

fact sheet

5

Nursing students and graduates

Clinical placements for nursing students

Clinical practice is an important component of the Bachelor of Nursing. It can also be one of the most interesting, enjoyable and influential phases of your studies. Because you have some choice as to where you go for your clinical, why not consider South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health as one of your clinical placement destinations:

- You'll have the opportunity to experience some of the finest hospitals and community services that Sydney and the Illawarra have to offer.
- You'll have access to a wide range of clinical settings in a variety of facility types including large principal and specialist referral hospitals and smaller district and sub acute hospitals. As well, all age groups are catered for from the youngest neonates and children needing paediatric services, to the oldest members of the community needing aged care or rehabilitation.
- If you're planning to streamline your career towards a particular specialty, for example emergency, perioperative or paediatric nursing, community or mental health, we can assist you, wherever possible, in organising the relevant placements for your major subject and clinical electives.
- You'll find the nursing staff ready and willing to support you while on clinical and help you get the most out of your real life experiences. Both enrolled and registered nurses are always keen to share their stories, to find out about your studies and help you to see where your career can take you.
- Since many nurses you'll encounter will have travelled extensively during their working lives, specialised in various fields, completed further studies or experienced unusual things in their careers, you can look forward to some interesting conversations in the tea room.

- You'll have plenty of opportunities to check out the hospital and see what sort of services it offers and also to see how many different nursing positions exist. You can also make contact with community health nurses who are generally willing to introduce you to their working environment which is outside the hospital, in community centres and people's homes.
- Clinical placements are perfect occasions on which to start gathering information about prospective employers. They are great ways of meeting new and recent graduates and asking them about their transition to the workplace. If you're interested, it's also a good time to find out about the graduate nurse programs offered by a hospital.

Most of all, you probably want to check out one of the major employers of newly registered nurses in New South Wales – South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health.

Employment as a newly registered nurse

As a nursing graduate with one of the most in-demand qualifications across all industries and some of the best employment prospects for the future, it's important to get a good start to your nursing career.

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health which, for many years, has welcomed large numbers of graduates into its facilities and services, recognises the importance of having newly registered nurses as part of its workforce to bring fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm to its already dynamic team of health professionals.

Graduate nurse programs

Graduate nurse programs are available in the majority of our hospitals. They work well because we understand how stressful the move from student to registered nurse can be and so they've been designed to provide you with extra support and guidance in the clinical areas. We believe the programs will assist you to work safely and comfortably in this new environment and in your new role as a registered nurse.

Through the experiences gained and with the help of your nursing colleagues, preceptors and nurse educators, you will soon develop confidence in your clinical practice and gain a thorough understanding of the workplace. The progress you make during your first year of practice as a registered nurse will be the foundation on which to build your nursing career.

There are a variety of graduate nurse programs in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health and all of them run for a full 12 months with intakes occurring between January and August/September each year. Some are general hospital-wide programs designed to support you while you apply the principles of your nursing theory, practice your clinical skills in broad surgical and medical settings. Others are designed for particular specialty areas, offering you the opportunity to be introduced to mental health, paediatrics, emergency, newborn care and the operating suite to name a few.

Features of our programs include:

- Generally three to four clinical rotations during the 12 months
- Study days, workshops and individual reflective learning opportunities as part of your paid employment
- Continuing education and professional development options to suit your individual needs as well as advice and assistance with planning your future career
- Ongoing employment in the majority of hospitals on a permanent, full or part-time basis where performance reviews have been satisfactory and vacancies exist.

When selecting a graduate nurse program it's important to realise that hospitals in our Area Health Service differ greatly in the range and type of services they deliver and populations they serve - local, state, national and, sometimes international. For example, some hospitals cater specifically for either adult or paediatric patients while others can accommodate patients of all age groups.

Maternity services of different levels of complexity are available at six of our hospitals but the specialised women's health services are primarily located at the Royal Hospital for Women.

Whether you prefer a large hospital over a smaller facility, a general approach to your first year or a focus on a specialty field, it's important to find out as much as you can about potential employers and the programs they offer before applying.

Hospitals offering programs include:

- Calvary Health Care Sydney (Kogarah)
- Prince of Wales Hospital (Randwick)
- Royal Hospital for Women (Randwick)
- Shellharbour Hospital (Shellharbour)
- Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital (Nowra)
- St George Hospital (Kogarah)
- St Vincent's Hospital (Darlinghurst)
- Sydney Children's Hospital (Randwick)
- Sydney Hospital and Sydney Eye Hospital (Sydney)
- The Sutherland Hospital (Caringbah)
- Wollongong Hospital (Wollongong)

More information about the hospitals in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health and details of the graduate nurse programs can be found on our website:

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