



Caring Across the River *Nursing in the Border Division*

Volume 14, December, 2007

This will be the last newsletter for 2007; there will not be another until February 2008 due to me being on leave (yay!).

I would like to thank everyone for their support of the Nursing in General Practice Program over 2007 and look forward to another big year in 2008. Have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

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1. Practice Nurses Salary and Conditions - APNA

The following is taken from the 2007 APNA Salary and Conditions Survey

Salary

- National
 - Mean \$27.65 (2006 \$26.24/ 2005, \$24.46 /2004, \$23.11)
 - Range \$21- \$50 RN and \$18-33 for EN
 - (2006 \$16.07 - \$48.00/ 2005, \$15.72 - \$42/2004, \$14 to \$40)

Employment Arrangements

- Hours per week
 - Mean 27 hours
 - Range 3 -50 hours
- How employed
 - 24.0% (24.2% 2006) full time
 - 58.9% (55.7% 2006) part time
 - 16.4% (19.8% 2006) casual
 - 41.1% (45.8% 2006, 49% 2005) by award, (6 awards down from 20)
 - 33.82% (35.3% 2006, 31% 2005) individual contract
 - 10.5% collective agreement (8% 2006)
 - 19% unsure or don't know (6% in 2006)

Employment Type

Which type of employment pays better?

- Award mean \$27.2 (range \$17.76-\$40)
- Contract mean \$28.49 (range \$19.76-\$50)

- Collective agreement \$28.81 (range \$17.73-\$40)
- Rate increases from 2006 to 2007
 - Award 5.96%
 - Contract 4.77%
 - Collective agreement 3.55%

Incentives

- 38% receive an incentive or bonus (36.4% in 2006, 26% in 2005, 17% in 2004)
- 12.3% receive an EPC incentive
- Other incentives or bonuses
 - Examples of bonuses
- Accreditation coordinator \$1000
- 10% of supplementary grant for 24 hour round the clock after hours care
- Christmas bonus (\$100-400)
- 1 weeks paid education leave
- 10% of PIP payment
- \$0.50 for each 10996/10993 item numbers
- 10% of income generated by Practice Nurse
- Gift vouchers e.g. massage
- High use of Christmas bonus. Usually not linked to performance

Conditions

- 60% receive personal leave
- 22% do not receive annual leave (16% casual)
- 23% receive a higher rate for overtime
 - Mean \$45.77 (2007, n=6)
- 22% receive accrued days off in lieu for overtime
- 32% receive a car allowance if using their car for work
- 1 respondent receives a car, petrol and running costs

Support for Education

- 56.7% of PNs receive partial or no practice support for professional development (2006 58.1%, 2005 62%)
 - 11.6% of practices don't pay any course costs (no change since 2004)
 - 20.4% pay only sometimes (2006 15.6%, 2005 28%)
 - 24% pay only part of education costs (2006 28.9%, 2005 21%)
- 18.9% of PNs have courses included in their contract (2006 20.7%, 2005 17%, 2004 11%)

Practice Nurse Salaries Commentary

- Considerable variation in salary and conditions
- Hourly rates increasing greater than CPI
- PNs on awards are lower paid
- PNs should consider non-salary items as part of their package e.g. incentives, education
- Lack of correlation between qualifications, roles and remuneration
- Evidence of inconsistencies in support for further education

Where do you fit in?

2. Wider Reading / Websites

Patterson, E., Halcomb, E., & Davidson, P. (2007). Practice **Nursing in Australia: Whose Responsibility?** *Collegian- Journal of Royal College of Nursing, Australia*, 14(1), 2-3 (Guest Editorial).

Pascoe, T., Foley, E., Hutchinson, R., Watts, I., Whitecross, L., & Snowdon, T. (2005). **The changing face of nurses in Australian general practice.** *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing* 23(1), 44-50.

Association for Children with a disability – “Helping you and your family”
<http://www.acd.org.au/information/help.htm>

Hormonal Contraceptives

http://www.nps.org.au/site.php?content=/html/news.php&news=/resources/NPS_News/news54

Practice nurses in Australia: current issues and future directions

Helen Keleher, Catherine M Joyce, Rhian Parker and Leon Piteman
MJA Volume 187, Number 2, 16 July 2007

http://www.apna.asn.au/associations/6694/files/PI_mja_pnf_aug07.pdf

3. Scope of Practice / Professional Practice

Following the election, below is a summary and some highlights of what the new government say they will do for primary health in the next few years....

