

# Fact Sheet: Literature Reviews

National  
Review of  
Nursing  
Education 2002

## What are the studies included in this volume and who conducted them?

Six literature reviews were commissioned to provide some insight into the information already available on issues related to the terms of reference for the National Review of Nursing Education.

Commissioned were:

- ***Australian aged care nursing*** by Professor Alan Pearson and team from La Trobe University
- ***Mental health nursing education and the health labour force*** by Professor Michael Clinton and team from the University of Newcastle and Curtin University of Technology
- ***Knowledge and skills required by rural nurses to meet the challenges of the changing work environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*** by Dr Karen Francis and team from Charles Sturt University
- ***Models of nursing education and training: A systematic review of the literature*** by Professor Sharon McKinley and team from Royal North Shore Hospital
- ***Midwifery education: Literature review and additional material*** by Ms Nicky Leap and team from the University of Technology, Sydney
- ***Aspects of nursing education: The types of skills and knowledge required to meet the changing needs of the labour force involved in nursing*** by Ms Robyn L. Aitken and team from the Victorian Centre for Nursing Practice Research, School of Postgraduate Nursing, University of Melbourne

## What does the research say?

***Australian aged care nursing*** reviews the issues surrounding nursing education and training in aged care and the current shortages faced in the aged care sector. It identifies a number of strategies for consideration as part of the National Review of Nursing Education. These included:

- a review of the structure of nursing and personal care teams in aged care
- expansion of the role of the registered nurse in aged care
- increase in the period of education and training for registered nurses to at least four academic years
- expansion of the role of the enrolled nurse and increase in the period of training to assist this role expansion
- strategies by the aged care sector to promote the development and maintenance of supportive work environments
- a strategy to credential advanced practice in aged care
- strategies to improve the image of aged care
- development of an agreed national education and training plan for aged care nurses
- establishment and funding for a national aged care nursing research program

***Mental health nursing education and the health labour force*** is a review based on material from North America, the United Kingdom and Australasia. The report draws attention to current international practice relevant to the preparation of mental health nurses and to more advanced education in mental health nursing. It identifies the need for wide ranging consultation on the issues facing the mental health nursing workforce and the preparation of Australian mental health nurses. The report ends with a number of questions arising from the review of the literature.

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**Knowledge and skills required by rural nurses to meet the challenges of the changing work environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century** covered a number of issues related to rural nursing practice. It characterises rural nursing as requiring a range of clinical specialities since the practice of rural nursing is by its nature diverse. The report identifies a similar list of challenges for the work of nurses as other reviews have found, though some of these, such as recruitment and effective support networks, may be more difficult to address in rural settings than they are in city locations. It argues that rural nurses need the same ongoing opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills as all other nurses but access is more difficult. Rural nurses are more likely to undertake postgraduate education if there is a rural university campus relatively near. The barriers to the education of rural nurses are: workplace, personal, and educational provider focused. The report also gives suggestions for the support of rural practice.

**Models of nursing education and training: A systematic review of the literature** did not find strong evidence to support particular models of nurse education and none to recommend against the models currently in place. It recognised that some evidence suggested the value of learning in the clinical practice site and computer assisted learning in combination with traditional approaches to teaching and learning.

**Midwifery education: Literature review and additional material** offers a comprehensive review on midwifery education in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Australia. It identifies and describes as concerns:

- the inconsistencies between Australian states and territories in the education and regulation of midwifery despite 'mutual recognition' operating across state borders
- the standards of midwifery education in Australia
- the difficulties of organising midwifery practice placements and the perceived loss of health industry 'ownership' of midwifery education
- problems addressing the needs of rural Australia, especially Indigenous communities with current courses.

**Aspects of nursing education: The types of skills and knowledge required to meet the changing needs of the labour force involved in nursing** suggests that healthcare services over the last five years have been thought of as a commodity and therefore discussed in terms of scarcity and supply. There has been a trend away from institutionalised care and new models of care are emerging. The advent of technology to support 'remote' care delivery in the community has also impacted on the way services are delivered. At the same time the way care is organised has promoted high levels of specialisation. New nursing roles have emerged in response to the changes in service. All these factors have influenced the skills and knowledge required. The list of knowledge and skills required found in the literature includes coordination of care, patient/client assessment, clinical decision making, patient/client and family teaching, research consumption and application and counseling.

## Is the research available?

Yes - all the research along with the review report *Our Duty of Care* is available on the review website at [www.dest.gov.au/highered/programmes/nursing/](http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/programmes/nursing/) or on request by telephoning (02) 6240 7604 or (02) 6289 7543.