

Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards 2019

Recipient Profiles

New to Practice Nurse/Midwife of the Year

Janry Ballesteros, Graduate Registered Nurse, Palmerston Community Care Centre

Since commencing with Palmerston Community Care Centre, Janry has shown strong team orientation and an ability to create cohesive supportive relationships with ease. He has a compassionate, kind and professional approach to meeting the holistic needs of all clients in his care. He sees the 'big picture' view of client care ensuring the client connects to essential services for ongoing care within the community. He has a compassionate and caring nature, which translates into exceptional clinical practice including complex wound management, care planning and management.

Janry strives for excellence in end of life care, supporting and nurturing palliative clients, and immediate and extended family with compassion and a maturity far greater than his years. Janry has shown in starting his career a commitment to excellence in all his endeavours and we look forward to seeing his career develop.

Flinders University Award for Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery Education

Jaya Thomas, Acting Director of Nursing, Clinical Learning Education & Research Service, Royal Darwin Hospital

The results of work that Ms Jaya Thomas led in planning, developing and delivering a new 'Tracheostomy Care Workshop' continue to be realised. This education program brought together all key stakeholders across multiple disciplinary areas and, importantly, included a patient with a tracheostomy, to inform the design and delivery of training.

In the training's design she considered the consumer's journey through the health care system. Consumer involvement enabled health professionals to learn about their experiences, reflect on their own practice and identify improvements.

Through utilising contemporary methods of teaching and learning Jaya has enabled delivery of high quality learning for health professionals with over 200 nurses having participated in the training. This has improved outcomes for tracheostomy tube patients and aids in achieving timely discharge of patients from Royal Darwin Hospital to smaller hospitals or back to communities.

There is now consistency in the standard of care provided, improved communication, and a more collaborative approach between health professionals when they plan care for these patients as a direct result of Jaya's educational program.

Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery Research

Deidre Widdall, Registered Nurse Project Officer, Cognitive Care Project Officer, Cognitive Care Project

Deidre Widdell led the Top End Health Service Cognitive and Delirium Care in Hospital research Project (CDCP) that aimed to raise awareness of cognition as a vital sign and the seriousness of delirium as a medical condition.

Deidre's research helped establish an innovative program for non-pharmacological interventions for essential prevention and good delirium care known as CHAMEOS. CHAMEOS reminds staff the core principles to good care - Communication, Hydration, Activity, Mobility, Evacuation, Orientation, and Sleep (CHAMEOS).

A core part of the research was embedding the findings through education, as a result Deidre now provides ongoing education and support to a group of Cognitive Care Champions, as well as establishing a Cognitive Care Reference Group and a Complex Care Training program for Personal Care Assistants (PCA's). Central Australia Health Service is now implementing project outcomes into the health services to improve cognitive care for all patients.

Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery Leadership

Rhonda Powell, Director of Nursing, Primary Healthcare Top End Health Services

Rhonda is a long term and distinguished leader who, over a number of years, has made a significant and positive difference to both clinical outcomes and the lives of many. Her work in Remote Health is iconic, as is her ability to lead and mentor. She demonstrates high-level management and leadership skills in often extremely challenging environments whilst maintaining strong advocacy for clients and community engagement.

Throughout Rhonda's work history within the Top End she has demonstrated excellence in all aspects of comprehensive mentorship, corporate knowledge and management skills. Rhonda provides effortless strategic leadership in planning and directing Primary Health Care services and resources.

Rhonda has an unassuming nature and is highly regarded by her team, through her actions she role models professionalism and community driven care.

Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery Innovation

Marilou Dellow, Clinical Nurse Consultant, Palmerston Regional Hospital

Marilou performs at a high level and consistently takes an innovative approach to improvements. Just two recent examples include mobility and bowel management. Following much research, Marilou developed a guide for nursing staff to ensure the best possible outcomes for patients in preventing falls and promoting continence. She proactively created posters as visual teaching tools to promote education and learning amongst the nursing staff as well as patients and their families. These are now in use across the rehabilitation and geriatric wards at Palmerston Regional Hospital. Using visual information has improved understanding by staff, patients and their families who are better able to understand the limits of the patient's mobility through the use of these tools. This increased physical activity, contributed to minimising falls, increases patients' and staff confidence, which leads to early discharge and improve quality of life.

Excellence in Aboriginal Healthcare

Trudy Waghorn, Willowra Health Centre Manager, Central Australia Health Service

In the seven years Trudy has been in Willowra she has shown strong engagement and commitment to the community which has resulted in measurable improvements in performance indicators vital to the provision of Primary Health Care.

The relationship that Trudy maintains with the community has improved client access to the health service with increased numbers of client consultations and a patient centred model of care. Trudy has been an advocate for developing the workforce and training new staff including new to remote nurses. In addition, Trudy has mentored and developed several Aboriginal staff. This had led to increased staff satisfaction, retention and stability with staff being mentored to take on higher-level roles.

