

FACULTY *news*



The University of Sydney
Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery

April 2006 Vol 3 No 1



Dean's Message

Graduation highlights

At the April graduation ceremonies, a number of outstanding researchers will receive their awards. There will be one Bachelor of Nursing (Honours) graduand and five Doctor of Philosophy graduands. The Faculty staff congratulate them on their achievements and acknowledge their outstanding contributions to the profession's rapidly expanding research base.

Bachelor of Nursing (Honours), with First Class Honours and the University medal

Ms Ester Carman (supervisors: Dr Maureen Boughton and Dr Sandie Bredemyer)
Title: Use of chlorhexidine as a topical antiseptic for the prevention of nosocomial infection in premature neonates less than 29 weeks: A blinded RCT

Doctor of Philosophy

Allison Shorten (supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Sandra West) Title: Making choices for childbirth after caesarean section: A randomised controlled trial of a decision-aid

Jung Ran Kim (supervisor: Prof. Doug Elliott) Title: Korean ICU nurses' knowledge and attitudes towards brain death and organ donation

Mary Ryan (supervisor: Prof. Jocalyn Lawler) Title: Living with recurrent ovarian cancer: A narrative analysis

Kumiyo Inoue (supervisor: Prof. Sue Armitage) Title: Nurses' understanding of domestic violence issues

Janice Gullick (supervisor: Prof. Colleen Stainton) Title: Conscious Body Management: The Experience of Choosing Surgery for Breath-LESS-ness

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Vol 3 No 1 April 2004

CRICOS Provider No 0026A

New graduate entry nursing courses commenced in March

In March this year, the Faculty commenced its new graduate entry programs for people wishing to take up a career as a registered nurse. This group will be the first to undertake the Master of Nursing program leading to entry to practice as a registered nurse. This new program is studied over two years full time for people who have a first degree. The degree is also offered in combination with undergraduate degrees in Arts, Science, Health Science or Exercise and Sports Science.

As the first of their kind in Australia, these new combined degrees have proven to be very popular. The Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery is leading the way in these innovative approaches to professional education.

A total of 70 new students commenced the Master of Nursing coming from diverse backgrounds in commerce, arts, science, economics, naturopathy and veterinary science among many other careers. This rich blend of people from various backgrounds was also experienced by medicine and the health professions including physiotherapy and pharmacy when they moved to graduate entry courses. This pattern is also reflected in the international research literature which shows this same variety and a much higher proportion of male students – 30% instead of the average of 10%.

In the combined degree patterns 82 students enrolled. Most of these were school leavers, or people already studying at the undergraduate level and saw the combined patterns as more interesting and a better match their career aspirations. The demand for the combined courses in their first year of offer exceeded expectations and a very talented and able group of students was attracted to this pattern of study.

The University of Sydney's progressive move to graduate entry in the health professions also reflects a pattern emerging internationally, particularly in the research intensive universities. The Faculty's leading role in the introduction of the combined degree patterns is also setting a trend, and this is further enhanced by their attractiveness to potential students.

Professor Jocalyn Lawler

International and Professional Relations



The last few months of 2005 was an exciting time in International and Professional Relations. Most exciting of all, Nada Dunda and her partner Paul celebrated the arrival of their daughter, Mishka, on 17 December 2005. Congratulations to them both. Nada is on maternity leave but will be returning in November 2006. Sarah Goodman-Jones is currently relieving in Nada's position and, while having been dropped in at the deep end, has met all the challenges – it's great to be working with her.

Study Abroad in 2005

Between September and December we hosted three groups of Study Abroad students. The first group, from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland Ohio, came to participate in Indigenous Health fieldwork experience. They spent five weeks working at Redfern and Daruk Aboriginal medical centres and with the Indigenous health workers at South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service. They then had a change of pace and worked in and around the Aboriginal medical centres in Toowoomba.

The students had a great time and we're extremely grateful to the staff of the centres and health services for their marvellous support.

The second group of students came from Dundee in Scotland and spent 10 weeks at Royal North Shore Hospital and in community and aged care services in and around the North Shore area. They equally had a great time and the staff in all areas were fantastic.

The third group came from Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore and spent four weeks working with our third year students at The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Camperdown. Each year, students from Nanyang Polytechnic spend four weeks in Sydney as part of our longstanding relationship with that organisation.

