

The Australian Nurse Practitioner; a contemporary context

Alison Bean-Hodges
Chair, Victorian Chapter ACNP
Women's Health Nurse Practitioner

the beginning....

new south wales NP projects commenced in
mid 1990s



catching up.....

victorian NP projects from 1999



across australia today

- first authorized NPs in 2000 & now approximately 440 australian nurse practitioners
- however not all authorized NPs working in NP roles

in april 2010, beautiful tasmania became the
the final state in australia to authorize an
NP



what is the Australian nurse practitioner?

- scope of practice is beyond conventional nursing roles and is governed by ANMC standards and specific organisational requirements
- at least 5 years of advanced clinical practice in speciality before commencing NP candidacy

the australian nurse practitioner

- NP candidacy includes masters program, pharmacology and internship
- specialised practice area & work collaboratively with other disciplines
- provide clinical assessment, diagnostics, prescribing and referral as needed

where and how do we practice?

- most NP roles are located in areas of service gap; domiciliary, outreach, rural and remote
- NP practice underpinned by evidence & improved access to healthcare

current NP roles include palliative care, youth health, sexual health, ICU liaison, wound care, aged care, renal care, remote area care, emergency care



what do our patients think?

- australian and international research findings consistently demonstrate satisfaction with NP care (National Hospitals & Health Reform Commission; Interim Report, 2008)
- 95% of patients “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt confident with care by NP and 90% rated quality of care as excellent or very good (Australian Health Review, 2010, 34, 59-65)

australian healthcare; the big issues

- improved and accessible primary care services, including disease prevention
- improved management chronic disease
- reduced acute hospital admissions for chronic disease or non-acute illnesses
- Increased involvement of multidisciplinary clinicians

australian healthcare; the big issues

- improved and timely access for marginalised, rural & remote consumers and emergency care presentations
- Increased number & retention of the healthcare workforce
- develop and implement national professional standards and accreditation

the role of NPs in addressing these issues

- fill gaps in non mainstream settings eg palliative care, wound care, outreach services
- increase access; multidisciplinary community health centres, primary assessment and triage in tertiary settings, general practice settings

the role of NPs in addressing these issues

- chronic disease assessment, monitoring and case management; heart failure, renal failure & dialysis, diabetes
- provide “clinical practice” career path for nurses
- benchmark and advise national professional standards and accreditation

the australian college of nurse practitioners; key activities

- support evidence based care & facilitate a community of learning
- professional development for members
- engage with governments regarding health policy

australian college nurse practitioners; key activities

- submissions; ehealth, primary healthcare roundtable, national health & hospitals reform commission
- foster interdisciplinary professional relationships

contact

- www.acnp.org.au

- chair, victorian chapter

alison.beanhodes@thewomens.org.au

8345 3139 or 0417 312 360

