



Australian College of Nursing

COMMUNITY & PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSING WEEK

16–22 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is proud to acknowledge and raise awareness of the invaluable contribution of community and primary health care nurses through our annual campaign Community and Primary Health Care Nursing Week.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating Community and Primary Health Care Nursing Week during 16–22 September by hosting an event.

Together we can raise awareness of the current and potential contribution of community and primary health care nursing to the health care system and highlight its impact on the wellbeing of individuals and local communities.

Don't forget to share photos of your event on social media using the hashtag:
#nurseswhereyouneedthem

With thanks to the support of our official partner,
Regal Home Health



Australian College of Nursing

www.acn.edu.au/cphcnw



COMMUNITY AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSES: WHY YOU MATTER

Do you realise just how important your role is? It can be easy to lose sight of what it is that we bring to the health care team in the care of our community. In truth, the value of community and primary health care nursing lies in our patient-centred focus and our ability to coordinate and link patients across our often fragmented health care systems. Health organisations and professionals the world over agree that nursing is one of the most powerful yet undervalued health care resources available.

The International Council of Nurses states that, “nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people” (International Council of Nurses, 2002). Furthermore, in Australia, McMurray & Clendon (2015) have defined community nursing practice as “an area of nursing focused on promoting health; advocating for wellness; preventing disease; and providing care where people live, work and play.”

“Nurses can be found in varied primary health care settings, in general practice, community based acute and chronic disease services, district or domiciliary nursing services, health promotion, public health, and disease screening” (Carryer et al., 2015; McMurray & Cooper, 2017). “They are usually the primary contact for patients in primary and secondary health care at admission to services and are most often the source of referral to local accessible resources to meet their ongoing needs” (McMurray & Cooper, 2017). In 2017, there were over 21,000 registered nurses and 2,700 enrolled nurses in Australia working in community health care services, being nearly 10% of the total registered nursing and just over 5% of the enrolled nursing workforce (Department of Health, 2017).

Australia spends just over \$2 billion on prevention each year, or around \$89 per person. This is equivalent to 1.34% of all health spending (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018). With the ever-increasing burden of chronic disease, the health promotion and management ability of the nursing profession is so far a largely untapped resource within the health care system. “Nurses can offer the

health system more capacity, especially within the primary health care (PHC) system, if enabled to work to their full scope of practice” (McKittrick and R. McKenzie 2018).

We would like to thank you again for participating in Community and Primary Health Care Nursing Week and acknowledging the valuable contribution community and primary health care nurses make to the wellbeing of our society. By hosting an event you have qualified to enter the September Nursing Now Australia Challenge for a chance to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards! The challenge encourages nurses to engage in monthly activities to raise the status and profile of our profession. To find out more and enter the competition head to acn.edu.au/nursingnow.

We hope you enjoy your celebration and look forward to having you on board again for Community and Primary Health Care Nursing Week 2020!

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