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joint position statement

nursing research

This position statement has been prepared jointly by the Australian Nursing Federation and Royal College of Nursing, Australia.

It is the position of the Australian Nursing Federation and Royal College of Nursing, Australia that:

1. Evidence based practice is the benchmark of high quality nursing care.
2. Nursing research contributes to the development of an evidence base that improves the quality of nursing care provided to members of the Australian community.
3. The following recommendation included in the final report of the National Nursing Review should be implemented:
To build capacity in a vital discipline that has only been in the university sector for a relatively short period:
 - (a) *immediate steps should be taken to ensure that the current level of postgraduate research scholarships and research training places for nurses are at least maintained, with the longer term target of doubling Research Training Scheme commencement load by 2008;*
 - (b) *a dedicated pool of funding from new or existing sources should be made available over the next 5 years to provide research grant money and for cooperative research centres for nursing:*
 - (i) *particular priority should be given to building longer term capacity and integration of research findings into practice; and*
 - (ii) *priority areas might include evidence-based practice, aged care, work organisation, mental health nursing, and nursing in rural and remote areas.¹*
4. The Australian Government's Department of Education Science and Training, in conjunction with the schools of nursing and the professional nursing organisations, undertake a formal review of nursing research and the efficacy of the current funding models.
5. The Australian Government, together with the state and territory governments, establish a national nursing research centre with three separate funding streams, namely: seeding scholarships to assist with developing nursing projects; fellowships for completion of research degrees; and major research grants.
6. Nurses are represented on all the key national funding bodies for health research including a dedicated position for nursing on the National Health and Medical Research Council.



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¹ Commonwealth of Australia 2002 *Our Duty Of Care* National Review of Nursing Education DEST Canberra pp. 20

7. Opportunities for funding are advertised in ways that inform all nurse researchers who work in universities and clinical settings, in the public and private sectors, and in metropolitan rural and remote areas of Australia.
8. Nursing research uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, and is rigorous and ethical in approach.
9. Nurse researchers take responsibility for working with professional colleagues and health and aged care organisations to apply research findings that improve the quality and safety of care.
10. The National Health and Medical Research Council's *National statement on ethical conduct in research involving humans* (latest edition) is endorsed.
11. Important areas of nursing research are:
 - patient focussed research;
 - the management processes within health care services;
 - cultural issues for nurses and patients;
 - the history of nursing;
 - ethical decision making;
 - nursing and professional regulation;
 - education of nurses; and
 - nursing workforce skills mix.
12. Nursing research can be nursing specific or it can be carried out as part of a multidisciplinary team where all aspects of patient care are investigated.
13. Nursing and other research outcomes are integrated into undergraduate nursing courses in order to promote the role of research in quality nursing and health care.
14. Schools of nursing in the higher education setting assist with the development of nurse researchers through training and career development opportunities in that:
 - 14.1 nurse researchers are provided with mentorship and individual support; and
 - 14.2 a range of research courses are developed which meet the needs of beginning, intermediate and experienced researchers including fellowship programs to assist pre and post doctoral students.
15. Employment opportunities are developed by either the health care provider or as joint appointments between health care providers and universities and other research centres, so that nurse researchers can positively contribute to the professional development environments in which clinical nurses work.
16. Nursing research findings are disseminated in national and international peer reviewed nursing, health and other publications and at conferences so that nurses and other health care professionals are able to access and utilise the research outcomes in their clinical work.
17. Nursing research is promoted by nursing organisations, including the ANF and RCNA, in both the nursing and mainstream media in order to demonstrate that nursing research is positively contributing to the provision of high quality nursing care.