Headline News

Calling for Abstracts - 2009 National Divisions Nursing in General Practice Forum

AGPN is calling for abstracts from Divisions for papers to be presented at the 2009 National Divisions Nursing in General Practice Forum. We encourage divisions to share the innovative and important programs they provide to support nurses in general practice.

2009 National Divisions Nursing in General Practice Forum will be held at The Sebel Albert Park, Melbourne on Wednesday 4 March and Thursday 5 March 2009. If you have not yet registered for the forum, please do so now and mark it in your calendar.

The Forum is an important opportunity for the network to share key experience and knowledge with others. Submit your abstracts and register online now by clicking the link below;

http://registration.gpnetworkforum.com.au/ei/getdemo.ei?id=8&s=_2SO0ONS5SR

Remember submission of abstracts closes on 9 January 2009.

For more information on registering and submitting abstracts for the forum follow the link below;


Graduate Certificate in Nursing (General Practice)

Enrolments are now open for the Semester 1 intake of the Graduate Certificate in Nursing (General Practice).

The Graduate Certificate in Nursing (General Practice) is an initiative of the Sunshine Coast Division of General Practice and the University of the Sunshine Coast to deliver flexible, accessible and affordable post graduate study to practice nurses. AGPN now provide national coordination to the Graduate Certificate for practice nurses nationally.
The graduate certificate is a four course certificate with the first three modules delivered through a dedicated pool of tutors. The fourth course is delivered via distance education by the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Further information and enrolment forms can be found at; http://www.generalpracticenursing.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=27433

For further information or to register your interest contact Toni Rice, National Coordinator on trice@agpn.com.au or (02) 62280850.

Development and Delivery of an e-learning Training Package to Support Medicare Item 10997

AGPN are delighted with the current progress of the e-learning pilot being undertaken by 50 practice nurses across four states. The pilot is due for completion on 17 December 2008. A process survey is being completed by the participants and data will be collated and analysed for inclusion into the final package.

An impact analysis survey will also be conducted in February 2009. Practice nurses will be provided with the opportunity to participate in a teleconference to discuss with their peers and AGPN the impact of the e-learning training modules upon their work practices.

In January 2009, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education will begin a four day face-to-face trial for piloting by Aboriginal Health Workers. Participants from across the Northern Territory will meet in Darwin and have the e-modules delivered to them in a series of lectures and participatory workshops. Process surveys will be completed by the AHW participants at the conclusion of the four day workshop.

The e-learning modules will undergo a final review and revision based upon data gathered from the survey analyses and then be forwarded to the Expert Advisory Panel and associated developers for their information and comment. The modules will simultaneously be presented to the National Reference Group for sign-off and endorsement prior to release in March 2009.

Further information about the E-Learning training package is available on our website; the link to the webpage is: http://www.generalpracticenursing.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=38550

Domestic Violence Referral Points Project

AGPN encourages all divisions involved in the Domestic Violence project to continue promoting the workshop to eligible practice nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers for 2009.

Support payments towards travel and accommodation are available for practice nurses/Aboriginal Health Workers from eligible practices to attend the two day face to face domestic violence training workshops.
Details of workshop dates and locations scheduled for 2009 are:

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<th>Workshop location and dates 2009</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shepparton, VIC</td>
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<td>Camperdown, VIC</td>
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<td>Wagga Wagga, NSW</td>
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<td>Nowra, NSW</td>
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<td>Moree, NSW</td>
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<td>Dubbo, NSW</td>
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AGPN with the assistance of divisions continues to support the training workshops for the Domestic Violence Referral Points Project. The national rollout of the training program *Recognise and Respond to Domestic and Family Violence* will continue until June 2009 in rural and remote regions across Australia.

The content of the workshops is reportedly very effective at increasing the ability of participants to recognise early signs of people experiencing domestic violence, and understanding of the personal and family affect and dynamics, and local referral options.

The demand for places at the training workshop continues to be strong, with many of the workshops being oversubscribed. Practice nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers from eligible practices interested in attending these workshops should enrol with Lifeline Australia for the 2009 workshops.

For further information on the training program click link below:

**Do you know an “agent of connectivity”? ... that’s a practice nurse to you**

*Courtesy of Inside the Network - November 2008*

New research into the role of practice nurses has found that they demonstrate six key operating roles in the workplace. These roles can be oriented towards patients, towards the practice in which they are
working, and towards the community, and they extend beyond the clinical and administrative roles which are generally understood to be part of nurses’ work.

AGPN has partnered with the Australian National University (ANU) to undertake a three year research study funded by the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute. The research team, led by Dr Christine Phillips, has involved observing nurses at work as well as structured interviews with nurses, GPs and practice managers.

