From the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

2014 ACT Nurses and Midwives Week

The dictionary describes a celebration as doing something special or enjoyable for an important event and to praise someone who is great or important.

There can be no better cause for celebration than the week of 5 to 12 May each year when we celebrate the professions of nursing and midwifery.

This year, nurses and midwives in the ACT celebrated the tenth anniversary of International Nurses and Midwives Week and what a celebration we had. Thank you to the staff of the Nursing and Midwifery Office for making the week long events so successful.

This newsletter is dedicated to those celebrations and I would like to congratulate all those wonderful nurses and midwives who received an Award, who were nominated for an Award, who turned up on the night to support their colleagues and to all those nurses and midwives who stayed behind to do what you always do, every hour of every day, and that is provide the important and high quality care for which our professions are justifiably proud.

In 2014 the International Council of Nurses has proposed the following simple, evidence based equation and whether applied at a global or a local level in the health system is fundamental to understanding how to make the best of the vital resource which is nursing and midwifery.

They said that an educated nurse workforce + a good work environment = high quality care. And in saying this, it applies equally to midwifery.

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So in keeping with the theme of celebration, here is some history that you may not know about International Nurses and Midwives Week.

One of the original proposals to honor nurses came in 1953 (before I was born...just!) from Dorothy Sutherland, an employee of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, but nothing was made official until President Richard Nixon’s 1974 proclamation recognised the week of 6 to 12 May. Later of course, midwives chose the 5 May to celebrate their special day making it a week of celebration.

A formal resolution passed by the U.S. Congress in 1982 set May 6 as the official day for celebration. Hallmark Corporation takes credit for the introduction of the original National Nurses Day greeting card, first sold in 1992 to honor professional nurses.

Nursing appreciation days target specialised fields within the nursing field. Nightingale was born May 12, 1820, and was named after the city of her birth, Florence, Italy. Nightingale founded the first secular school for nursing after training at the Institute of St. Vincent de Paul in Alexandria, Egypt; Institute for Protestant Deaconesses near Dusseldorf, Germany; and on-the-job training from the Sisters of Mercy at a hospital in St. Germain, near Paris. She certainly gave the word “International” some credibility when added to Nurses Day.

Her father’s given name was Shore, but he changed it to honor his wealthy benefactor, Peter Nightingale. Educated by her father, Florence developed a love of mathematics and used this knowledge of statistics to show the number of deaths from unsanitary hospital and operating conditions during the Crimean War of the 1850s.

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This year was the 10th anniversary of our celebrations for International Nurses & Midwives Week. The International Day of the Midwife is celebrated annually on 5 May. This day was first celebrated in 1991 after a recommendation from the 1987 International Confederation of Midwives conference in the Netherlands. International Nurses Day is celebrated annually on 12 May. This day was established in 1974 by the International Council of Nurses to coincide with the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, and always carries a theme. The ICN’s theme this year is: Nurses: A Force for Change, a vital resource for health.

For the past 10 years, the ACT Nursing and Midwifery Office have formally celebrated the week between the above dates.

The week began on Monday 5 May with an oration to celebrate the International Day of the Midwife. Ann Kinnear, CEO, Australian College of Midwives shared a vision for midwives moving into the future.

On Tuesday, a particularly moving and poignant remembrance and thanksgiving, Wreathlaying Ceremony was held at the Australian War Memorial where His Excellency the Governor General and Lady Cosgrove joined defence force and civilian nurses and midwives to remember some very special nurses. The ceremony is an initiative of the ACT Nursing & Midwifery Network and is hosted by the AWM and supported by the ACT Nursing and Midwifery Office. The ceremony acknowledges nurses who have served, both in conflict and peace time in the Australian Defence Forces.

On Wednesday, Community Health held their highly successful Symposium which was well attended by a broad range of nurses and midwives who not only enjoyed some inspirational speakers and broadened their knowledge but also raised money for Lifeline in the process.

Thursday heralded a wonderful, Masquerade Gala Awards Dinner. Katy Gallagher MLA, Chief Minister and Minister for Health joined Dr Peggy Brown, members of the Health Directorate executive and over 550 nurses, midwives and guests, all wearing extravagant, creative and flamboyant masks, to celebrate, recognise and honour outstanding nursing and midwifery practice in the ACT.