Special initiatives and short courses

During August and September we conducted a professional development course for 25 nurse practitioners. The course was organised by Dr Liz Harford from the Nursing Branch of NSW Health. The people teaching on the course came from across the College of Health Sciences, in particular from the faculties of Nursing and Midwifery, Pharmacy and Health Sciences. The course provided a great opportunity for rural and metropolitan nurse practitioners to get together and to share experiences.

In association with Kennedy Healthcare Group we ran a six day aged care management course in two day modules over three months. The course brought together 35 aged care managers and clinicians and provided an opportunity for networking and learning. Aged care managers, industry consultants and staff from the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery facilitated the course. It was such a success that we are offering the course twice this year – in a five-day block in March and again in module format in September, October and November.

Professional development short courses

Aged Care Management	Monday 13 March – Friday 17 March 2006
Wound Management	Wednesday 29 March – Friday 31 March 2006
Cancer Nursing	Wednesday 26 April – Friday 28 April 2006
Managing Nursing Resources	Wednesday 24 May – Friday 26 May 2006
Clinical Education	Thursday 29 June – Friday 30 June 2006

Our professional development short courses for the second half of the year will be posted on our website soon. For further information and application forms please visit our website at: www.nursing.usyd.edu.au

The Nursing and Midwifery Alumni Association

At its annual general meeting in 2005, the Nursing Alumni Association was renamed the Nursing and Midwifery Alumni Association in line with the renaming of the Faculty of Nursing to the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery. The decision was also made to cease membership fees but continue to recruit members to the Association.

Membership of the Association helps us keep in contact with you, so that you can be informed of special events and Alumni gatherings. It's also your way of keeping in touch with the Faculty and wider University.

A special Nursing and Midwifery Alumni Newsletter will be mailed shortly so if you are an alumnus or you know someone who is, please contact us so that we can ensure our database is up to date.

If you would like further information on the Nursing and Midwifery Alumni Association or any of our short courses or other activities please contact:

Stuart Newman
 Phone: 61 2 93510614 or
snewman@nursing.usyd.edu.au
 Sarah Goodman-Jones
 Phone: 61 2 93510677 or
sarahgj@nursing.usyd.edu.au

Student Information

Semester 1 key dates

If you are a local student and you wish to withdraw from a unit of study without academic or financial penalty, please refer to the following critical dates for Semester 1, 2006.

International students should refer to the International Student Refund Policy listed at the following website: www.usyd.edu.au/fstudent/postgrad/costs/inm/refund.shtml#ref

Local full fee-paying students should contact the Faculty Office on 61 2 9351 0693 for further information about refunds.

March 2006

Monday 6 March	Lectures begin
Friday 31 March	Session 1 census date: Last day to withdraw from a unit of study offered in session 1 without academic or financial penalty. Session 7 critical date: Last day to withdraw from a unit of study offered in session 7 without academic or financial penalty. Please note: If you withdraw from session 1 or session 7 units of study past this date, academic and financial penalties will apply.

April 2006

Saturday 1 April 2006	Session 7 critical date: Last day to discontinue without failure.
Friday 14 April – Friday 21 April	AVCC Common Week/non-teaching Easter period
Sunday 23 April 2006	Session 7 critical date: Last day to discontinue.
Tuesday 25 April	ANZAC Day public holiday
Friday 28 April	Session 1 critical date: Last date to discontinue a unit of study without failure.

