INPractice

News from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) | September 2026



Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (SA Branch)

We Are Stronger Together.

www.anmfsa.org.au

Authorised by Adj. Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM, CEO/Secretary, ANMF SA, Ridleyton SA, 5008.

Member Benefits

We are committed to making a positive difference to members lives by providing a holistic suite of benefits that will assist you in reaching your potential, caring for others, and shaping the future of our profession throughout your career journey.

Our five pillars encompass the values we endeavour to uphold to ensure you can make the most out of your membership.



Support

Working tirelessly to make a positive difference in the lives of nurses, midwives, and personal care workers.

- Expert industrial advice regarding wages, conditions, career structures and workloads
- Legal advice and representation for Coronial and Nursing and Midwifery Board inquiries and Return to Work cases through Union Legal SA
- Member Support Portal – providing you with one-on-one support, with 24/7 online access to lodge any personal or group issue
- Support on the go with the new ANMF SA app
- Expert advice and assistance with Work Health and Safety – ensuring nurses, midwives and personal care workers are working in safe conditions
- Professional advice surrounding your registration, reclassification and best practice



Protect

Promoting and protecting the industrial interests of nurses, midwives, and personal care workers.

- $10 million Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Journey Accident Insurance (JAI), protecting your income, for travel to and from work



Connect

Always by members' sides, keeping you at the forefront of the healthcare industry.

- Access to numerous ANMF SA conferences, showcasing innovations in nursing and midwifery, with discounted rates for members
- Access numerous Journals posted to your door and online: ANMJ, INPractice, electronic news & bulletins with breaking news and information



Develop

Equipping nurses, midwives, and personal care workers with the resources they need to progress in their careers.

- Professional Development Support – Access to 282 free Continuing Professional Development (CPD) online tutorials, ANMF conferences showcasing innovations in nursing and midwifery with discounted rates for members, plus face-to-face CPD to achieve your 20-hours CPD annual requirement



Benefit

Ensuring value to members extends beyond the work environment, backing you in life too.

- Free and heavily discounted legal services, including wills and conveyancing, assisting with Return-to-Work claims through our law firm, Union Legal SA
- Discounted holiday homes
- Savings on private health cover with Nurses and Midwives Health
- Save on groceries, fuel, entertainment and dining out with Member Advantage

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO/SECRETARY



Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM
ANMF SA CEO/Secretary

Honouring Our Legacy, Shaping Our Future

This edition of *INPractice* highlights the many ways nurses, midwives and personal care workers continue to shape the future of healthcare in South Australia through leadership, innovation, research, education and advocacy.

Across this edition, you will read stories that demonstrate the strength of our professions and the impact our members make every day, whether at the bedside, in aged care, in the community, through education, or by contributing to the research and policy initiatives that help drive improvements across the health system.

One of the highlights of recent months has been the celebration of ANMEC's 25th anniversary. From its beginnings as a practical solution to a workforce training need, ANMEC has grown into one of South Australia's most respected health and care education providers. For a quarter of a century, ANMEC has played a vital role in developing the nursing, midwifery and care workforce, supporting thousands of students and strengthening healthcare services across our state.

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Join the conversation.

This edition also showcases the importance of research and innovation in advancing our professions. The Four Ps research project highlights the valuable contribution nurses and midwives make through evidence-based practice and the role research plays in improving care outcomes for patients and communities.

Our Annual Professional Conference and Worksite Representatives and Health and Safety Representatives Conference once again brought members together from across the state to share knowledge, develop skills and discuss the challenges and opportunities facing healthcare. These events are a powerful reminder that when members come together, we strengthen not only our professions but also our collective capacity to influence positive change.

We also celebrate the ongoing legacy of former ANMF SA Executive Director Rob Bonner through the Rob Bonner Scholarship, which continues to support professional development and leadership within our professions. Investing in future leaders remains essential to ensuring nursing and midwifery continue to have a strong voice in shaping healthcare policy and practice.

This edition explores emerging opportunities in healthcare delivery, including developments in nurse prescribing and the expanding scope of nursing practice. These advances reflect the evolving role of nurses within the healthcare system and the important contribution they make to improving access to care for the community.

Alongside these achievements, the ANMF SA continues to advocate strongly on behalf of members through the public sector enterprise bargaining process. Following members' decision to reject the state government's final offer, the matter has now progressed to conciliation and arbitration.

