

MEDIA RELEASE

Nursing staff expand care

8 March 2019

Last year, Murray PHN provided scholarship grants to enable health services to expand their nursing care, with two nurses from Heathcote Health completing the training.

RIPERNS or rural and isolated practice endorsed registered nurses, have undertaken further education to allow them to administer and supply a small and controlled amount of medications without the prescription of a GP or health service doctor.

Murray PHN CEO, Matt Jones, said that the scholarships enabled local health services to expand their nursing care, particularly in regional areas where there is no or limited access to doctors, nurse practitioners, paramedics and/or pharmacists to administer and supply a range of approved medicines.

“RIPERNS help fill the gap in rural settings and improve the availability of medical services. They can treat patients quickly, reducing the time a patient has to wait to see a GP at hospital or the need for a patient to have to travel to a doctor if one isn’t available locally.”

The medications that can be administered or supplied by RIPERNS are for very general low risk conditions such as ear infections, small burns or tonsillitis.

Gerry Canny, Director of Clinical Care at Heathcote Health, said there’s a level of community expectation about what services an Urgent Care Centre can provide.

“The greatest challenge for our nursing staff is to be able to make clinical assessments and decisions while chasing the advice from on-call GPs via telephone.

“Staff jumped at the opportunity to apply for the scholarships to build on their existing skills and experience.

“Now there’s less of a reliance on our on-call GPs, improved relationships between GPs and nurses, and increased skills, confidence and clinical leadership of endorsed nurses.

Murray PHN will offer new RIPERN scholarships later this year. The funding will contribute to tuition costs and course expenses. To be kept up to date with Murray PHN news and opportunities, subscribe to their newsletter: www.murrayphn.org.au/news/newsletter

Contact details

For more details, Amity Bradford, Communications Specialist e: abradford@murrayphn.org.au or t: 0436 820 014.