May 2006

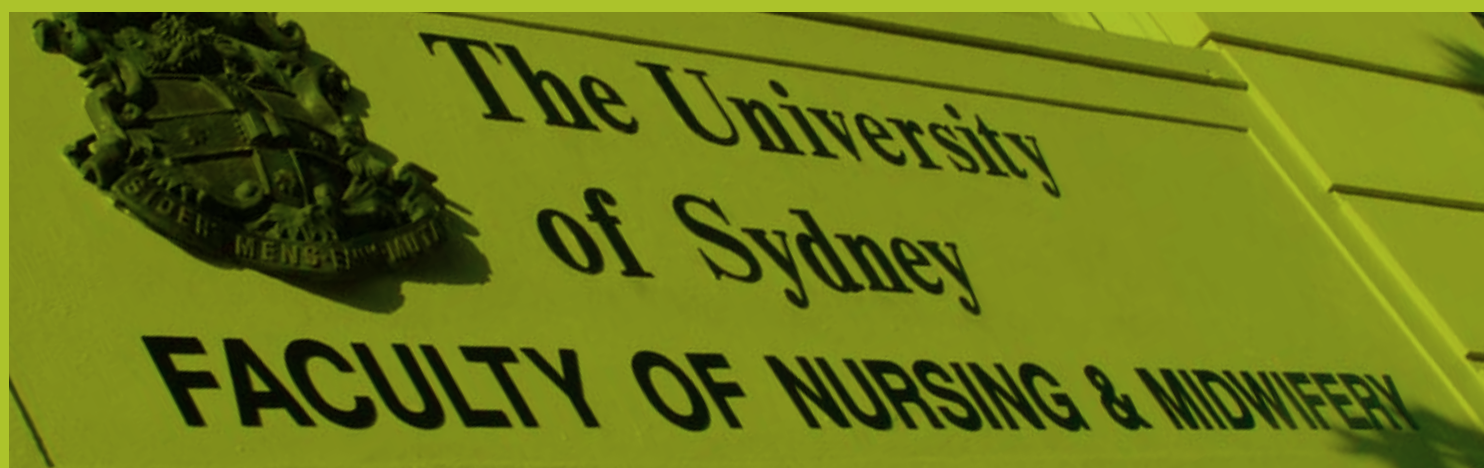
Sunday 14 May	Session 8 critical date: Last day for withdrawal.
Tuesday 16 May	Session 8 critical date: Last day to discontinue without failure.

June 2006

Friday 9 June	Session 1 critical date: Last date to discontinue.
Sunday 11 June	Session 8 critical date: last day to discontinue.
Monday 12 June	Queen's Birthday public holiday
Monday 12 – Friday 16 June	Study Vacation
Monday 19 June – Saturday 1 July	Examination Period

July 2006

Saturday 1 July	Semester Ends
Monday 3 – Friday 7 July	AVCC Common Week/non-teaching period



Student Information

Who's who at the Faculty

Dr Maureen Boughton

Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching)

Maureen is responsible for the academic coordination of the Faculty's courses of study and works with other members of the Faculty to organise and oversee the Faculty's admission, enrolment and progression of students. Maureen also reports on students' satisfaction with courses and units of study.

Dr Jenni Blundell

Associate Dean (Academic)

Jenni oversees the academic work involved in preparing, offering, teaching, assessing and reporting of results for all units of study offered by the Faculty. In conjunction with the Associate Dean (Research) and the Coordinator (Research Students), Jenni assigns supervisors for research degree students and ensures that the students are appropriately supervised.

Professor Kate White

Director (Research Development and Support Unit)

Kate's role is to enhance the development of research within the Faculty and to support new and existing researchers. Along with Jenni and Sue, Kate is responsible for assigning and ensuring the satisfactory progression of research students.

Mr Stuart Newman

Director (International and Professional Relations)

Stuart is responsible for the international programs that involve the Faculty and for the development and running of the professional development and short courses offered to registered nurses.

Ms Lynne Brown

Coordinator (Pre-registration Courses)

Lynne provides academic advice to undergraduate nursing and combined degree students and to the Faculty's new graduate entry students. She works closely with Maureen Boughton to ensure the satisfactory progression of all pre-registration students.

Ms Maureen Ahern

Coordinator (Postgraduate Coursework)

Maureen's role is similar to Lynne's, she provides academic advice to postgraduate students studying a coursework degree. Included in Maureen's portfolio are those students studying the Bachelor of Nursing (Post-registration).

Dr Sue Forsyth

Coordinator (Research Students)

Sue works closely with Kate and Jenni to recruit, support and advise the research students in the Faculty. This includes students studying in the BN (Honours), MN (Honours) and PhD courses.

Sarah Brown

Manager (Student Administration)

Sarah is responsible for student services and the administration of postgraduate coursework and post-registration courses for local and international students. Students have contact with Sarah for a variety of reasons from the time they enquire about a course right through until they graduate, which allows her to get to know students quite well.

Susanne Norton

Administrative Officer

Susanne is responsible for the administration of local and international pre-registration and research degree students. Students contact Susanne throughout their course in matters such as enquiries about courses, admission, progression and graduation.

Maria Carlisle

Manager (Clinical Placement)

Maria is responsible for providing clinical placements for all pre-registration students in all the clinical units of study. Maria liaises with over 300 clinical placement sites to endeavour to ensure all students have appropriate clinical experiences.

Research Development and Support Unit

Message from the Director



Welcome to the Research Development and Support Unit's first newsletter for 2006 which now has its own section in the Faculty newsletter. This year will be exciting and busy for the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery.

