

fact sheet

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Opportunities for nurses and midwives

Working in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health (SESIH) gives nurses and midwives access to some outstanding opportunities for professional development, career enhancement and the achievement of their goals and ambitions.

Nurses and midwives - making a difference as leaders

Nurses and midwives take on leadership roles on a daily basis in the course of organising their clinical care. Modelling of clinical excellence, coordinating health teams, focusing on improving the patient's experience of care and maximising health outcomes are all leadership attributes. Being ready for the risks and opportunities that are inherent in contemporary healthcare and contributing to the provision and planning of safe and effective health services are some of the ways in which nurses and midwives express their leadership.

There are several approaches individuals can take to developing the knowledge, skills and self mastery that will enable them to make a difference as clinical leaders.

Leadership development programs

We host two formal programs that attract nursing and midwifery participants:

- Clinical Excellence Commission (CEC) State-wide Clinical Leadership Program is a joint initiative between the CEC and several Area Health Services including SESIH and during the twelve months aims to:
 - Enhance the capacity of clinicians to lead sustainable system improvement and patient safety initiatives
 - Work more effectively with available clinical information and resources
 - Develop a culture of patient-centred care within an environment that supports work based learning.

- The Effective Leadership Program is an initiative that has been developed in partnership with the University of Wollongong and is aligned with the broader agenda of leadership in health. This twelve month program is delivered in two modules:

Module 1 introduces participants to the Kouzes and Posner Exemplary Leadership Behaviours:

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
- Challenge the process
- Enable others to act and
- Encourage the heart.

Module 2 challenges the participants to integrate exemplary leadership behaviours in their work practices and supports participants to actively influence their workplace culture.

Other opportunities

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health is aware that the self mastery of leadership calls for, and is fostered by, opportunities for reflection and practice. Active engagement in these is facilitated in many ways including through clinical supervision groups, mentorship and action learning sets.

The development of transactional leadership skills that enable nurses and midwives to develop the competencies required to manage in complex organisations are highly valued. Across SESIH, there are opportunities to participate in 'stepping-up', 'management development', 'in-charge' and other similar programs.

Practice development and research

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health is very proud to have developed and sustained partnerships over many years with various universities in NSW. This has enabled our nurses and midwives to benefit greatly from the leadership, guidance and encouragement provided by the Professors of Nursing located within our facilities.

Professorial positions SESIH:

- Aged and Extended Care Nursing
- Women's Health Nursing
- Child and Adolescent Nursing
- Mental Health Nursing
- Practice Development
- Rehabilitation, Continuing and Aged Care
- Midwifery Practice Development

The REACH Project is an International research collaborative between SESIH and The Royal Hospitals in Belfast, The Children's Hospital at Westmead and Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service that offers a pathway to life long learning using a clinical career framework.

The aims of REACH are:

- Recognition and value of staff regardless of whether an academic or clinical pathway have been taken
- Competent and confident clinicians at all levels
- The creation of a culture of lifelong learning for improved quality of care
- A nursing workforce with skills that are transferable throughout the organisation
- The successful recruitment of staff and improved workforce retention.

Writing for publication

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health has pioneered the writing for publication initiative that aims to encourage any nurse or midwife who is motivated to publish. Support is provided through an introduction to publication writing workshops and the allocation of a writing coach (an academic or published clinician) whose assistance could be:

- Instrumental (time, aid in kind, modifying environment)
- Informational (facts, knowledge, advice, suggestions)
- Appraisal (feedback, affirmation, self-evaluation)
- Emotional (listening, respect, trust, concern).

Some examples of how nurses and midwives have used this initiative to their benefit include: improved understanding of the impact on staff satisfaction of 12 hour shifts, completion of a Master's thesis and publishing an opinion piece.

Clinical and organisational learning

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health is committed to building a learning organisation, meaning that we subscribe to continuous learning and the provision of opportunities for learning at all levels of the organisation. Through our Organisational Learning Unit staff can undertake a range of courses from its annual calendar.

Nurses and midwives throughout SESIH are dedicated to ensuring that clinical learning occurs at the front line of healthcare and they are supported in this by the presence of clinical nurse educators.

Nurse educators work collaboratively to ensure that all learning opportunities and credentialing is recognised across the Area Health Service. Individual facilities and services also develop and promote localised clinical and professional development opportunities for their staff.

The responsibilities of nurse educators include participation in the design of an evidenced based curriculum, planning flexible, relevant and appropriate learning opportunities and evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs.