



Health Minister's Award for **NURSING TRAILBLAZERS**

2025 nominations

Nominations for the 2025 Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers are now open. Read all about the award here before completing [your application/ nomination form](#).

About

The Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers is the only award of its kind in Australia. The award recognises nurses who through qualities such as leadership and innovation, are helping transform Australia's health and aged care systems. Trailblazers make a difference by improving quality of care, by keeping their communities healthy, by ensuring access to treatment and care for everyone, by recognising that some members in the community require a different approach to achieving good health.

These original nurse-led solutions and creative models of care can help improve our Australian community's health outcomes through evidence-based innovative processes. This award highlights the ingenuity of nurses and how essential and indispensable nurses' contribution to the wellbeing of the community is.

The Trailblazers Award was founded by the Federal Government Minister for Health in 2019 and the Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is proud to be the administrators. The award acknowledges that nurses and the nursing profession can envisage and implement innovative solutions to many problems that negatively impact the Australian health and aged care systems. The prestigious Trailblazers Award is given to an outstanding and innovative ACN member who has demonstrated leadership by bringing new thinking to a particular healthcare challenge that needs to be addressed.

If you are this year's winner

Winning the Trailblazer Award is a fantastic boost for your career, recognising the contribution you have made to healthcare. The winner will be selected by the Health Minister from a shortlist of nominations. All three finalists will be invited to ACN's National Nursing Forum where the Health Minister will announce the winner. All finalists will receive an award and a gift pack. The winner will be promoted on the ACN website and be invited to speak at the ACN National Nursing Forum. They will also be profiled in ACN's exclusive membership communications 'ACN Now' and 'The Hive'.

The Process

You can nominate a nurse you know or know of who has developed and implemented a brilliant idea in their community or across Australia, an idea that solves a problem or tackles an issue. Or you can nominate yourself, be proud of what you have achieved and share your innovation, your achievement and what it means to the people it impacts. You can find an [application/ nomination form here](#).

Before you start filling in the nomination application, make sure you read the selection and the judging criteria carefully. Take care and address all aspects of the application form, thinking carefully about how the innovation meets all the criteria. If you are nominating someone else, they will be asked to provide all the details of the innovation. So if you're nominating someone else, don't worry if you don't know all the details, but please make sure you leave contact details for your nominee. And you don't have to be a nurse to nominate someone for the award.

Your innovation

ACN manages the nomination and selection processes for the Trailblazer's Award. To enable a fair and equitable assessment process, we need to make sure we capture specific aspects of the innovation.

Firstly, explain your innovation, your pathway to the solution, your passion. Tell us your story. The following section will ask you specific questions which may sound repetitive, but they serve a purpose. This section allows you to describe aspects of your innovation which you feel are particularly important.

To help with writing your story, think about describing:

The problem you identified that called out for an innovation.

(Who was the innovation targeted towards? Who would benefit? What changes were required to, for example, work regimes, timings of care, advertising of services, etc)

How you came up with the idea for the innovation you developed.

(How did you envisage the changes? Who was your target group? Were you inspired by articles and news stories? Tell us your story.)

Who influenced your decisions?

(People you work with, friends in the community, an article you read, knowing that cost was prohibiting people getting care, difficulties for people to travel to a healthcare facility, shortage of specialist carers?)

Who did you motivate or persuade to help you with the solution?

(Did you create a group of nurses to help manage and implement the solution? Are other healthcare professionals part of the solution? Did you lobby locals to help with locations, transport? How did you get your ideas into the community?)

The infrastructure needed to implement your innovation.

(Were you able to use existing clinics and health centres? Did the clients/ patients come to a central location or did you visit the patients at home?)

Selection Criteria

Your application must also explain how the innovation meets the following specific criteria.

Your innovation:

1. Addresses the challenges that are present in your environment for those seeking a healthcare solution.
(Where is your innovation situated? Town/ region/ city?)
2. Makes a significant contribution to nurses and/or the nursing profession and contributes to better health outcomes for the Australian community.
(How does, or how can your intervention contribute to better health for the community? Describe the community your intervention is impacting.)
3. Showcases a novel approach taken by nurses that reflects the holistic and integrated philosophy underlying nursing care.
(What is the novel approach you've chosen?)
4. Demonstrates an innovative intervention or fresh take on a model of care that resolved a problem in the delivery of health care or addressed an unmet health need of a population.
(Provide details of how you identified the problem and the steps you had to take to solve the problem.)
5. Is successful.
(How has your innovation shown it is successful? Success can be measured by improved health outcomes of a particular group of patients or clients, write-ups in the press, mentions on community radio, interest in the innovation shown by community and other health professionals. Success can also be demonstrated through more formal evaluations, statistical data, write-ups in journal articles, etc.)
6. Was a cost-effective response to an identified issue.
(Cost effectiveness might relate to an immediate cost saving – the innovation costs less to implement than the previous solution. Or it might be a longer-term cost effectiveness – certain community members are being treated for a condition while it is still easy and quick to fix rather than waiting until they require a long hospital stay and expensive interventions, for example.)
7. The solution can be replicated in other towns, cities, regions across Australia.
(What would need to happen for another locale to pick up and implement your solution?)

Additional key criteria

The panel members will also be measuring your application against four key criteria. Think about how the development of your innovation/ model of care included the following considerations:

- Innovation/ Novelty
- Collaboration/ Problem Solving
- Success/ Cost-effectiveness
- Replication

You might think about adding these criteria in brackets to the relevant part of your response to highlight how and when they applied.

Upload function available

The application form will allow you to upload any document you think would help support your application.

Referees

If you are self-nominating, you will be asked to provide details of two referees. The application form asks you to fill out their details. We will contact them about your application.

Closing date

You have until the end of March to complete your application – **COB Monday 31 March 2025.**

Any questions?

If you would like to talk about any aspect of the Trailblazers application and award, Karen Grace MACN, ACN's National Director - Professional Practice would be happy to discuss your questions. Please send your email to Jan at Jan.Ljubojevic@acn.edu.au with your questions or to arrange a suitable time with Karen.

Finally

Now you know how to apply. So jot down some preparatory notes, access [the application/nomination form](#), and tell us your story.

We look forward to reading all about your brilliant innovation.