Games and the Grand Prix in Melbourne, participants arrived for the five-day International Practice Development School held at the Monash Conference Centre in the city.

They came from healthcare organisations and universities in Victoria, NSW, Queensland, Northern Territory, Tasmania, and as far away as Canada. Practice Development (PD) has been taken up enthusiastically by healthcare organisations because it captures the needs of nursing and interdisciplinary teams to work together more creatively to develop not only their knowledge and skill but to influence the contexts and culture of care.

One of the team of eight facilitators at the highly acclaimed Monash University PD School this year was, Doctor Angie Titchen, a leader of Practice Development at the Royal College of Nursing Institute, Oxford. Angie is known internationally for her pioneering work on methods used by facilitators in practice development. With a background in developing interdisciplinary teams, Doctor Titchen and the team used artistry in enabling participants to express their ideas, as a medium in moving towards creative thinking, planning and action.

PD School programs are not like any other. They have an atmosphere that arises from

an intermingling of critical dialogue, reflective practices, workshops and project design. The mood is a mix of excitement, intensity, concentration, good humour and fun.

Participants in the school were welcomed by Ms Kim Sykes, Principal Nurse and Director, Nurse Policy Branch, Victorian Department of Health. Ms Sykes supports the work of practice developers. She is a participant in the Practice Development Round Table of leaders and clinicians involved in active practice development in Victoria and other States that meets throughout the year at Monash University to discuss and promote this work. Practice Development is recognized for its systematic and rigorous approach to improving practice that is consistent with the interests of service users and the ubiquitous nature of change in healthcare organisations.

Practice Development at Monash University is part of an international PD collaborative that includes the University of Ulster, The Royal College of Nursing (UK), Fontys University, Holland, Victoria University of Wellington, Northern Sydney Central Coast and others. When the School of Nursing and Midwifery hosted the first Practice Development residential school and conference in Australia five years ago, it inherited an innovative approach to improving patient-centred care. Over this time, it has gone from strength to strength and has been invited to host the 2007 International Practice Development

Conference in Melbourne around the time of the Spring Racing Carnival, in early November.

The next residential PD School will be held from 11-15th September 2006 at the International College of Management, Sydney. This school will again be lead by Dr Valerie Wilson, Monash University School of Nursing and Midwifery and Director of Nursing Research at the Children's Hospital at Westmead. For details, call Vanita D'Souza on +61 2 9845 1321 or email vanitad@chw.edu.au. Dates for the 2007 international residential practice development schools will be announced shortly.



Left: Ms Kim Sykes, Director, Nurse Policy Branch, Victorian Department of Human Services, and Doctor Angie Titchen, Royal College of Nursing Institute, UK



Participants involved in creativity workshop.

ARC linkage grant success for Southern Health and Monash

Southern Health in collaboration with Monash University, School of Nursing and Midwifery, the Centre for Medical and Health Sciences Education, and Griffith University has been awarded an Australian Research Council grant for three years to explore nurses' work as a learning practice.

The project team of Dr Jenny Newton, Associate Professor Stephen Billett (Griffiths University), Associate Professor Glenice Ives, Professor Brian Jolly, and Professor Wendy Cross, Director of Education and Research Southern Health are excited about this opportunity to investigate the perspectives of experienced nurses and undergraduate student nurses. The project will examine how they develop their knowledge and learning through

professional practice. This project will provide a significant contribution to enhancing understanding of nursing practice as a pedagogical process within healthcare; and to potentially inform both tertiary and healthcare organizations about innovative approaches impacting on the national nursing workforce



Professor Cross, Dr Newton and Associate Professor Ives

News and Views

Contributions to the newsletter are very welcome from past and present students, staff and colleagues. We would love to receive photos, conference snapshots, and information on career moves for our alumni, research progress, awards, innovations and travel. Just contact us with your idea, anytime and we will do the rest!

Contact Virginia Plummer on 03 9904 4064 or virginia.plummer@med.monash.edu.au

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