*“You may also be aware that yesterday Kevin announced that a Rudd Labor Government will invest \$35 million to introduce a **Healthy Kids Check** to make sure kids are healthy and ready to learn at school. The \$45 Medicare Rebate for this check will include measuring eyesight, hearing, and height and body mass index and will be conducted at the for four year immunisation. This will benefit around 255,000 children across the nation” Nicola Roxon, 17th Nov. 2007*

(Looks like another job for super nurse. What about the 4 year old check already done by Maternal and Child Health Nurses?)

Elements of Labor's strategy will include:

- Examining providing **incentives for GPs** to practice quality preventative health care, including through longer consultations and evidence-based management of chronic disease
- An increased focus on **multi-disciplinary care** from primary care teams
- A **review of the Medicare Schedule** in an effort to alleviate the crippling red tape burden on GPs
- \$2.5 million for the establishment of an **Australian Allied Health Rural and Remote Clinical Placement Scholarship Plan**
- \$220 million investment in **GP Super Clinics**
- Reforming the **Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund** to ensure funding gets to the communities that need it

Labor will develop a National Preventative Health Care Strategy to bring a true preventative focus to the health system. The Strategy will provide a blueprint for tackling the burden of chronic disease currently caused by obesity, tobacco, and excessive consumption of alcohol. Its

development will be supported by a Taskforce which will provide evidence-based advice to government and health providers – both public and private – on preventative health programs and strategies.

The Taskforce's work will include:

- a) building an evidence base on preventative health, so we know what works and what doesn't;
- b) providing support for clinicians, particularly in primary care settings to play a more effective role in preventative health, including through providing information on the effectiveness of particular treatments and interventions;
- c) providing advice for policy makers on what strategies work best at population level, and on the best buys for government investment in preventative health;
- d) providing advice to Government on options for better integrating preventative health practice into the Medicare Schedule and other existing government programs; and
- e) build inter-governmental and public-private partnerships on preventative health.

The Taskforce's membership will comprise a range of experts including:

- academics/experts in chronic disease prevention and management;
- **doctors' groups, including GP groups and specialists;**
- nurses;
- allied health professionals;
- consumers;
- health insurers;
- non-government organisations with expertise in public prevention campaigns; and
- Government (Commonwealth, state, territory and local).

Federal Labor has already committed to a series of down-payments on tackling the national obesity crisis. They include:

- \$35 million to provide a **Healthy Kids Check** for all 4 year olds before they start school, and a **Healthy Habits for Life** guide for parents to help their kids stay fit and healthy.

Federal Labor will also:

- Commission the Treasury to produce a series of **definitive reports on the impact of chronic disease on the Australian economy**, and the economic benefits of a greater focus on prevention in health care.
- **Broaden the focus of the AHCAs** between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories beyond hospital funding by developing a **National Preventative Health Care Partnership**.

Shift the focus from so-called "six minute medicine" in general practice by beginning a reform process to provide incentives for GPs to practise quality preventative health care.

Thanks to GPV

What we as practice nurses need to bear in mind is that if we do not consider ourselves competent to undertake any changes to our role without education or training, then we should not be doing so. Nurses acting outside their own scope of practice do not have a legal leg to stand on.

Having said that, now is a great opportunity to embrace the changing world of general practice and establish the nurses role as an integral member of the primary care team. Get enthusiastic about what nurses can contribute to patient care, have a look at your practice within the big

picture of primary health care and see what you can do, get educated to make the most of your opportunities!

