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The ceremony was the culmination of two years of hard work and determination by the students and is an outstanding achievement for the nurses in Papua New Guinea. Although the program provided secure study centres in the Schools of Nursing, the nurses sometimes studied under very difficult circumstances. Half-way through the course, one of the provincial hospitals closed due to civil disturbances and several students were displaced. Two had to travel by foot and bus for 3 hours each way (with a male escort), to attend classes in the nearest study centre. One outstanding student completed her studies in her village in a remote highland area without electricity or telephone contact, arriving with four handwritten assignments on the day of the final examination.



front row, second from left, Melanie Birks, second row, second from left, Jeni Grubb

Representing AusAID at the ceremony, Dr Mark Thompson stated that in recognition of "the resounding success of this program and the need for well qualified personnel in PNG, AusAID has agreed to fund another forty candidates for the Bachelor of Nursing program." These students recently started their course, along with a few students from the first group who are still completing their studies. Together these nurses will be well positioned to make a significant impact on nurse education and towards improving health outcomes for the people in the provinces.

NURSES FROM JAPAN TO STUDY PALLIATIVE CARE AT THE PENINSULA CAMPUS.

A continuing education program designed for Japanese Nurses (In English and Japanese) will commence on 13th May 2002 at The School of Nursing, Peninsula Campus. This is a totally new palliative care course designed to meet the needs of Japanese nurses. The development is the outcome of progressive meetings between palliative care leaders in Japan and Tony Barnett, Head of School, Monash University.

Conference and lecture visits to Japan by Susan Lee, Senior lecturer (Palliative Care) helped to establish the needs for palliative care education for Japanese nurses. Course coordinator, Kaori Shimoinaba has experience working in the palliative care area in Japan and Australia and has vigorously promoted this course in Japan over the last year. Kaori comments that one of the aims of this initiative is "...to promote good communications in nursing between Australia and Japan by providing a course that will reflect nurses' educational needs and those of the Japanese health care system."

London

CONNECTING WITH KINGS

This month marks the beginning of a joint project between the School of Nursing and the Florence Nightingale School of Nursing & Midwifery at King's College, London. The team from Community Health and Ageing/Aged Care Nursing studies are exploring ways in which they can collaborate for coursework development. Whilst the team are communicating by WebBoard and videoconferencing, they will regularly abandon the 'virtual' with workshops on-site, for example during visits to London throughout the year. Dr Liza Heslop will present the first of these workshops during her visit to London at the end of May. Look out for future 'Tales from Kings'!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT COURSE AND CONFERENCE



Participants from the Practice Development course.

Monday 4th February saw the School of Nursing host its 2nd Practice Makes Perfect conference. This year's conference attracted a wide diversity of participants from clinical practice, management and academia and was sponsored by Southern Health, the Department of Human Services and Cabrini Hospital. The conference was officially opened by Mrs Patricia Heath Chairperson of the National Review of Nurse Education. She shared with the audience findings from the review pertaining to the profession's view of nursing practice, which was illuminating. Professor Annette Street from Latrobe University gave the first keynote address for the day in which she discussed the need for research into nursing practice and strategies for doing this. Following some concurrent papers, Dr Kim Manley CBE, Head of Practice Development from the Royal College of Nursing Institute, London delivered the second keynote paper. Dr Manley informed the conference participants of her action research study undertaken in a critical care unit of a major London Hospital. Her work in the unit transformed the culture from a unit of low morale and high attrition rates to one that is now recognised for its standard of excellence. After a scrumptious lunch catered for by Steve and Mary, four consecutive workshops were run. The focus of these workshops was on the relationship of practice development to: evidence-based practice, reflective practice, developing creative practices and strategies for implementing change and were facilitated by Ms Gabby Fennessy, Dr Kim Manley, Dr Debbie Horsfall and Professor Brendan McCormack respectively.

The final keynote address was given by Professor Brendan McCormack, Director of Research, Clinical and Practice Development, University of Ulster and Royal Hospitals Trust. Professor McCormack's inspiring presentation which drew upon his current work within the Trust's hospitals informed the audience of how to develop practice using a systematic framework or model. The conference was then officially closed by Mrs Jill Davis-Linklater, Chief Nursing Officer for Barwon Health. For some participants, that concluded the day whilst others made the most of the opportunity to network over drinks and a dinner held at the Peninsula Country Golf Club.

