

Media Release

Wheatbelt
GP Network



Building healthy communities through General Practice.

International Nurses' Day – Practice Nurses Making a Difference in General Practice Every Day

Practice Nurses around Australia were celebrated on 12 May - International Nurses' Day for the difference they make to a healthy community says Wheatbelt GP Network chairman Dr Duncan Steed.

"It wasn't that long ago that Practice Nurses were an unusual sight in general practice, but now most of our doctors wouldn't be without this important member of their team,"

Practice Nurse numbers have grown in Australia to about 8000, increasing on average by 1000 every year for the past three years. Practice Nurses are a key member of the general practice team triaging patients, and providing health promotion, illness prevention and treatment services.

"The Practice Nurse role means General Practitioners can focus on more complex medical cases that come through the door, but they also provide assistance to patients who might need extra education about their health condition,"

As chronic disease – like diabetes and heart disease – becomes more prevalent in Australian society, Practice Nurses skills will be needed even more, said Dr Steed

"These nurses have a lot to offer our chronically ill patients. In conjunction with the GP they can help patients to manage their conditions to maintain quality of life, help them arrange services and monitor how they are going with their treatment," he said.

Divisions of general practice around Australia have supported the development of the Practice Nurse role in this country. The Nursing in General Practice program has created education programs for nurses to create a career pathway and helped many general practices to employ their first nurse.

"Our practices which have embraced a Practice Nurse role have found the whole practice has benefited and that leads to better health outcomes for patients. We should all be celebrating the practice nurses in our community" Dr Steed said.



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Wheatbelt GP Network is an initiative of the Central Wheatbelt Division of General Practice Inc (ABN 73 639 952 959)