Trudy has implemented and engaged with the community to form a Local Health Advisory Group that meets regularly to consult on health matters related to the community and provision of care from the clinic directly impacting on health outcomes in Willowra.

Team Award for Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery

Division of Emergency Medicine Nursing Team, Top End Health Service

The Division of Emergency Medicine are a high performing team that provide a single service across two campuses, Royal Darwin Hospital/Palmerston Regional Hospital. In 2018 with the opening of Palmerston Regional Hospital over 100 new nurses were inducted to ensure that both campuses were resourced with an appropriate clinical skill-mix every shift.

During 2018 the Division of Emergency Medicine Nursing Team developed and implemented a suite of new initiatives to improve patient care, including a Virtual Desktop Interface, Electronic Pathology orders and a Navigator role. The team is collaborative, mutually respectful, with nurses working effectively across a multi-disciplinary team.

The team is constantly looking at continuous improvement initiatives, reviewing incidents and near misses, and complaints with the view of developing recommendations for improvement.

Client Appreciation Award for Excellence in Nursing/Midwifery

Elizabeth Hondema Registered Nurse, Gove District Hospital Emergency Department

In December 2018 a client was rushed to Gove District Hospital with severe sepsis. The client who was visiting Nhulunbuy from Victoria, had received a bi-lateral lung transplant in June 2018 and was now critically ill. From the moment the client was rushed into the Emergency Department Liz was outstanding, her clinical expertise and calming approach put the whole family at ease in a very stressful situation. Liz reassured the family multiple times, she was informative and continued to show throughout the entire experience that the client was at the centre of her care. She built trust with the family. Her quick thinking and confidence in her clinical skills helped save the client's life. Of note were her skills, organization, knowledge and genuine care for the client and her family.

NT Administrator's Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Nursing/Midwifery

Brycen Brook Director of Nursing and Midwifery - Primary Health Care, Central Australia Health Service

Brycen Brook started his nursing career in 1973 at the Maryborough Base Hospital where he worked as a Registered Nurse before moving to Alice Springs to take up a position at the Alice Springs Hospital. He has worked in the Territory ever since.

From the late 70's he moved into Remote Health in Papunya and Yuendumu before leaving to study midwifery. He completed his midwifery training at the Westmead Centre in 1982 before returning to Central Australia to take up the role of Remote Area Nurse Manager at Ali Curung.

In the following years he worked at multiple communities within Central Australia where he established reciprocal, respectful relationships and lifelong friendships with Aboriginal Health Workers and community people in general.

Brycen moved to Alice Springs with his family in 1985 where he has fulfilled various positions within Remote Health. In his work as an Aboriginal Health Worker Trainer, he inspired Aboriginal people to train to become Registered Nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers or Aboriginal Community Workers. He believes that to deliver a comprehensive health care/service to Aboriginal people, there must be Aboriginal people employed as a part of the health team.

He was bestowed a skin name while working at Yuendumu and is still known by that name today. Across the Northern Territory, he is known by Aboriginal people who call him by his skin name, which is a testament to the respect bestowed on him, and he to them, this two-way respect is shown in all his interactions.

Brycen has been the Director of Nursing, Primary Health Care, Central Australia Health Service since 2008 and is a very strong advocate for nursing and midwifery in the Northern Territory. He mentors new nurses and ensures they have the appropriate support as he understands and appreciates the complexity of working effectively in remote communities.

Nurse/Midwife of the Year

Jenny Messell, Juninga Service Manager, Australian Regional & Remote Community Services - Aged Care

Jenny has been at the Juninga Centre for 23 years in which time she has shown dedication and commitment to her clients and their families; she role models the values of respect and diversity; creates an accepting workplace culture; delivers the highest quality clinical care; is a natural leader; and has gentle laconic sense of humour.

At the heart of the Juninga Centre is Jenny Messell's dedication to professional service delivery. She has an excellent reputation for nursing professionalism amongst her immediate colleagues, affiliated service providers and the visiting doctors. However, beneath her clinical, administrative and managerial professionalism is her professional care of her clients and their medical, emotional and cultural needs. Jenny knows each of her clients personally, their families and their backgrounds aside from their immediate medical challenges. It is not her position which commands respect rather her innate competence, wisdom and fairness that commands respect and loyalty.

Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards 2019

Jenny is not judgmental and by this promotes a workplace culture, which is accepting and tolerant of a real mixture of people. There is an energy and sense of purpose for all those who work as part of the Juninga team, which is directed, at providing quality care for a diverse group of indigenous clients and their families. Her gentle management style encourages a supportive team environment providing individual care to a varied group of indigenous clients.

Jenny is an exemplary of the nursing profession and is truly deserving of recognition as the Northern Territory's Nurse of the Year 2019.