On Friday we were treated to a hilarious debate on whether nurses should ‘Scrub the Uniform’. Ronnie Croome, our Chief Nurse, and her colleagues, Carmel Brennan and Maz van Meurs, comprehensively defeated the opposing academic team of Shane Lensen from ACU and Janet Jenista and Kerrie Doyle from UC.

Monday 12 May saw all manner of breakfasts being held across a wide range of ACT Health facilities to mark and celebrate International Nurses Day. One of those attended by Ronnie was a special breakfast in Ward 12B.

From the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer

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profession. School nurses are honored on the Wednesday of the official May 6-12 National Nurses Week, and student nurses receive special recognition on May 8. Certified nurses carved out a day for exclusive appreciation, using the March 19 birthday of the group’s benefactor, Margretta “Gretta” Madden Styles, who died in 2005. Styles, according to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, was “an international pioneer of nursing certification and longtime friend of AACN and AACN Certification Corporation.”

And here’s a little trivia that might interest you, just to round things off.

The patroness of nursing is St Elizabeth of Hungary, chosen because of her selfless, compassionate and charitable service to the sick and to the poor. Thank goodness that over time, the charitable component was dropped!! Contrary to popular belief, Florence Nightingale died at the age of 90 from heart failure and not syphilis.

In 2012 there were more nurses and nursing aides than soldiers in the U.S. Army, according to the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. “Scrubs,” a magazine dedicated to the nursing profession, identifies Linda Richards in 1873 as the first person to earn a diploma in nursing in the United States. Internationally, Finland and Norway have the highest number of nurses per capita.

According to the latest data available to the World Health Organization, Nepal, Liberia, Central African Republic, Haiti and Bangladesh have, in that order, the lowest ratios of nurses per capita of all nations, ranging from 5.0 to 11.0 nurses per 100,000 people and Ireland, Seychelles, Maldives, Philippines and Azerbaijan have, in that order, the highest ratios of midwives per capita of all nations, ranging from 411.0 to 137.0 midwives per 100,000 people.

Next newsletter I will share some local ACT facts and figures about our nursing and midwifery workforce so I hope you tap into a copy when next we talk.

Once again, congratulations to all nurses and midwives in all parts of the ACT community where care is provided, you really do an outstanding job.

Ronnie
Veronica.croome@act.gov.au
Cassie is an exceptional nurse with a passion for her work that is hard to match. She is extraordinarily efficient and reliable, and demonstrates the qualities to which all nurses aspire.

For the past 13 years she has dedicated her professional life to caring for survivors of adult sexual assault, working as a frontline clinician in the ACT, as the driving force behind the development of the Clinical Forensic Medical service in the ACT and as the powerhouse behind the incorporation and running of FAMSAC Australia, a national organisation which sets the standards for the provision of medical care to victims of sexual assault and provides a forum for clinicians to review and support each other’s practice.

For nine years Cassie was the sole nurse following up on around 1000 patients seen by the Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care service. She was there for each one of her patients, providing care and compassion, at whatever hour of the day or night suited them best, not when it suited her.

She’s no longer on her own as she has recently formed a team of nurses to provide the services that she has worked so hard to develop for people of the ACT and surrounding areas. Her leadership adds credibility to new concepts but she always adds her own personal touch.

Cassie’s workplace includes medical settings, the courtroom, death scenes, police stations and the watch-house. In her everyday activities she works with Police, Forensic Investigators, Canberra Rape Crisis Counsellors and prosecuting and defence lawyers.

Cassie is indeed an extraordinary nurse.

We have joint winners of the 2014 Midwife of the Year award; Noelyn Perriman from the Maternity Unit, Calvary Health Care ACT and Katherine Bishop from the Antenatal Clinic, Women, Youth and Children’s Services, Canberra Hospital and Health Services.

Noelyn Perriman, a midwife of many years, and is now a dedicated and passionate midwifery educator, highly respected both locally and nationally. She works collaboratively with all healthcare providers to ensure the best possible maternity care for women and their infants.

Having conducted an audit of stillbirths at Calvary Health Care she has implemented an action plan to reduce the incidence of these tragedies. Noelyn is a strong advocate for breastfeeding and was a key driver in Calvary’s successful Baby Friendly Health Accreditation in 2013.