The Practice Makes Perfect conference offers a platform for practitioners to gain insight into the concept of practice development and this year's course on practice development which is run in tandem with the conference saw the return of some participants to expand their knowledge and understanding of practice development. The course is an action packed five days of work and this year some light relief was provided in an evening dinner presentation by Patricia Cameron-Hill and Shayne Yates – "You won't die laughing...how to have less stress in your life and more fun". The evening was a riot of fun and frolics with some brave souls attempting to learn Irish dancing ably led by Professor McCormack!

If this has whetted your appetite and you would like to know more about Practice Development then watch this newsletter for details of next year's course and conference.

Dr Jenny Newton

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centre; Professor Brendan McCormack demonstrating the 'Double jig'.

Creative Practice Ideas

CONFERENCE REPORT

News from the 8th World Congress of Intensive & Critical Care Medicine held in Sydney 28th October to 1st November, 2001.

This International conference was attended by Debbie Kiegaldie, Felicity Astin and Kate Kremser lecturers from the School of Nursing, Peninsula campus. Congratulations to everyone on their presentations but particularly to Kate on her first ever international conference presentation entitled 'Victorian Nurse-Initiated Thrombolysis: Capable and Confident?', together with co-author Felicity. Congratulations also to our partners in industry at Dandenong Hospital on their excellent presentations.

The conference was extremely well attended, and with delegates from over 80 countries, it was indeed a multicultural experience. The opening ceremony was excellent with a refreshingly different approach. Several speakers eloquently shared their personal stories with the audience, the difference being that they had all either themselves been patients in Intensive Care, or had had relatives admitted. It was moving to hear their narratives and it re-emphasised how important the role of the nurse is in the often frightening environment of Intensive Care. The simple touch of a hand and a reassuring voice becomes what one patient described as a 'lifeline'. Also mentioned by an ex-patient was that when a patient is discharged from Intensive Care, it is a victory, but one that often marks only the beginning of a very slow process of 'clawing' oneself back towards some normality, which may take months to years.

In addition to the theme of hearing the patients' side of the story, music also played a great part in the ceremony. It was opened by the haunting notes of a didgeridoo played by an Aboriginal in costume with a backdrop of pictures of the sites of Australia projected on two big screens. Additionally, there was a blues guitarist from Tamworth, an Irish chap

who played a strange looking instrument not unlike a set of bagpipes, several singers, a jazz pianist and a drummer who wore sunglasses, a mask and theatre greens! All of them were practising Intensivists from around the world. The Australian icon Slim Dusty also made an appearance. All in all, a fabulous welcome to overseas delegates by Australia which was described as the 'best address in the world!'.

Here are a few snippets of information from some of the presentations.

Antimicrobial-coated catheters for CVP's appear to prevent line sepsis;

The site of Myocardial Infarction (eg Anterior MI, ECG changes in V2, V3 and V4 equals occlusion of Left Anterior Descending Coronary Artery) was not an



from left; Felicity Aston, Debbie Kiegaldie, Kate Kremser.

accurate predictor of which coronary artery is occluded. On a similar subject, there appeared to be little difference in outcome (end points of in-hospital mortality, initial sudden death or cardiogenic shock) for acute anterior versus inferior MI. Woman appeared to exhibit with pain radiating down the right arm which is not the case for men, although the sample size of this study was small.

The debate about which fluid to use in the critically ill continues to rage: colloid, crystalloid, albumin?! Some small trials have demonstrated that crystalloids and/or albumin use may increase mortality rates. Several large multi-centre randomised controlled trials are in progress around the world. In Oz, the SAFE Trial (Saline vs Albumin Fluid Evaluation), results are due in 2003. So we will wait and see!

Automatic External Defibrillators are 'de rigeur' especially in USA with some impressive results. They are increasingly

using Automatic Internal Defibrillators, the newer models are now the size of an internal pacemaker. All cost a lot of money!

The use of 'MET' Medical Emergency Teams is a popular new development being used in several hospitals throughout the world. A great idea which means that any Nurse in a clinical area may call the team if the patient meets the set criteria eg systolic BP >90mmHg. This means that acutely ill patients are seen before they get to the stage of cardiac arrest. Prevention is definitely better than cure!

Lots of new ideas about computerisation in ICU;

New developments in BLS & ACLS. will be released by ARC at the end of this year;

The concept of Nurse led procedures was presented, in particular for Thrombolysis, CVP insertion & weaning from mechanical ventilation.

If you would like any further information, send me an email; Felicity.Astin@nursing.monash.edu.au

Award ANF AWARD FOR BEST COMPLETING STUDENT



School of Nursing graduate Bianca Quon was presented with the ANF Undergraduate Nursing Care Award. The award was given to the School of Nursing for the best completing student in both theory and clinical practice.