I am delighted to announce that Professor Brendan McCormack will be joining the Faculty later this year as a University of Sydney Visiting Fellow. Professor McCormack, from the University of Ulster, is internationally renowned for his work in the practice development area. During his Visiting Fellowship, Professor McCormack will be working with staff from the Faculty and from Prince of Wales Hospital. More details of Professor McCormack's visit will follow.

In collaboration with the Children's Hospital at Westmead and the Gosford and Prince of Wales Hospitals, the Faculty will be hosting two colleagues from Professor McCormack's Unit in May and June this year. Margaret Devlin and Christine Boomer will be working with staff from each of the hospitals on practice development. We are looking forward to their visit and the opportunity to share their work.

In this edition we continue to profile research students and new staff at the Faculty. Firstly we congratulate Ester Carman for her outstanding achievements in her BN Honours degree. Ester gained First Class Honours and will also receive a University Medal. Ester's project was strongly imbedded in the clinical setting, with strong support from colleagues in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at RPAH's Women and Babies. Congratulations also to her supervisors, Drs Sandie Bredemyer and Maureen Boughton.

Also congratulations to Professor Stainton and colleagues from Royal Hospital for Women on their recent grant success for their project: Testing the Feasibility of Introducing an Early Antenatal Intervention to Reduce Postnatal Urinary Incontinence.

A warm welcome to Dr Cannas Kwok who joins the postdoctoral fellow team; she is already making strong headway in establishing international partnerships with colleagues in Asia.

The RDSU will also welcome Dr Libba O'Riordan from the Children's Hospital Westmead and Nerida Bell from the Emergency Department at RPAH who are on secondment to the Unit.

Following the success of our 2005 'Brown Bag' series, it will continue in 2006. The seminars are open to all and visitors are welcome to join any or all of these sessions.

It is clear that it is going to be a very exciting, busy and fun year. The RDSU team are looking forward to working with colleagues to continue to improve health care.

Kate White

Brown Bag research seminars series

Room A2.03/04

12 noon – 1.30 pm

27 April 2006

Dr Cannas Kwok

Breast cancer prevention among Chinese–Australian women

25 May 2006

Dr Michelle Cleary

The patient's view of need and caregiving consequences: A cross sectional study of acute inpatients with severe mental illness

29 June 2006

Dr Sandie Bredemyer

Transcutaneous measurement of jaundice in the newborn: An evaluation of clinical accuracy in preterm infants

27 July 2006

Dr Michele Travers

Living in a contested world: The psychosocial consequences for people with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Grant success

Congratulations on successful grants:

Stainton, C., Forder, W. & Jarvis, S. Testing the Feasibility of Introducing an Early Antenatal Intervention to Reduce Postnatal Urinary Incontinence. *Nurses & Midwives Board of NSW – Category 5 Scholarship.* \$19,000.00

Auret, K., White, K., Graham, N., Walker, H. & D'Abrew, N. Learn Now; Live Well: Train the Trainer *Department of Health & Ageing. Local Palliative Care Grants Program Round 2.* \$119,698.00

Research Development and Support Unit



Ester Carman

Ester completed her nursing degree in the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Sydney in 2003. Ester stood out during her program. She received consistent distinction grades and several awards, including recognition on the Dean's List for high academic achievement, an Undergraduate Merit Scholarship (2003) and an Honours Scholarship (2004).

Ester's outstanding achievements continued in the clinical area where she successfully completed the Royal Prince Alfred New Graduate program and was awarded Outstanding New Graduate of the Year (2004). Following clinical rotations through cardiology, gastroenterology, liver and transplant services, Ester transferred to RPA Newborn Care in early 2005.

During this challenging two year transition from new graduate to registered nurse in the highly specialised, complex and technological environment of a tertiary referral service, Ester capped off her undergraduate studies with First Class Honours under the academic supervision of Dr Maureen Boughton and Dr Sandie Bredemeyer. In addition, Ester will be awarded the University Medal (Sydney) for high academic achievement during undergraduate study at the upcoming graduation.

Ester's Honours thesis, 'Use of chlorhexidine as a topical antiseptic for the prevention of nosocomial infection in premature neonates less than 29 weeks gestation: a blinded randomised controlled trial', facilitated the further development of the knowledge and skills necessary for quantitative research. Ester's significant contribution to the project included assistance with: preparation of the research proposal; submissions to RPA and the University of Sydney ethics committees; a successful funding application; approval for use of a non-commercial topical antiseptic in a clinical trial from the Therapeutic Goods Administration; and database management, data entry and analysis.

