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Nursing profession suicide rates at alarming levels

Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is deeply concerned by the findings of a new study, 'Suicide by health professionals: a retrospective mortality study in Australia, 2001-2012', by researchers led by Deakin University's Dr Allison Milner. The results of the national study reveal that the rate of suicide for female nurses and midwives was almost three times higher than females in other professions. The suicide rate for male nurses and midwives was almost twice as high as males in other professions.

ACN CEO, Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN said, "the results of this study are alarming. Suicide affects many people, not just the individual who took their own life. Nurses have families who love them and communities who rely on them, to lose them in this way is deeply saddening."

The study states that some of the reasons for the higher rate of suicide by female and male nurses is the particularly demanding nature of the job. Contributing factors such as long hours and work life balance play a prominent role, with anxiety also a potential risk factor for suicide.

Adjunct Professor Ward said "nurses are incredibly good at looking after patients but we must make sure that they are looking after themselves. Adequate and appropriate support initiatives targeting suicide prevention are absolutely critical. Suicide is preventable and we must make sure that families and work colleagues look out for warning signs and support vulnerable individuals who may be at risk. No one wants to hear of a death by suicide. ACN strongly supports suicide prevention initiatives in hospitals and workplaces employing nurses."

ACN encourages anyone that needs help to contact any of the following helplines:

- Lifeline on 13 11 14
- MensLine Australia on 1300 789 978
- Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467
- Beyond Blue on 1300 22 46 36
- Headspace on 1800 650 890

Ends _____



For interviews, or for more information, please contact Wendy Hooke on 0297457541 or 0448 004 039 or email wendy.hooke@acn.edu.au



Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward, CEO of ACN.



Australian
College of
Nursing

Advancing nurse leadership

Notes to the Editors:

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurse leaders and its aim is to ensure that the Australian community receives quality nursing care now and in the future. ACN is a membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties. ACN is also the Australian member of the International Council of Nurses headquartered in Geneva.

ACN, an organisation not afraid to intelligently challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, is a well-connected and educated national body that drives change with people of influence to enhance the delivery of health services to the Australian community. ACN advances the skills and expertise of nurses to provide leadership in their contribution to the policy, practice and delivery of health care.

A membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialities, ACN's membership includes many nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics and researchers.

What is the role of ACN to media?

- ACN provides trusted, well supported information about Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN has a number of media-savvy spokespeople within the organisation who can comment on Australia's health care system, the delivery of health care, nursing leadership and the nursing profession.
- ACN offers media with an alternative voice to that of an industrial relations perspective.
- ACN is in-the-know and can comment on health care matters of interest.
- ACN can respond to media requests in a timely manner and with subject/clinical expert's available on-hand for further discussion.
- ACN regularly responds to government updates pertaining to Australia's health care system.

What role does ACN play?

ACN is here to act and deliver results as agents of change. They are working towards a brighter future through advancing nurse leadership to enhance the delivery of health care to all. The organisation provides nurse leaders with access to relevant information, support and education that will enhance Australia's reputation on the world stage.

Social media channels:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acnursing>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/acn_tweet

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/australian-college-of-nursing>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/acn_nursing