Noelyn’s broad knowledge of the principles of adult learning has informed her outstanding ability to educate in a fun, safe and inclusive style and she has had a truly positive impact on the culture within the Maternity Unit at Calvary Health Care ACT. New Graduate midwives can often be found lining up at her door. These midwives find Noelyn warm and welcoming and, she provides a safe haven for them to debrief, as well as to express their fears and concerns. She possesses extraordinary skills and knowledge in all areas of midwifery which enhance her clinical practice. Noelyn is committed to her own professional development and she is currently completing her Master’s Degree in Midwifery. She is a person of great integrity, respectful of all with whom she has contact and is a very a worthy person to be recognised today by her colleagues as the 2014 midwife of the year.

Katherine Bishop is a new midwife to ACT Health who has worked diligently in her role over the last 15 months to raise the profile of the minority group of pregnant women for whom she cares.

Katherine’s role supports women with high vulnerabilities in pregnancy. This can include women with a history of substance use, mental health issues, co-morbidities or those involved with the criminal justice system. She cares for these women in a non-judgemental, supportive manner with compassion, integrity and attention to detail. Katherine is the key contact worker for a multidisciplinary team. She engages with the women she cares for early in their pregnancy, to deliver optimal care pathways that ensures the safest possible birth for mother and baby.

Katherine co-ordinates care with multiple agencies including alcohol and drug services, social workers, obstetricians, mental health, detention and rehabilitation centres, Care and Protection and other ACT Health service providers. She also facilitates a monthly collaborative multidisciplinary team meeting that supports the transfer of care of pregnant women with vulnerabilities to the community following the birth of their baby.

Katherine has excellent communication skills, she is thoughtful, caring, reflective and a pleasure to work with.
The 2014 Private Team of the Year is the Fisher Family Practice, Nursing & Midwifery Team.

The nurses and midwives at the Fisher Family Practice are champions in primary health and lead by example.

They are recognized by the practice staff and by the patients as an integral part of the health care team.

Each member of the team has been trained to deliver specialist nursing care, including pregnancy and antenatal care, well women’s clinics, specialised care for the elderly and chronic disease management.

They can each lead their special area of practice but they are also able to support their colleagues in all areas of practice. They each ‘go that extra mile’, which is demonstrated by their excellent work in patient led chronic disease management and their participation in the Coordinated Care Program.

The nurses and midwives have keenly implemented this program and look to opportunities to increase the program in their own practice and evaluate it as well. They are willing to assist other nurses set up their own program in their practices and provide helpful tips and strategies to do this. They understand the importance of ongoing primary healthcare and ensure that their patients receive accurate, prompt reminders regarding their care. This team is an example of primary health care nursing at its best.

The 2014 Enrolled Nurse of the Year is Karen King from Ward 8B, Canberra Hospital and Health Services

Karen is a knowledgeable, approachable, enthusiastic, motivating and passionate Enrolled Nurse with excellent communication skills. She encourages patients and carers to actively participate in their care with the aim of improving the patient experience and patient health outcomes. Karen has supported her Clinical Nurse Consultant to introduce bedside clinical handover, which has resulted in staff accepting the implementation of this model. This has lead to patients being more involved in their ongoing care. Karen is an Infection Prevention and Control champion for the ward and she is also a qualified Hand Hygiene auditor. She is passionate about safety in the workplace and has been nominated to represent her colleagues, and the ward, in Health and Safety as well as being their Fire Warden.

In 2013 Karen became one of the first enrolled nurses to successfully advance to a personal classification level 2 position. Karen upholds our core values and as stated by her Clinical Nurse Consultant “she is a pleasure to work with”.

The 2014 Graduate Nurse or Midwife of the Year (2013 Graduate Program) is Karlia Lyons from Ward 6A, Canberra Hospital and Health Services.

Karlia shows absolute commitment to the core values of nursing and fully understands herself and her role in this fine profession. She is caring, empathetic, flexible, dedicated, knowledgeable, intuitive, patient and compassionate.

Karlia commenced her new graduate program on ward 6A in February 2013 and was swiftly performing at a level far exceeding our expectations of her as a new graduate. Karlia’s nursing practices are first and foremost patient focused. She uses her excellent communication skills to form therapeutic and collaborative relationships with her patients, particularly to ensure that the rights of the individuals or groups are respected.

