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Valuing our enrolled nurses

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Background: Enrolled nurses (EN) (Division 2 Nurse) are an essential part of the Australian health care system and are considered integral to the nursing skill mix in the acute settings. South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) is a large Health Service in NSW, with six hospitals and a total bed capacity of approximately 2000. It continues to struggle with recruitment and retention of ENs.

Aims: The aim of this study is to better understand the investment education and training have on the recruitment and retention of ENs as ENs in SWSL HD from both an EN and Management perspective. It is anticipated that the information collated through the study will identify new opportunities that could be made available for ENs. Knowledge gained from this project will assist in the scoping an EN Professional Development pathway in SWSLHD.

Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative assessment was undertaken through conducting surveys, focus groups with the EN workforce and relevant stakeholders. A sequential explanatory mixed methods approach was used. A total 902 surveys were distributed amongst the 502 ENs, 299 nursing and midwifery managers, and 101 Clinical Educators. Focus groups will be held at each of the six hospitals.

Results & Conclusions: It is anticipated that this study will give clear insight into the education and training requirements for ENs across the district and formulate a plan of action to improve the resources available and career progression opportunities for ENs as ENs.

Biography

Rebecca Leon is the Manager of the Centre for Education and Workforce Development, SWSLHD. She truly believes that education provides each of us with a foundation to inform our decisions, actions and attitudes. Her own path of education includes a Diploma in Applied Science (Nursing), Bachelor of Nursing, Graduate Certificate in Emergency Nursing, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and a Masters of Health Science (Nursing) with a major in education. Her thesis explored how/if education can change/influence perspectives even deep seated beliefs in relation to our practice; reinforcing her belief that education informs our decisions, actions and attitudes.

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