While this process can take time, members can be assured that your union remains committed to pursuing the best possible outcomes. Throughout every stage of the proceedings, we will continue to advocate for fair wages, safe workloads, better working conditions and the recognition that nurses, midwives and personal care workers deserve.



ANMEC staff at the 25th anniversary celebration held in September.



ANMEC Director Megan Corlis with Findon Technical College's Tara Budarick and the Department of Education's Gayle Newnham.

As you will see throughout this edition, our professions continue to demonstrate resilience, professionalism and a steadfast commitment to those we care for. Whether through education, research, clinical innovation, workplace advocacy or leadership, nurses, midwives and personal care workers are helping shape a stronger future for healthcare in South Australia.

As always, our greatest strength lies in our collective voice and our commitment to one another.

We are stronger together.

Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM
CEO/Secretary
ANMF (SA Branch)



AGED CARE IS NOT FIXED.

AUSTRALIA NEEDS CARE YOU CAN COUNT ON.

Authorised by Adj. Assoc. Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM,
Branch Secretary, ANMF South Australian Branch, Ridleyton SA 5008

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation
South Australian Branch

Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation



ANMF SA Strategic Lead Industrial Team, Ed Grue, explains how the process works, why evidence matters, and the role members can play.

ARBITRATION:
WHAT IT MEANS FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES

In July, public sector nurses and midwives voted to reject the South Australian Government's enterprise bargaining offer, which included a 16 per cent wage increase over three years and proposed changes to a range of employment conditions.

As a result, the Government has indicated it will seek to have the unresolved matters considered by the South Australian Employment Tribunal (SAET).

While most enterprise agreements are settled through negotiation, there are occasions when the parties are unable to reach agreement. In these circumstances, SAET can assist the parties through conciliation and, if required, determine outstanding matters through arbitration.

ANMF (SA Branch) Strategic Lead Industrial, Ed Grue, said the next stage of the process reflects members' decision not to accept the employer's offer.

"Members made a clear decision that the Government's offer did not meet their expectations," Mr Grue said.

"As a result, the matter is now moving into a different phase, where an independent tribunal will become involved in helping resolve the issues that remain in dispute."

What is South Australian Employment Tribunal (SAET)?

The South Australian Employment Tribunal is an independent body that deals with employment and industrial matters across South Australia.

In this case, SAET's role is to assist the parties to resolve outstanding issues and, if agreement cannot be reached, determine those matters through arbitration.

Importantly, the Tribunal is independent of both ANMF SA and the Government.

The first step: Conciliation

Before any arbitration hearing takes place, the parties will usually participate in conciliation conferences facilitated by a Commissioner of the Tribunal.

Conciliation provides an opportunity for both parties to explain their positions, identify the key issues in dispute and explore whether agreement can still be reached.

The Commissioner does not decide the outcome during conciliation. Instead, they help facilitate discussions, clarify issues and encourage resolution where possible.

"Conciliation is an important step because it provides another opportunity for the parties to explore whether agreement can be reached," Mr Grue said.

"It can help narrow the issues in dispute and identify the matters that may ultimately require determination by the Tribunal."

Support

If some or all issues are resolved during conciliation, those matters may not need to proceed further. If significant issues remain unresolved, the matter may progress to arbitration.

What is arbitration?

Arbitration is a formal process where the Tribunal determines matters that the parties have been unable to resolve.

Unlike bargaining, where outcomes are negotiated between the parties, arbitration involves the Tribunal considering evidence, submissions and legal arguments before making a determination.

"The Tribunal's role is to assess the evidence before it and determine what it considers to be the most appropriate outcome," Mr Grue said.

Any determination made by the Tribunal is legally binding on all parties and generally applies for a nominated period, similar to an enterprise agreement.

Building the case

If arbitration is required, the focus shifts from negotiating outcomes to preparing and presenting evidence that supports ANMF SA's position.

Given the breadth of issues contained within members' Log of Claims, it is unlikely every claim will be the subject of detailed arbitration proceedings. The Tribunal and the parties will work through identifying the key matters requiring determination.

ANMF SA is currently working with its legal team, including solicitors and barristers, to develop the strongest possible case and determine the most appropriate approach to advancing members' claims.

The next stage involves gathering detailed evidence to support the matters that proceed before the Tribunal.

