

MEDIA RELEASE



District Nursing Service – Bringing Care To You

Friday 4th August 2006

Northeast Health Wangaratta District Nurses have been providing care to people in our community for over a century. District Nursing Week was established to promote and recognise the work provided by district nurses. District Nursing Week will be held from 6th - 12th August this year.

District Nursing is the provision of nursing care to people in their own home. The nursing care can be complex and varied. Types of service traditionally provided by the District Nursing Service (DNS) (but not limited to) are:

- Wound care
- Medication administration or supervision
- Diabetes education and management
- Personal care
- General health monitoring
- Palliative care

NHW District Nursing Service Manager Susan Christie explains “the District Nursing Service (DNS) which services the immediate Wangaratta region is a division of the Home Based Nursing and Support Services unit of Northeast Health Wangaratta. The DNS provides care to over 150 clients throughout the Rural City of Wangaratta, as far north as Springhurst, as far east as Everton, as far south as Hamilton Park and as far west as the Warby Ranges”.

NHW District Nursing Service Manager Karen Gunner says “the service strives to provide members of the community with a high quality, professional nursing care for people with short or long term illnesses, people with disabilities and those who are elderly and frail and choose to remain in their own homes”.

As little as seven or so years ago there was no type of home based nursing service in our region other than District Nursing. Today, The Home Based Nursing and Support Services Unit at Northeast Health Wangaratta consists of eight separate services. These are:

- 1) Palliative Care
- 2) District Nursing
- 3) Hospital In The Home (HITH)
- 4) Post Acute Care

- 5) Community Aged Care Packages
- 6) Hospital Admission And Risk Program (HARP)
- 7) Veteran Affairs
- 8) Stomal Therapy

Although these programs have distinct differences in the services they provide, they do work in collaboration with each other to provide holistic and comprehensive care to clients. A client may require and receive service from a single program, or be serviced by multiple programs, depending on their individual needs.

The District Nursing service is sub contracted by other services within Home Based Nursing and Support Services to deliver care for their clients. This means that the district nurses often provide care for clients who are managed by HARP, HITH, Stomal Therapy, Palliative Care, Veteran Affairs and the Community Aged Care Package program. Because of this sub contracting type arrangement, District Nursing is by far the largest of the eight services within the Home Based Nursing and Support Services Unit. DNS currently employs a staff of 20 nurses.