



MONASH University

Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

Innovative Professional Development for Primary Care Nurses – a rural paradigm

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Monash University, School of Rural Health – East & South Gippsland

Who are we:

- Established in 2003 as part of the Rural Clinical School program
- Attached the Monash University School of Rural Health
- Campuses in Bairnsdale, Sale and South Gippsland
- Provide an integrated community – based curriculum / MBBS

Where are we:

- Far east Victoria
- Situated on Bairnsdale Hospital grounds
- Catchment area 21,000 sq. kms, service 40,000 community members
- SRH – Bairnsdale has (8) General Practice Clinics affiliated to SRH–B
- GP Clinics vary in size, most procedural with emergency facilities attached



Foundation of PNEG Practice Nurse Education Group

- School of Rural Health – Bairnsdale’s philosophy for inclusive education with a multi disciplinary approach
- Identified a need for primary care nurse education in East Gippsland
- Primary care nurses are required to provide an extensive range of clinical skills to their communities
- Data of primary care nurses working in General Practice setting in East Gippsland was established
- April 2009 invitation to all primary care nurses to network / discuss ideas about education events



AIM

- To initiate and support educational activities for primary care nurses in the East Gippsland region
- Encourage performance and knowledge expansion
- Strengthen patient safety through reinforcement of knowledge and rehearsal of clinical skills
- Provide opportunity for nurses to network and form alliances
- Seek linkages to other educational activities that might be advantage to all



Foundation: first meeting (April 2009)

Objective for the first meeting

- Needs analysis of educational activities
- Scope the skills primary care nurses are required to undertake
- Identify champions

Outcomes from the first meeting

- Attendances 30 primary care nurses
- Scoped clinical activities e.g. spirometry, wound care, WH clinics etc.
- Discussion regarding educational activities and topics required for the year
- How often do we hold educational sessions (monthly – quarterly)
- Identified possible tutors
- Identified key nurses at each General Practice to disseminate information and support
- What tutor and financial support available
- Did not consider who else to include

Topics of high priority included:

- Emergencies in General Practice
- Diabetic – best practice
- Pathology – the red flags
- Ophthalmological reviews and management of emergencies
- Management of chest pain and acute coronary syndrome
- Basic Life Support accreditation
- Wound management
- Dementia pathways
- Continence care
- Pain management
- **ANNUAL NEEDS ANALYSIS or WORKSHOP PLANNING**



