

MEDIA RELEASE – Embargoed until 4.30pm

21 August 2017

Nurse leaders recognised for outstanding contributions to the profession

A Sydney woman who has nursed rural and metropolitan patients back to health for more than 50 years was officially recognised by the nursing fraternity today by becoming a Distinguished Life Fellow (DLF) of the Australian College of Nursing (ACN).

Nursing, Midwifery and Health Care Consultant Judith Meppem PSM FACN was sworn in as a DLF during an Investiture of new Fellows and Awards ceremony at ACN's National Nursing Forum at The Events Centre, The Star, Sydney, this afternoon.

Ms Meppem was the inaugural NSW Chief Nursing Officer for 12 years until 2002, and was awarded a NSW Public Service Medal in the 2003 Australia Day Honours for outstanding public service to nursing administration.

A signatory to the Health Care Plan for Sydney's 2000 Olympic bid, Ms Meppem has frontline experience as a Registered Nurse, Registered Midwife, Nursing Unit Manager, Assistant Director of Nursing, Deputy Director of Nursing, Teaching Hospital Director of Nursing and Area Director of Nursing.

She has worked in a mix of metropolitan and rural clinical settings throughout her distinguished career in areas including Moree, Newcastle, throughout Western Sydney and on the Northern Beaches of Sydney.

Another four nurses were recognised for their leadership, professional achievement and individual contributions to the profession by being awarded fellowships of the College at this afternoon's ceremony. They are:

- Monash Health, VIC, Chief Nursing Information Officer Adjunct Professor Naomi Dobroff FACN
- SA Health Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer Adjunct Professor Lydia Dennett FACN
- General Practice Cremorne, Sydney, Practice Manager Yvonne McKinlay FACN
- Pindara Private Hospital, Benowa, QLD, Enrolled Nurse Advanced Practice Leanne Smith FACN

ACN Chief Executive Officer, Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN, congratulated the new fellows and said their achievements were recognition of each of their outstanding contributions to the nursing profession.

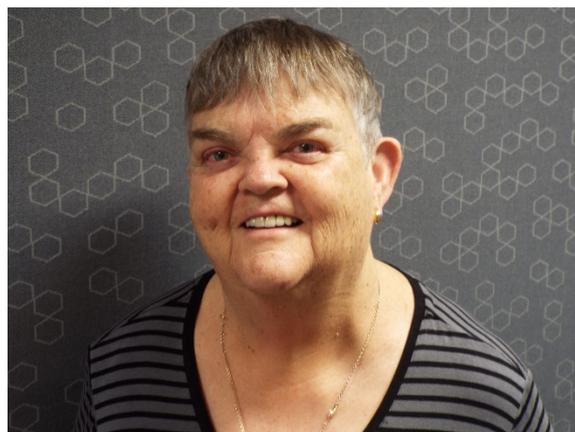
“Fellowship to the Australian College of Nursing is a prestigious recognition and celebration of hard-working and dedicated nursing professionals, who come from a variety of clinical settings and academia,” Adjunct Professor Ward said.

“Each and every one of our award recipients today are an absolute asset to the nursing fraternity and deserve to be recognised for their commitment, enthusiasm and devotion to the profession. They are inspirational nurse leaders to many.”

Fellowship is a prestigious member status awarded to nurses in recognition of significant professional achievement. Applications are assessed on the professional leadership, commitment and achievements of the applicant and are reviewed by ACN’s Governance Committee, which makes a recommendation to the ACN Board of Directors.

Distinguished Life Fellowship of ACN is awarded to fellows for outstanding professional achievements and contributions.

The National Nursing Forum, running from 21-23 August, is ACN’s signature annual event bringing together more than 400 nurses, students and health professionals from around Australia to discuss how to *Make Change Happen* for the benefit of patients and communities. Attendees have had the opportunity to hear from respected health care leaders, senior decision-makers and Members of Parliament.



Above: Judith Meppem has been recognised for more than 50 years of tireless work as a nurse and health care professional.



-ENDS-

For interviews contact ACN Executive Assistant Narelle Barrie on 0450 908 920 or Kristen Connell on 0400 054 227.

Notes to 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. An organisation not afraid to challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, ACN 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's membership includes nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics and researchers.

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