



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

General Secretary: Brett Holmes | Assistant General Secretary: Judith Kiejda

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25 July, 2018

Technology transforming nursing practice

Solving nursing challenges and improving lives through the use of groundbreaking technology was explored by industry leaders at the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association's (NSWNMA) 73rd Annual Conference in Sydney today.

Biomedical engineer and inventor, Jordan Nguyen, opened Professional Day, explaining how the convergence of technology, ideas and methodology is improving healthcare and the lives of patients at a rapid speed.

"We're living in the fastest rate of change we've ever seen, so let's learn to embrace that and find out where the opportunities are. Technology is doing a lot of the heavy lifting when it comes to developments," Dr Nguyen said.

Dr Nguyen uses technologies and patterns in data to invent mind-controlled vehicles that are improving the lives of people with physical disabilities.

"The information is there. It's about how quickly we can access it and verify it, and then how we utilise it. This allows us to move into those creative areas and use our imagination to start thinking big."

Donovan Jones, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery and Shanna Fealy, Early Career Researcher and PhD Candidate at University of Newcastle, expanded on the role of technology in teaching nursing and midwifery.

"It's getting harder to avail our students to clinical experiences and we can't simulate them all using task trainers [lifelike models]. For some students, their introduction is the abrupt reality of an actual procedure, which can be confronting," Ms Fealy said.

"We've come a long way in our professional practice – using computer-based virtual worlds to teach our students. We can use this augmented reality technology to teach our students under the premise of mobile health for "anytime, anywhere healthcare" to avail this technology to them."

Safe staffing dominated afternoon presentations with a strong focus on the urgent need for safer staffing ratios and improved skill mix.

Professor and Head of the School of Clinical Sciences, Queensland University of Technology, Dr Lisa Nissen stressed the need for a nationally consistent approach to prescribing medicines by health professionals other than medical practitioners, in order to support safe practice.

"There is a very real risk to patient safety when expanding the role of health practitioners beyond roles for which they are properly trained," Dr Nissen said.

"Where there is an opportunity to expand scopes of practice, it needs a volume of people for system changes. Use the volume and impact you have in the system to make substantial change."

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, NSW Health, Jacqui Cross, used her time to thank nurses and midwives for their work and reminded of professional responsibility.



“We have a collective responsibility – those involved in education, policy, managers and clinicians - to understand and use our standards to inform the way we deliver care. To challenge each other, look at the possibilities and guide our decision making.”

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, reiterated the importance of safe staffing and analysed the professional obligations of nurses and midwives.

“Access to a high standard of healthcare is consistently rated as a top priority for Australians and demand for high quality care in NSW hospitals will continue to grow. We are seeing greater expectations in aged care as well. As nurses and midwives, we are leaders and advocates and it is in these roles that we must insist on being partners in continuous improvement of the systems,” Mr Holmes said.

“If you are a registered as a nurse or midwife, you have a professional obligation to report your concerns if your ability to provide safe care is compromised.

“It is the obligation of any nurse or midwife who identifies a risk, such as inadequate staffing levels or poor skill mix, to take action to try to rectify the issue so the patients we care for are not placed at risk of harm.”

Mr Holmes also acknowledged the role government plays in safe patient care and the need for NSWNMA members to continue to hold it accountable.

“The ugly reality is that we cannot rely on this Government nor on Private Corporations or aged care providers to deliver evidence based nursing and midwifery staffing and skill mix without strong and persistent campaigning. We can make it happen – the evidence is too strong and health matters. It matters to us as individuals and it matters to the community.”

NSWNMA Assistant General Secretary, Judith Kiejda reiterated the theme of Professional Day in her remarks.

“The system is broken and only ratios can fix it. It’s a matter of life or death.”

Tracey Spicer closed day one to a standing ovation, parting conference participants with inspirational advice to campaign for important issues and use the momentum of movements to make their voices heard.

Over 800 nurses, midwives, members and guests from across the state gathered at Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion during Professional Day on Wednesday.

Tomorrow, the NSW Minister for Health, Minister for Medical Research, Brad Hazzard, will address delegates and members.

The 73rd Annual Conference runs until Friday, July 27 at Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion, Sydney.

**** Media Alert ****

Media are welcome to attend public addresses during the NSWNMA’s 73rd Annual Conference in the Grand Pavilion at Rosehill Gardens.

THURSDAY, 20 JULY



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2pm to 2.30pm – The Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research

NB: Notices of motion and General Business items are closed to media. You can also follow the Annual Conference via social media, using [@nswnma](#) and [#NSWNMAConf](#)

MEDIA CONTACT:

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