Ester has also had a literature review on the use of topical antiseptics in the neonatal intensive care unit published and she has presented preliminary work at a State neonatal nursing conference and the Inaugural RPA Women's and Babies Research Showcase.

It is anticipated Ester will continue as co-investigator in the four year chlorhexidine project funded by the Nurses and Midwives Registration Board (NSW) and continue to expand and develop her clinical and academic skills over the course of the trial.

Ester remains a valued member of the neonatal team at RPA Newborn Care and is now focused on expanding and consolidating her clinical skills and knowledge base in this specialty. Ester enjoys the challenge that neonatal intensive care offers; it is a relatively new specialty and is a rich environment in need of research to advance practice and consolidate neonatal nursing theory.

Integrated clinical experience in the final year of a pre-registration nursing program: The students' perspective

Michelle Maw, Jenny Green and Sandra West

It is twenty years since nurse education was formally transferred

from the hospital to the tertiary sector. Despite this, debate about the clinical learning opportunities offered to nursing students continues. Recent reviews of nursing in Australia have revealed a number of educational challenges yet to be addressed by the discipline. In particular, pre-registration student learning within clinical environments and the development of effective models of clinical education remain challenging. These have been targeted as areas requiring further research by the National Review of Nursing Education (2002), the Senate Community Affairs References Committee Report on the Inquiry into Nursing (2002), and the Australian Universities Teaching Committee Report (2002 & 2003).

This study is specifically designed to investigate students' expectations of, and reflections on, integrated clinical practice. Clinical practice and the learning that occurs in clinical environments, is a vital component of pre-registration nursing programs. How this clinical experience is delivered, including the duration and type of supervision required during clinical placements, remains a contentious issue. For several years now universities have been urged to increase the amount (measured in hours) of clinical practice in undergraduate nursing programs, while attention to the spread of experiences and associated learning outcomes for students has been increasingly affected by the current financial and staffing difficulties experienced by the health care sector.

Previously, undergraduate students experienced clinical in block mode throughout their three year degree. Following a period of theoretical input, these students undertook up to four weeks of clinical experience in a single block in the absence of further opportunities for classroom-based discussion and guided reflection on practice. The development of necessary links between classroom

Research Development and Support Unit

Dr Cannas Kwok

The breast is a symbol of beauty, sexuality, and nurturing but it can be a troublesome organ that threatens women's lives.
(Plotkin, 1996)

I grew up with the pain of breast cancer. For ten years, as a young girl and adolescent, I watched my mother being tortured and then killed by this horrible disease. This ineradicable memory, together with the knowledge I later acquired about Chinese women's increased risk of developing breast cancer after migration to Australia, made the promotion of breast cancer prevention my mission in the local Chinese community.

My doctoral study, based on qualitative data, demonstrated that many Chinese–Australian women failed to present themselves for mammography because of their cultural beliefs about the inexorable nature of fate and destiny in the causation of breast cancer. Many believe that breast cancer is a particularly shameful disease because it can imply that the victim has been guilty of immoral behaviour. Consequently, strategies based on the bio-medical model, which seek to promote mammographic screening, are seldom effective.

My doctoral study highlighted that culture has a significant impact on Chinese women's perceptions of breast cancer and breast cancer screening behaviour. A logical next step would be to examine how Chinese–Australian women and their family members, whose cultural background may be significantly different from that of the dominant Anglo–Celtic culture, respond to breast cancer and its treatment.

For these reasons, the study of breast cancer beliefs among Chinese–Australian women is the focal point of my post doctoral fellowship. I will be elaborating the findings by developing a quantitative instrument to survey a much larger group of Chinese women to test how widely the findings apply. This study aims to provide further information which can help design effective breast health education for Chinese–Australian women. The instrument will be administered to Chinese women in Hong Kong and China. By comparing the results in both areas, the findings can examine and support how Chinese–Australian women's belief about breast cancer and its prevention are being influenced by: 1) Western concepts of health promotion particularly in relation to breast health practices influence; and 2) traditional Chinese health beliefs before and after migrating to Australia.

This study will meet a growing need for information on the cultural needs of Chinese–Australian women diagnosed with breast cancer, and provide the basis for developing a culturally sensitive model for providing psychosocial support to this growing population. The study will build to a significant extent, on research undertaken in my doctoral studies, extending this work into areas of cancer diagnosis, treatment and supportive care for Chinese–Australian women.

