

# fact sheet

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## Consider a career in nursing

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health is committed to meeting its responsibility towards assisting people, in particular school students who are interested in health industry occupations, to make informed choices about their futures. Indeed, across the country, in health services everywhere, there are many different programs and initiatives in place.

In this organisation many of our hospitals participate in activities that showcase the nursing profession specifically, so as to demonstrate the wonderful opportunities that it offers. A smaller number of hospitals with maternity services offer similar opportunities for people wanting to pursue a career as a midwife.

We ensure that the information provided during these occasions is both accurate and relevant by working closely with NSW Health, the tertiary education sector (TAFE and universities) and professional nursing bodies. We regularly review our activities to improve them and keep them up to date.

Current efforts that enable school leavers to investigate a nursing career in a practical way occur through work experience, work placement, work observation, career talks, communiqués and specific local initiatives. In addition the HSC Nursing Studies subject is being piloted at St George Hospital. Other options such as the VET-in-schools programs based on the Community Services and Health Training Packages, are under consideration for the future.

### Why nursing?

*Nursing is much more than a job - it's a wonderful career...for life.*

The profession is always searching for new recruits who are intelligent, practical, motivated and hard working and who are smart enough to realize that:

- Working with people of all ages and from all walks of life is one of the most interesting, rewarding and also challenging things to do
- Providing an essential service to the general public with other members of the health care team is a privilege that brings with it wonderful employment prospects, both here and overseas
- Being able to choose from numerous specialty areas of practice is the recipe for a wonderfully diverse career that's full of inspiring experiences and never dull
- Building upon an initial nursing qualification through the pursuit of further studies helps improve knowledge, expand skills and open up exciting professional and employment opportunities.

### Explore nursing whilst still at school

To help you explore nursing and find out if it is the career for you, the nurses in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health have come up with great ways in which they can show you what it's really like. Why not take advantage of these opportunities while you're still at school?

#### Work experience

Work experience is one of the best ways for Year 10 students to see first hand what nursing involves and gain a better understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of nurses. It allows you to participate directly in some practical activities, observe clinical procedures and see some of the many applications of technology in health care. Students are given a special "Dare to Care" handbook to keep that contains interesting information on nursing and exercises to help with your investigations.

#### Work placement

Work placement is different in that it takes place in Year's 11 and/or 12, as part of the HSC curriculum, and combines school work with a vocational industry placement.

Because it's often run over several terms, there's more opportunity of gaining an in-depth look at nursing than is possible in a week of work experience. It is mainly our larger hospitals that offer work placements.

### **HSC Nursing Studies**

This program is for senior students who are seriously considering a career in nursing. It provides a direct link to formal nursing courses (Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled/Division 2 Nursing) or Bachelor of Nursing) by teaching students some of the basic skills used in the health care industry. Currently conducted during Years 11 and 12, the program involves both theory and practical experience.

### **Clinical placement**

If you're considering enrolling in, or are currently undertaking a course such as Assistant in Nursing, Access to Nursing or Paramedical Studies in Year 11 or 12 why not ask your school career advisor if you can arrange a clinical placement at your local hospital. This will give you the opportunity to experience the environment, meet nurses and other health professionals as well as patients, and enable you to broaden your understanding of this industry.

### **Career activities**

Nurses will come to your school, particularly if it's in our area, to give talks on nursing, to attend careers nights, speak to parents or be involved in any other career activities such as mock interviews. They are also happy to give you information on nursing and will tell you honestly about their studies, their experiences, the work, the conditions, the pay, the career opportunities and the future prospects.

### **Nursing observation**

If you have recently left school, you can take advantage of the Nursing Observer Program which gives you the opportunity of meeting and talking with nurses while looking around the hospital. It's a shorter program than work experience, usually lasting from a couple of hours to one or two full days (as negotiated), but because it's specifically for you, this amount of time is often all you'll need to have your questions answered.

### **Tours and open days**

Hospital tours and open days allow you to see what working in a hospital is really like and find out about the range of jobs available in the industry. You'll be able to look at displays, collect information, join in the simulated clinical activities and chat with nurses and other employees, on their own "turf". Visiting a hospital can be really interesting and sometimes surprising.

For more information visit:

<http://nursing.sesiahhs.health.nsw.gov.au>

For general information about becoming a nurse or a midwife visit:

[www.nursing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nursing.nsw.gov.au)