

Fact Sheet: Nurse Education and Training – Volume 1

National
Review of
Nursing
Education 2002

What are the studies and who conducted them ?

- **Student expectations of nursing education** by Dr David Saltmarsh and team from Macquarie University
- **Enrolled nurse education** by Ms Lisa McKenna and team from the Centre for the Economics of Education & Training (CEET), Faculty of Education, Monash University
- **Nursing education in multicultural context** by Professor Maurice Eisenbruch and team from the University of New South Wales
- **Report from a national survey of health service facilities** by Professor Christine Duffield and team from the Centre for Health Services Management, University of Technology, Sydney
- **Higher education statistics for nursing students** collated at the Department of Education, Science and Training

What does the research say?

Student expectations of nursing education used group interviews to ask student nurses why they chose nursing as a career and what their career and lifestyle aspirations were. They found that:

- Career choice was largely due to prior experience in nursing work, knowing someone who is a nurse or who is working in another caring occupation, having observed nurses at work, nursing's glamorous presentation in popular culture or as a best choice among the traditionally female occupations.
- The students considered the benefits of a nursing career as a good prospect of on-going employment, job satisfaction, potential variety within the work of the profession, the range of lifestyle options and as a foundation or stepping stone to another career.
- Their aspirations were largely to remain in nursing in one of the many roles available, to work as a nurse and travel, combine family with nursing work or to do aid or missionary work.
- Different categories of students had different aspirations and saw different benefits of a nursing career.

Enrolled nurse education which examines the current arrangements for the education and training of enrolled nurses (Division 2 nurses in Victoria) found:

- TAFE does most of the preparation of enrolled nurses although there are several private providers in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.
- Most States and Territories require enrolled nurses to have a Certificate IV except Queensland which requires a Diploma.
- Enrolled nurse courses give students exposure to a broader range of clinical situations than previously and have high completion rates.
- Most graduates are employed soon after graduation in a range of clinical areas including the traditional area of aged care.
- Enrolled nurses can experience problems when moving between States and Territories due to different levels of training and different regulations for the administration of medications by enrolled nurses.

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Nursing education in multicultural context aimed to explore the assumptions and concepts about the multicultural context of nurse education within Australia, to map the ways in which nursing education addresses (or fails to address) multicultural health and to recommend strategies for enhancing cultural competence in nursing. It found a wide range of assumptions and concepts regarding the multicultural aspects of nurse education and different stages of evolution in the way it is addressed. There were examples of leadership in development in this area. Among the issues the researchers identified as critical for the profession is the need for systematic investigation into the cultural needs of students, staff, patients or clients and the need to engage with other health professions in this research.

Report from a national survey of health service facilities was a detailed survey sent to Australian hospitals and health services to examine the involvement and support offered by these facilities in the clinical education of student nurses prior to being registered or as part of postgraduate studies. It examined in detail the staff's view of their experience of students and new graduates and their strengths and weaknesses. It also explored the perceived influences on the retention of new graduates.

Higher education statistics for nursing students is an extensive set of data drawn from the Department of Education, Science and Training and other instruments used by the Department which identifies nursing students as a unique group. The data shows commencements and enrolments for all levels of nursing study across the period 1991- 2000 and completions for the period 1991-1999. It also shows this information at institutional level. There is information about the characteristics of commencing students, indications of retention and progression, detailed analysis of the 1992 student cohort, impressions from student experience questionnaires and the graduate destination survey.

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/ or on request by telephoning (02) 6240 7604 or (02) 6289 7543.