"This is a significant undertaking and will require careful preparation," Mr Grue said.

"Every claim pursued through arbitration must be supported by credible and persuasive evidence."

Evidence matters

One of the key principles of arbitration is that decisions are based on evidence.

While nurses and midwives have strong views about the challenges they face, the Tribunal is required to make decisions based on the evidence presented.

Evidence may come from a range of sources, including:

- Nurses and midwives working across the health system
- Expert witnesses
- Economic and financial analysis
- Recruitment and retention data
- Workforce and workload evidence
- Comparable agreements and industry benchmarks

"The experiences of nurses and midwives working in SA Health will be incredibly important," Mr Grue said.

"But we will also need supporting data, expert opinion and other evidence that demonstrates why change is necessary."

What happens at a hearing?

The Tribunal hearing will follow a structured process.

ANMF SA will make submissions that may include witness statements where necessary, may extend to witnesses being called to provide oral evidence.

Submissions are presented from both parties before the Tribunal considers all of the evidence and arguments presented.

"While it is a legal process, the hearing is fundamentally about testing the evidence," Mr Grue said.

"The Tribunal wants to understand the facts, consider all perspectives and make an informed decision."

The decision

Once all evidence and submissions have been heard, SAET will deliver its determination.

The Tribunal may accept aspects of ANMF SA's position, aspects of the employer's position, or determine an alternative outcome based on the evidence before it.

"The Tribunal is not required to adopt one party's position in full," Mr Grue said.

"It can decide that a different outcome is more appropriate."

Whatever determination is made, it is binding on all parties.

Beyond the tribunal

A Tribunal determination is an important milestone, but it is not the end of the process.

Any new wages, conditions or workplace provisions must then be implemented across the health system and translated into meaningful changes in practice.

This is where ANMF SA members and Worksite Representatives continue to play a critical role by helping monitor implementation, raising concerns and ensuring entitlements are applied correctly.

The importance of member involvement

Throughout the process, members and Worksite Representatives will continue to play an important role by sharing workplace experiences, identifying issues, assisting with evidence gathering and keeping colleagues informed.

ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Assoc Elizabeth Dabars AM said member involvement would remain critical throughout the process.

"The decision by members to reject the Government's offer demonstrated the strength and engagement of our membership," Ms Dabars said.

"While conciliation and, if necessary, arbitration represent a different pathway to resolving this bargaining round, our focus remains on securing outcomes that support nurses, midwives and the communities they care for.

"Members' experiences and ongoing involvement will be central to that work. The strongest evidence comes from those delivering care every day.

"Whatever lies ahead, we will continue working together to ensure the strongest possible case, supported by the best evidence, is put before the tribunal"

Further information.

Interested in becoming a WSR? Follow the QR Code for more information.

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



ANMEC students with South Australian personality Andrew Cosi Costello.

25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE:

CELEBRATING ANMEC'S LEGACY

What began as a practical solution to a training challenge has grown into one of South Australia's most respected education providers for nurses, and care workers.

In 2026, the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Education Centre (ANMEC) celebrates 25 years of delivering high-quality education and helping shape the future health and aged care workforce.

The story began with a simple question. ANMF (SA Branch) was seeking a way to ensure its manual handling training for workplace leaders was formally recognised. After attempts to partner with an existing training provider proved unsuccessful, an unexpected suggestion sparked a new direction.

"A consultant working on the design of our manual handling training said in passing, 'Well you could always apply to become a registered training organisation yourselves'," recalled former Executive Director Rob Bonner. "So, we did."

In 2001, the federation was honoured to be granted its first approval as a registered training organisation, which proved no small feat, having had to submit to a heavy government process involving a state department body.

From there, the beginnings of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Education Centre (ANMEC) – formerly known as Nursing Industry Skills Centre (NISC) – was born.

One of its first major initiatives was the delivery of the No Lift, No Injury workplace health and safety program, which trained hundreds of workplace leaders across the aged care sector. Soon after, ANMF SA was asked by the ANMF Federal Office to lead a pilot traineeship program in aged care, further expanding its educational reach.

Mr Bonner said concerns about the quality of training available in the sector helped drive the development of ANMF SA's first nationally recognised qualifications.

"We had seen some pretty awful training provided to workers in the sector," he said.



ANMEC students in the library in 2015.

