



Introduction to nursing in general practice

Introduction to general practice
Module 1: May 2010

Learning objectives

On completion of this module participants will have:

- an outline of the Australian health care system
- an appreciation of the role of primary health care in meeting health needs
- an understanding of the multiple role played by practice nurses
- an understanding of the role played by Australian General Practice Network, state based organisations and local divisions of general practice.

Health System



The diagram illustrates the components of a health system. It features three overlapping ovals: a large light blue oval at the top left, a yellow oval at the bottom left, and a pink oval on the right. The text is centered within each oval.

**Hospitals
Acute Care Sector**

Primary Health care

Aged Care

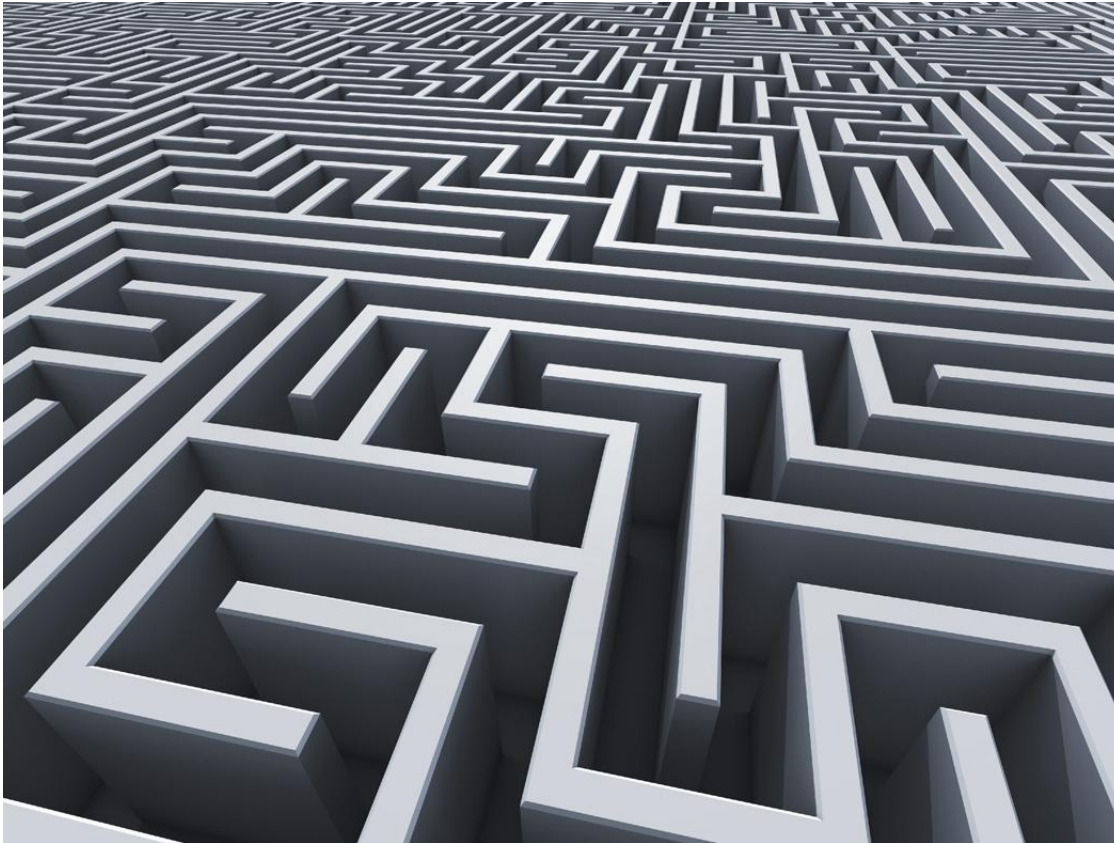
Australian health status

- One of the highest life expectancies in the world
- Current life expectancy
 - 83 years for men
 - 86 years for women
- High level of chronic disease - 7% population and rising
- Increasing burden on the health system

Indigenous population

- ABS Life Expectancy data
 - > 59.4 years for men
 - > 64.8 for women
- more than 17 years < than life expectations for all Australians
- Smoking
- Chronic disease lifestyle

Medicare



Primary health care and general practice

- accessible, clinically and culturally appropriate, timely, affordable
- patient centred, preventive
- well integrated, coordinated continuity of care
- flexible, responds to local needs
- socially appropriate, universally accessible, scientifically sound first level care
- effective and nurturing work environments.

General practice in Australia

- members of the practice team include doctors, practice nurses, practice managers, receptionists and in some practices allied health professionals
- 85% of the general population will visit a general practice annually: it is the most frequent point of entry to the health system
- practice arrangements vary from solo, small or large, in a variety of settings: rural, remote, urban, metropolitan.



Who are practice nurses?

- a registered nurse (Div 1) or enrolled nurse (Div 2) who is employed or otherwise contracted to undertake activities in or for a general practice
- the practice nurse (PN) must be appropriately qualified and trained, including compliance with any state or territory requirements, to provide particular nursing care services.

Practice nursing in Australia

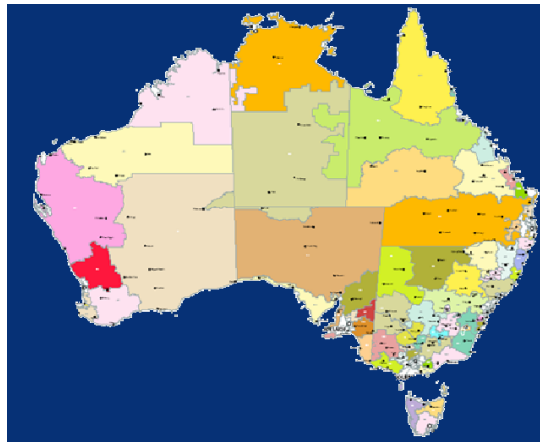
- practice nurses are vital members of the general practice team
- dynamic, vibrant, exciting, multi skilled specialty
- In 2009 there are 8914 PNs compared with 4924 in 2005.
- 56.9% of general practices employ one or more practice nurses
- 84.5% of all practice nurses are registered nurses with 15.3% reporting that they are enrolled nurses
- 79.6% of surveyed nurses worked part-time

Practice nursing dimensions

- **Clinical care:** clinically based procedures and activities
- **Clinical organisation:** management, coordination and a high level administration of clinical activities, particularly the use of a systems approach
- **Practice administration:** administrative support to the general practice as a business enterprise
- **Integration:** effective communication channels within the practice and between the practice and outside organisations and individuals.

General practice Network

- Australian General Practice Network (AGPN)
- state based organisations
- 111 network member organisations



Network NiGP support

- run local network meetings
- provide education and training
- assist with recruitment and orientation
- mentoring
- networking
- development of special interest groups.

Bronwyn McLaren

bmclaren@gpnw.com.au



GENERAL PRACTICE
north west



GENERAL PRACTICE
north