For further information: cannaskwok@nursing.usyd.edu.au

Dr Cannas Kwok
Post Doctoral Fellow



Continued from page 6

learning and clinical experience became the responsibility of the student. In response to this, and in the context of wider discussion in the nursing literature, the Faculty has reviewed its approach to learning through clinical practice.

Now, over a seven week period of concentrated study focusing on one area of practice, High Acuity Nursing students attend five on-campus study days interspersed with 20 off-campus clinical days. This clinical experience is undertaken in high acuity hospital settings. This pattern of integrated clinical experience was designed to foster discussion of recent clinical experiences with student colleagues and academic staff in the classroom context where underpinning aspects of the processes of clinical reasoning and difficulties encountered in the development of clinical competence can effectively be explored.

There is very little data about how students experience and learn from clinical work organised in this integrated way. This study is specifically designed to investigate students' perceptions in terms of their expectations of, and reflections on, integrated clinical practice associated with a unit of study in their undergraduate degree program. It is intended that a comprehensive view of the students' perspective on this integrated model of clinical education will be determined and that this will provide the discipline with valuable information which can be used to assist in determining the models of clinical education most beneficial for pre-registration student learning in clinical environments.

For further information: mmaw@nursing.usyd.edu.au

Research Development and Support Unit

Conferences and calls for abstracts

11th European Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care. 26 April 2006.

Further information: www.quality.bmjpg.com

12th Annual Hunter Mental Health Conference 'Getting it Right: Acute Care'.

19 May 2006. Further information: www.anzcmhn.org

2nd National MND Conference 'Advances Initiatives and Challenges'.

20 June 2006. Further information: www.mndnsw.asn.au

Evidence-Based policies and Indicator Systems 'What can social science evidence do for the policy making and public services'. 11–13 July 2006, London.

Further information: www.cemcentre.org/EB2006

Pediatric Research Seminar: 'Creating a future for Children and Families'.

21 July 2006

10th National Immunisation. 2nd PHAA Asia Pacific Vaccine Preventable Diseases Conference: Success in Immunisation. 30 July–1 August 2006. Further information: www.phaa.net.au

12th Annual National Health outcomes Conference: Managing Health and Disease in Today's Society 9–10 August 2006. Further information: www.uow.edu.au/commerce.ahoc

4th Australian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care: 'Raising the Bar for Quality'. 21–23 August 2006. Further information: www.aaghc.org.au or www.achs.org.au

Palliative Care Nurses Australia Inaugural Conference: 'Strength in Working Together'. 8–9 September 2006. Further information: www.pallcare.org.au

Ageing, Disability & Spirituality: 'Addressing the Challenge of Disability in later Life'. 26–29 September 2006. Further information: www.centreforageing.org.au

Publications 2006

Kwok, C. (2006). Cultural awareness in breast cancer fight. *Australian Nursing Journal*, 13(8) 33

Recent conference presentations

Lawler, J. (2005) Nursing workforce and professional preparation in a global and competitive economy: lessons to be learned from a case study of The University of Sydney, Australia, 6th Annual Interdisciplinary Research Conference, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin, 2–4 November

White, K., Gregson, J., Hickey, M., Saunders, C. & Emery, L. (2006). Women's Experience of Premature Menopause: Where was the Support? BCN Conference, Sydney, 10 March

Kwok, C. (2006). Screening behaviours among Chinese–Australian women. BCN Conference, Sydney, 10 March

The Nursing History Research Unit



The Director of the NHRU, Emeritus Professor Lynette Russell, has

welcomed the

appointment of Dr Sue Forsyth to the Unit. Dr Forsyth will enhance the Unit's nursing history research experience and support the realisation of the Unit's aims. Her appointment is also a recognition of the importance of the study of nursing history and its relationship to contemporary nursing practice. As with other projects emanating from the NHRU, Dr Forsyth's work will be undertaken in collaboration with the Research Development and Support Unit.

Emeritus Professor Russell is currently working on a history of bush nursing in New South Wales, which will be published in 12 to 18 months time. She will soon travel with her co-researcher and Honorary Archivist at the College of Nursing, Mrs Judith Cornell, to visit some of the retired nurses who worked with the NSW Bush Nursing Association.

Professor Russell has been struck by the number of contacts she has received from people associated with the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery. On this trip Professor Russell and Mrs Cornell will spend some time with a former bush nurse at Darlington Point and, from there, they will travel to Canberra to undertake research into the Association.