



New practice nurse funding initiative

Numbers of General Practice Nurses

State	2005	2007	2009	% change since 2007	% change since 2005
NSW	1157	2010	2441	21%	111%
VIC	1515	1926	2026	5%	34%
QLD	1112	1707	2061	21%	85%
SA	203	663	764	15%	276%
WA	722	895	986	10%	37%
TAS	126	266	332	25%	163%
NT	59	186	197	6%	234%
ACT	30	75	107	43%	257%
Total	4924	7728	8914	15%	81%

75% part-time

Practice nurse role

- **Clinical care**
 - Clinical procedures and activities
- **Clinical coordination**
 - e.g. recall/reminder, population health approach
- **Practice administration**
 - Accreditation support
- **Integration**
 - Liaison with other providers

RACGP/RCNA 2004

Operating Roles

Nurse as patient carer

Nurse as quality controller

Nurse as organiser

Nurse as problem solver

Nurse as educator

Nurse as agent of connectivity

Phillips et al 2009

Health assessments

Immunisation

Wound Management

Women's health

Chronic disease clinics

ECGs, Pathology, Routine obs

Patient education

Care planning

To name a few!

Evolution of role

- From 'expediency measure' to career
- GP directed ⇨ autonomous
- Huge diversity in role
- Rapid evolution

29.4% (2006 26.9%, 2005 21%)
of Practice Nurses run a nurse-
led clinic

Funding thus far

- NiGP program (2001) Commonwealth funded
 - Rural PIP Subsidy (\$8000 per EFT GP)
 - Training and support
 - Division of General Practice capacity building
 - Consumer information
 - Supporting training (scholarships)
 - Encourage network and mentoring (APNA Seed funding)
 - Rural re-entry scholarships scheme (not just practice nurses) 2005/6 Federal
- Budget 2005 - funding continued \$128m including \$112m for PIP subsidy
 - PIP subsidy extended to areas of workforce shortage

Development of practice nursing

- PN item numbers introduced
 - Immunisation and wound management (2004)
 - Pap Smears (2005)
 - Pap Smears and preventive care, antenatal care (2006)
 - Chronic disease management item numbers (2007)
- GP Management Plans and Team Care Arrangements replaced old EPC program and role of nurse expanded within this

Over 20 million
PN items
claimed since
2004

For and on
behalf of GP

New funding: What is it and how will it benefit practice nurses?

- Commencing in January 2012. Investing almost \$400m over 4 years to nursing services in general practice.
- Incentive of \$25,000 per GP (in an accredited practice) for employment of a registered nurse and \$12,500 for employment of an enrolled nurse.
- Rural loading up to 50%
- Current PIP practice nurse subsidy and PN 'for and on behalf' of item numbers to be redirected to this new incentive. Nurse contribution to GP item numbers such as health assessments and GPMPs to remain unchanged.

Positives for practice nurses

- Less confusion over legal accountability
- Greater incentive for correct allocation of funding
- Increased scope of duties for practice nurses, allowing for greater flexibility in operation of practices
- Recognition of nurses' varying qualification levels
- Increased opportunity for development of skills and new nursing services

New funding: Areas of concern and continuing improvement

Areas we will advocate for clarity and/or improvement

- Recognition and incentives for advanced nursing roles
- Disincentives for practices to allocate inappropriate administrative tasks to nurses' duties
- Continued recognition of nursing contribution
- Assessment of impact of the new scheme on practices with high nurse-GP ratios
- Funding for infrastructure to allow for increased nurse employment
- Further incentives for high quality care

Areas of concern regarding GPs

- Employed or contractor GPs may experience resentment at 'loss of income'
- Lack of clear definition of job description and role of the nurse
- Temptation to commence GP billing for nurse activities where not warranted particularly for contracted./employee GPs

Other concerns

- Change of focus in nurses' job roles
- Changes in job security



Supporting nurses in general practice

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