Some of the key study findings were presented by Julie Porritt, Principal Adviser Nursing in General Practice at AGPN as part of a keynote speaker’s paper at the Australian Rural Nurses and Midwives 14th National Conference at Adelaide in November; [www.arnm.asn.au](http://www.arnm.asn.au)

The six operating roles that have been identified are:

- Patient carer
- Organiser
- Quality controller
- Agent of connectivity
- Educator
- Problem solver

Julie said that the study had shown that, ‘while most of these roles would perhaps be seen as obvious ones, the agent of connectivity is something that has not been described before in general practice and is particularly important for establishing and maintaining collaborative practice.’

The research results are indicating that internally, nurses within a practice are acting as an intermediary - or an agent of connectivity – between the different disciplines.

‘They do this through the unwritten responsibility of being responsive to others and the cultural rule which enables nurses to enter all spaces in the practice, including doctor’s rooms.’

General practice nurses are highly responsive to others, and this responsiveness is supported by the multi-tasking they commonly undertake, engaging in multiple tasks simultaneously. They also play an important role in connecting the practice to its community by building relationships with external health care providers, community service providers and other community agencies.

‘As more doctors work part-time, continuity of patient care is increasingly vested in the nurse, who ensures that care is continued by other doctors in the practice, across the spectrum of healthcare providers outside general practice, and by the patient at home. In this respect, the nurse works to ensure connectivity within internal and external aspects of care provision, but also to link the two.’

This role of connectivity is particularly important for those who work in other sectors of the health system. The practice nurse is the main contact in general practice; practice nurses can help you to maintain continuity for patients and act as a key agent in supporting quality care services.

‘The role for the practice nurses is dynamic,’ says Julie,’ and nurses in this setting are increasingly becoming recognised for the skills and expertise that they bring as an integral member of the general practice team.’

‘Our study is also showing us that practice nurses and GPs are working together as an inter-professional community,’ says Julie. ‘Models of leading are shared between GPs, practice nurses and other members of the practice team.’
The research is scheduled for completion this month and the completed results will be available early in the new year. This research should provide valuable information to contribute to the planning that is currently underway to develop a stronger primary health care focus in the Australian health sector.

Other News

Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes Program – New resources on the AGPN website

A number of new resources have been added to the AGPN website to support divisions in implementing the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes Program. The following resources are now available:

- Program Guidelines – providing comprehensive information on the program and its implementation framework
- FAQs – answering a number of common questions on Lifestyle Modification Programs (LMPs) and other elements of the program
- Invoicing Templates – for use by LMP facilitators to claim the correct level of patient subsidy
- Program Information Sheet – which can be used to provide an overview of the program to general practice and other local services
- RTF version of the GP Referral Form for creating electronic templates of the form in medical software packages.
- Practice Detailing Card – for divisions to support general practice in program uptake.

All of these resources and many more can be downloaded from the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes Program page on the AGPN website at; [http://www.agpn.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=35338](http://www.agpn.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=35338).

If you need any assistance in using these resources or require further information on the program, please contact your SBO.

APNA Best practice nurse award winners

The winners of the Australian Practice Nurses Association (APNA) Best Practice Awards have been announced with six nurses recognised and rewarded for their quality of general practice nursing and extraordinary commitment to working in the general practice environment.

All applications were supported by their local GPs with the running theme in GP references for award winners being their commitment to better patient outcomes, ability to share the clinical case load and increase practice profitability.

For more information on the winners contact Lynette Powell at APNA on [l.powell@haystac.com.au](mailto:l.powell@haystac.com.au) or (03) 8689 2236.
Benchmarque - Registered training organisation

The Benchmarque Group is a Registered Training Organisation specialising in the development and delivery of unique clinical skills programs. Since launching our business in early 2007, The Benchmarque Group has successfully developed Nationally Accredited courses in Ear Irrigation, Wound Closure and Suturing, ECG Interpretation and 3 Courses in Continence Management.

In addition, The Benchmarque Group has a total of 16 Nationally Accredited Courses delivered on its Scope of Registration. All 16 courses are delivered by a national team of endorsed trainers who are specialist healthcare workers still practicing in their chosen field.

The Benchmarque Group Pty Limited strives to work in partnership with professional bodies and community groups to develop and deliver courses aimed at improving the skills and knowledge of its members.

In late 2007, The Benchmarque Group committed itself to environmental best practice and the prevention of pollution in office management and general business operations. Through a process of continual improvement, we aim to be leaders in the private training sector in efficient and effective environmental practices.

The outcome of this process resulted in The Benchmarque Group being certified as Australia’s First Carbon Neutral Registered Training Organisation.

The Benchmarque Group are proud to be the Support Sponsor for the AGPN Nursing in General Practice Forum in March 2009.

AGPN Nursing in General Practice team would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year 2009!!!

Contact the Editor

Information in this newsletter is for the use and benefit of all members of SBOs and Divisions, so please pass it on, and recycle the whole, or parts, of this publication to your members with due acknowledgements to AGPN.

If SBOs, Divisions and other readers have information for, or comments on, AGPN Nursing News please contact Beta Chakraverty on 02 62280 800 or email bchakraverty@agpn.com.au