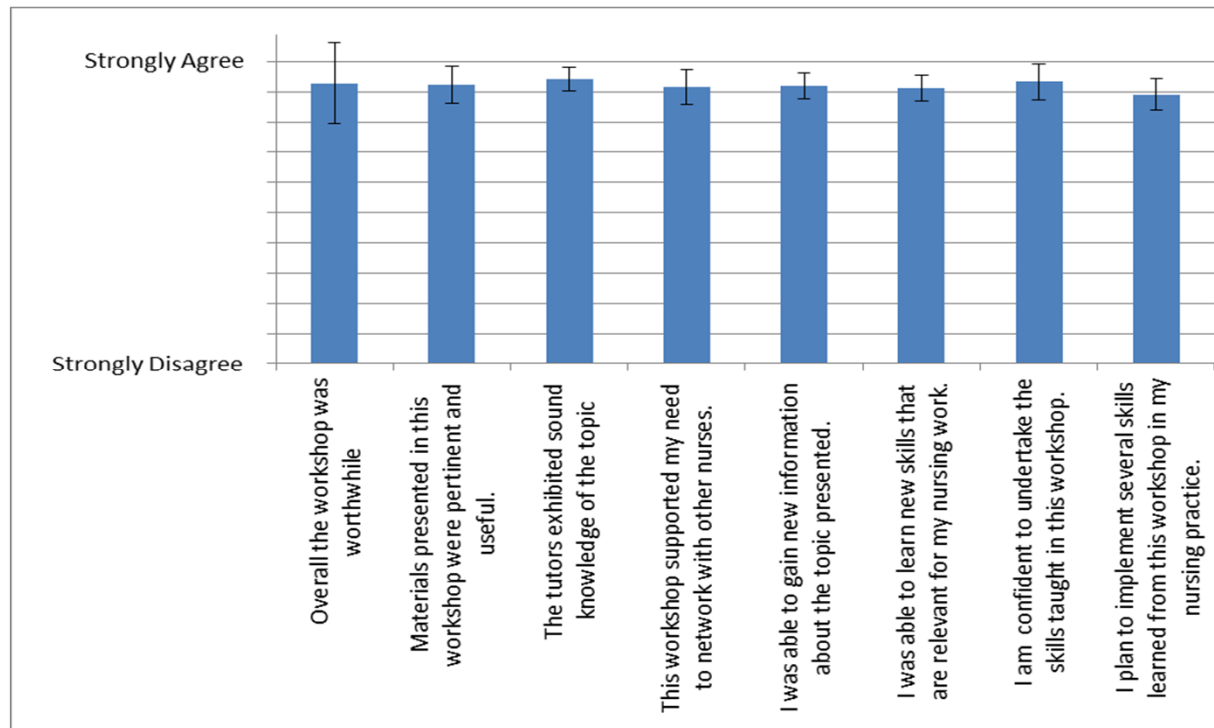


Workshop Evaluations

- Total of 270 nurses attended 20 sessions (2009-present)
- Average of 13.5 nurses at each session.
- Evaluation had an 89.8% response rate.
- Evaluations were conducted at 17 of the sessions.
- 65% of attendees were from GP Clinics (followed by 14% acute care and 10% aged care)
- 42% of attendees were from Bairnsdale and 39% from Lakes Entrance. The other participants came from as far away as Traralgon, Sale, Maffra, Dargo, Orbost and Omeo.
- Vast majority of nurses (72%) had completed their degree over 20 years ago and 13% between 10-19 years ago, with only 9% newly qualified (<5 years).

More evaluations:

- An average of all session evaluations showed very positive feedback.



Evaluation Outcomes

Nurses attend the workshops as an opportunity to refresh clinical skills and knowledge that is relevant to their current work.

- *“revision of forgotten techniques”*
- *“Helps background knowledge in general practice”*
- *“To update knowledge and maintain competency”*
- *“Practical application – reinforcing theoretical knowledge”*

Nurses found the information presented highly pertinent, useful and overall worthwhile.

- *“All sessions have been excellent. And very relevant for my work practice in the GP clinic”*
- *“All very interesting and informative”*

The subject matter was considered to be covered at a sufficient level, with most nurses able to identify interesting or new information/skills that they had gained from the workshops.

- *“Able to assist patients – to support them”*
- *“I will try to implement the assessment in my work routine and pass on what I have learnt to others”*
- *“Be of more assistance to the GP’s”*
- *“It will allow me to make quicker judgements”*

The nurses also felt confident in utilising the knowledge and skills taught in the workshops and planned to implement them into their practice.

- *“Confidence with sharing key messages/supporting client”*
- *“Increased confidence and safe practice”*
- *Feel more confident if alone in the practice (except for the GP)*

The workshops supported the nurses need for networking with other nurses and learning from colleagues.

- *“The workshops great – good way of learning together”*
- *“good interaction in the group”*
- *“Great networking”*
- *“Networking, hospital perspective”*

Support & Sustainability for the Practice Nurse Education Group

Support:

- Recipient of June Allen Practice Enhancement Fellowship 2010 & 2011
- School of Rural Health (administration & refreshments)
- Evolution of collaborative education with local Regional Health Services & other organisations
- More recently – Australian Practice Nurses Association (APNA)
- Medicare locals

Sustainability:

- Enthusiastic drivers amongst the group
- Small grants to support tutors
- Collaborative events (medical students, interns, general practitioners)



Conclusion:

- The PNEG program has demonstrated that General Practice nurses in the East Gippsland region have **enhanced their knowledge and acquisition of clinical skills** for better patient outcomes.
- Our results demonstrate that the practice nurses have become **more reflective practitioners** and **more confident** in the care they provide to their patients.
- The opportunity to **network** with other nurses in similar circumstances has **generated collaborative learning and formed alliances** amongst a group of nurses who tended to work in isolation to each other.
- Educational events driven by this group **addresses the learning needs of the group**, and decreases the times nurses have to travel to metropolitan areas for professional development.
- This program is now **recognised regionally** and formed relationships with other educational providers, resulting in further collaborative educational activities for practice nurses to attend.
- The straightforwardness of this program and with support from its members makes this **program unique and easily replicated** to other rural and remote areas where nurses require further educational activities.

A scenic view of a large body of water, likely a bay or estuary, with a forested coastline and a cloudy sky. The water is a deep blue-green color, and the sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The foreground shows a sandy beach and a line of trees. In the distance, there are more landmasses and a few small boats on the water.

Thank you

Questions

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A/Prof David Campbell and Dr Eleanor Mitchell

Nurses Board of Victoria: June Allen Practice Enhancement Fellowship

Enthusiasm from the Primary Care Nurses