She demonstrates excellence through her respect and willingness to accommodate the preferences, needs and values of her patients and their families. Karlia has a “nothing’s too hard” attitude and is highly regarded among her colleagues (including the multidisciplinary team), her
patients and their families for her dedication and devotion to all aspects of her job. She is a valued team member and an asset to our ward. She is one of those rare nurses that you meet throughout your career that strike you as being truly special.

Karlia is planning to undertake further study this year. She epitomises the notion of an outstanding new graduate.

The 2014 Primary Health Nurse of the Year is Louise Murphy from Maternal and Child Health at the Belconnen Health Centre.

Louise is a highly valued team member of Women Youth & Children Community Health Programs. Her dedication and passion for maternal and child health nursing is exceptional. Working within a primary health care framework, Louise has developed strong networks to facilitate support and care for highly vulnerable parents in our community and has made a significant contribution to the nursing and midwifery profession through her dedication and commitment to quality improvement.

She strives to share and embed a culture of learning and quality improvement amongst her colleagues through role modelling and sharing her own love of learning and is a key member of the Community Health Programs Nursing and Midwifery Quality Improvement Committee. She has been directly involved in the planning, development and implementation of many QI activities.

She was recently involved in re-establishing MACH services at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Centre which involved high level negotiations that resulted in regular meetings for a group of parents with small children to discuss parenting, health and welfare issues to ensure their children are developing appropriately.

Louise has well developed relationships with other support agencies eg PANDSI, The Australian Breastfeeding Association and the QE 11 Family Centre and is a keen representative and contributor to the National Perinatal Depression Initiative Steering Committee, and the Safe Sleeping Policy Working group.

She has presented locally and nationally on MACH issues and is a qualified Family Partnership Training Facilitator. Louise’s dedication and passion for maternal and child health nursing and consequently for the women and families of the ACT has earned her the 2014 Primary Health Care nurse of the year award.

The 2014 Manager of the Year is Hazel Hurrell from the Rehabilitation, Aged and Community Care Division of Canberra Hospital and Health Services.

Hazel is an outstanding manager. In her role as Assistant Director of Nursing, she consistently demonstrates an exceptional level of commitment to her work and a focus on supporting her managers and their teams.

She embraces opportunities to improve the patient experience as demonstrated by her advocacy and implementation of the recent Assistant in Nursing model of care in the Acute Care of the Elderly Unit.

Hazel’s management style of providing clear expectations, being firm but fair, is appreciated by both managers and team members.

She has earned the admiration and respect of allied health, medical and nursing staff alike. The ‘care factor’ is one of her highly regarded personal attribute, and her delightful sense of humour contributes to the very positive relationships she has with her staff.

Hazel’s passion for excellence is unwavering. She was a significant driving force in establishing clinical champions and monthly audits for each of the Australian Council on Healthcare accreditation standards and more recently transitioning to the 10 National Quality and Safety Standards.

Her expertise has been welcomed in external collaborative projects with the University of Canberra and Residential Aged Care Facilities.

Hazel’s leadership incorporates the highest ethical standards along with her grace, compassion and critical thinking, she epitomises ACT Health’s core values of Care, Excellence, Collaboration and Integrity.

The ACT Chief Nurse’s Encouragement Award has gone to Katharine Faupula from the Emergency Department, Calvary Health Care ACT.

At the awards night, Ronnie said, “I have chosen Katherine (better known as Kat) for my achievement award tonight because of her outstanding work as a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Department at Calvary Hospital. She is an excellent example of a quiet achiever, someone who works actively and tirelessly every day for the benefit of patients and staff.

The excellent example she sets for others has been noticed by her colleagues and I would like to join with them in recognising her achievements. These achievements go beyond dedication, compassion and excellence in nursing care, but also include the support, encouragement and education she provides for her nursing colleagues and the drive and leadership she demonstrates within her own quality improvement portfolio. She also supports the nurses of Tonga, travelling there often on personally funded trips to assist locally in whatever way she can. Kat inspires confidence in her colleagues and her work, both locally and internationally, is a shining example to us all, of how care and good nursing can make a difference. Thank you Kat and I wish you every success for your future.
The 10th anniversary Nursing & Midwifery awards dinner was a resounding success thanks to all the wonderful nurses and midwives who joined in the spirit of the occasion and masked up! Some of the amazing masks worn on the night are pictured here:
Masks from the Masquerade Dinner
Masks from the Masquerade Dinner