4. Five minutes with.....Leanne Good

1. Which practice employs you? And where is it located? *The Howlong Medical Centre*
2. How long have you worked in general practice? *15 months*
3. What are your main roles in your practice? *Venepuncture, wound care, health assessments/care plans, receptionist*
4. If you were not working in general practice, what would you be doing? *Mental Health*
5. Where did you grow up? *Adaminaby (Snowy Mountains)*
6. Could you tell us a little about your family? *I have a Ma a Pa, 4 brothers, 2 sisters, 2 beautiful girls, Danni 10 and Makayla 8 and a gorgeous partner Ray.*
7. If you were stuck on a deserted island what would be the three things you would take? *A big knife, matches and jiffy firelighters...lol*
OR
A big boat a sat phone and alcohol
8. If you were stuck on a deserted island, what would be the three things you are glad you no longer have to worry about or take care of? *School lunches, Ironing and grocery shopping*
9. Who would you most like to have to dinner? *My little brother Danny*
10. What are you reading at the moment? *I look at one on the bedside table often*
11. What music are you listening to at the moment? *Hinder*
12. What is your all time favourite movie? *Shrek*

Quick Quiz

Tea or Coffee? *Coffee*

Sweet or Savoury? *Both*

Sleeping or Football? *Nana naps*

Reading or TV? *Both*

Walking or Running? *Walking*

Snow or Sand? *SNOW!! :-)*

5. NiGP Updates

Immunisation

RCNA has revised the Community Immunisation position statement. Combining the Adults and Children/Adolescents position statements, this revised statement offers current information on immunisation.

The Community Immunisation position statement is available online at:

<http://customers.ilisys.com.au/rcnao/UserFiles/COMMUNITY%20IMMUNISATION%202007.pdf>

Thanks to Nursing Matters #29

Generic Medicines

NPS has an informative page (link below) on generic medicines which is something that often comes up when you talk to patients about what they're taking and why.
http://www.nps.org.au/site.php?content=/html/news.php&news=/resources/NPS_News/news55

It is a free online subscription to get regular NPS updates, and also the Australian Prescriber is available online for free - www.australianprescriber.com

Contemporary Nurse

Contemporary Nurse is an international refereed journal for health care professionals and in August 2007 released a special issue titled *Advances in Contemporary General Practice Nursing*. The journal includes articles on the role of the practice nurse, professional issues, perspective on health professionals in the primary care setting and a way forward for practice nursing. Articles are written by a number of Australian authors including Julie Porritt, Sally Hall, Christine Phillips, Elizabeth Halcolmb, Patricia Davidson, Rosemary Bryant and Elizabeth Patterson.

Copies of *Contemporary Nurse* can be obtained from www.contemporarynurse.com.

Thanks to AGPN Nursing News, November 2007.

Education subsidies for 2008

GPV have informed us that they will not be funding the education offered in the training calendars as they have over the past couple of years. There is a meeting in late Feb which will decide their budget for the next financial year and training opportunities and subsidies will be decided after that. In the meantime, nurses applying for courses/training without an APNA or RCNA scholarship will be responsible for the entire course cost. The exception (at the moment) is NSW nurses applying for the immunisation accreditation – the Alliance of NSW Divisions will still fund this.

GPV will be coordinating another intake for the Graduate Certificate in Nursing (General Practice) in 2008.

Module 1 & 2 will be offered in Semester 1

The course fees for new students commencing in 2008 will be \$330.00 unit (still very cheap compared to other uni's)

New enrolments due by 1st February 2008

An Introduction Workshop for new students will be held on Friday 22nd February - Melbourne (venue TBC) this will support students with academic writing and get them started on their assignments. Each student will have a tutor as part of the support GPV will provide. Flyer has been sent to all nurses with this newsletter.

6. Upcoming Education Events 2008

Date	Event	Venue	Presented by	Cost
February 14 th	Practice Nurse Network meeting	GP Network Boardroom, 6.30 start.	AWGPN	Dinner, if required
February 22 nd	Ear syringing workshop FULL	UNSW Clinical School, Albury	Benchmark and GPV	\$128.50 (Plus catering cost)
March 13-14 th	The Management of Adult Diabetes	Hotel Ibis, Melbourne	Ausmed	\$349.00

7. Practice Nurse Network

Dinner was held at the Indian Tandoori restaurant in Dean St last night and was enjoyed by all. Thank you to all who have supported and participated in the network this year. The next meeting will be on February 14th at 6.30 and will be a forum for all to decide what you would like the network to do / participate in / achieve over the next 12 months. Bring your ideas and agendas along! All welcome.

Any one with any ideas or contributions they may wish to make – please contact Jacki as below. Please send a response and let us know what you think of the concept and of the content. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter please contact Jacki at the GP Network on jeckert@bordergp.org.au or (02) 6049 1906
The contents of this newsletter are derived from various sources and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Albury Wodonga Regional GP Network.