



# Student to new graduate

The transition from student nurse to Registered nurse (RN) can be a time of trepidation, filled with many emotions. From feelings of happiness for obtaining a graduate nurse program to feelings of fear and anxiety gaining employment outside of a graduate nurse program.

The novice practitioner questions what they have learnt, their skills and ability, to whether they made the right career choice, to whether they will be like the nurses they are/will be working with.

**To provide new graduate registered and enrolled nurses and midwives with basic skills to start their professional journey transitioning to the workplace will be easier, by having awareness of:**

- Your Award (different each state for public hospitals);
- Rostering patterns;
- Clinical Handover practices;
- Nurse and Midwife Board of Australia Codes and Standards (Decision Making Framework), AHPRA.
- Documentation guidelines and practices to ensure appropriate communication of events (organisation)
- Recording CPD – Learning Management System (LMS)

**Some of the common issues that occur during this transition period from student nurse to registered nurse include:**

- Theory-to-practice gaps
- Caring for increasingly complex patients with multiple comorbidities
- Time management
- Medicine administration – take time, ask questions and or look up the medication
- Patient assessment skills
- Escalation of the deteriorating patient
- Documentation skills
- Limited proficiency in managing and executing technical skills
- Working and collaborating within teams

- Accountability
- Decision-making
- Shift work
- Prioritising and coping with unexpected events
- Lack of access to experienced mentors and coaches
- Performance anxiety
- Bullying

## Self-care

It is also important during this time of transition that graduate and new registered nurses care for themselves and ensure a healthy balance between their new role as a registered nurse and their lifestyle. The nature of nursing work is demanding and can be stressful. A healthy balance between work and home life such as exercise or meditation will keep you feeling energized and ready for work.

The transition from student to RN can also prove to be an anxious time personally, as well as professionally, depending on location of employment and whether this requires moving away from family.

## A positive transition to a RN

Some other strategies and factors that have been found to facilitate a positive transition from student nurse to registered nurse include:

- Orientation programs with realistic goals and competencies to achieve technical skills
- Approachable and responsive mentors and senior leaders
- Timely provision of constructive feedback
- Continuing staff development opportunities
- Open communication
- Support when dealing with deteriorating patients, death and dying



## References:

Hans,P. 2019. Preparing the Future Front-line Health Care Workforce in North Carolina. *North Carolina Medical Journal*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ncmedicaljournal.com/content/80/3/159.full?utm\\_source=TrendMD&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=North\\_Carolina\\_Medical\\_Journal\\_TrendMD\\_0](http://www.ncmedicaljournal.com/content/80/3/159.full?utm_source=TrendMD&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=North_Carolina_Medical_Journal_TrendMD_0)

Hofler,L. 2016. Transition of New Graduate Nurses to the Workforce

Challenges and Solutions in the Changing Health Care Environment. *North Carolina Medical Journal*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ncmedicaljournal.com/content/77/2/133.full?utm\\_source=TrendMD&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=North\\_Carolina\\_Medical\\_Journal\\_TrendMD\\_0](http://www.ncmedicaljournal.com/content/77/2/133.full?utm_source=TrendMD&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=North_Carolina_Medical_Journal_TrendMD_0)

Rees,C., Heritage, B., Osseiran-Moisson,R., Chamberlain,D., Cusack,L., Anderson, J., Terry,V.,Rogers,C., Hemsworth,D., Cross,W., and Hegney,D.. 2016. Can We Predict Burnout among Student Nurses? An Exploration of the ICWR-1 Model of Individual Psychological Resilience. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4949488/>