Quick stats...

963 students

Enrolments into all programs in last 12 months

633 students

Current enrolments

190 students

Enrolments in 2011

"Those factors triggered the development of our first qualifications in aged care work and the commencement of delivery of a full qualification for the first time.

"We set ourselves the ambition to deliver the program within the funding provided and at a high quality. I like to think that we have delivered on the quality consistently and at a reasonable cost."

As demand grew, ANMEC expanded beyond aged care education. A significant milestone came with approval to deliver the Diploma of Nursing, creating a pathway that has since supported thousands of aspiring enrolled nurses.

Nurse educator Di Nicholls, alongside Cherie Coppins, played a pivotal role in developing the early aged care programs before leading the Diploma of Nursing as its first course coordinator.

While ANMEC has evolved significantly over the past quarter century, its mission has remained remarkably consistent: delivering quality education, supporting students and preparing graduates to enter the workforce with confidence.

For former ANMF SA Executive Director Rob Bonner, ANMEC's success is one of the organisation's most significant achievements, even if its growth was never part of the original plan.

Joining ANMF SA in 1986 with a background in teaching, Mr Bonner played a pivotal role in shaping the organisation's direction during a period of extraordinary growth. Under his leadership, ANMF SA expanded significantly, while continuing to invest in initiatives designed to strengthen the professions and support the workforce.

When the Nursing Industry Skills Centre, later ANMEC, was established, its future scale was difficult to predict.

"I have to say that there was no longer-term vision for the first period of NISC's existence. It continued to evolve, in some cases into areas of teaching that I had sworn were not to be contemplated!" Mr Bonner said.

"ANMEC was never in the early days of its existence intended to be a large arm of the organisation but clearly has evolved to be so in its last decade of existence."

Despite its evolution, Mr Bonner said several principles guided ANMEC from the outset: a commitment to quality teaching, strong curriculum design and delivery, and a focus on producing capable, employment-ready graduates.

Equally important was ensuring the education centre reflected the values and culture of ANMF SA.

"We also wanted to embed the culture of the union within the training centre. I can remember a debate with an accreditation auditor about that. She did not approve," he recalled.

"I compared it with a religious-based school or training service. No one questions the fact that they seek to align cultures with their host organisations and we should be no different. Point accepted."

Being a union-owned training provider presented both opportunities and challenges. Some employers were initially hesitant to partner with ANMEC while simultaneously negotiating with ANMF SA, but those concerns diminished as the quality of the training became widely recognised.

"Gradually that became less of an issue when the quality of the training became more recognised and the partnerships with employers became better established," Mr Bonner said.

"From a union perspective it became a very clear investment in the development of a future workforce in our sectors. It was a way of directly investing in members' capacity and professional development and of embedding our values in students and in the workforce more generally."

Today, those values continue to underpin ANMEC's diverse education portfolio, which includes nursing, personal care, allied health assistance and sterilisation services qualifications. Students benefit from contemporary learning environments, industry-experienced educators and purpose-built clinical facilities designed to prepare them for real-world practice.

Over 25 years, ANMEC has earned a reputation for excellence, receiving multiple industry accolades, including recognition as a South Australian Training Awards Small Training Provider of the Year and subsequent award nominations and wins.



Students completing training exercises.

ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM said ANMEC's success reflects a longstanding commitment to building a skilled, confident and compassionate health workforce.

"For 25 years, ANMEC has played a vital role in shaping the nursing and care workforce across South Australia. What began as a bold idea has grown into a highly respected education centre that has helped thousands of students develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to succeed in their careers.

"We are incredibly proud of ANMEC's achievements and of the graduates who continue to make a difference every day in hospitals, aged care facilities, community services and healthcare settings across the state.

"As we celebrate this milestone, we also recognise the educators, staff, industry partners and students who have contributed to ANMEC's success. Their passion and commitment have helped build a lasting legacy of excellence in education.

"Looking ahead, we remain committed to investing in innovative, high-quality education that supports our professions and strengthens the workforce of the future."

Twenty-five years after a passing suggestion sparked an ambitious idea, ANMEC continues to demonstrate the power of education to transform careers, strengthen professions and improve care for the South Australian community.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL REGISTERED NURSES' ASSOCIATION INC.



2027 Gwendoline Dinah Henderson OAM

Annual Midwifery Scholarships

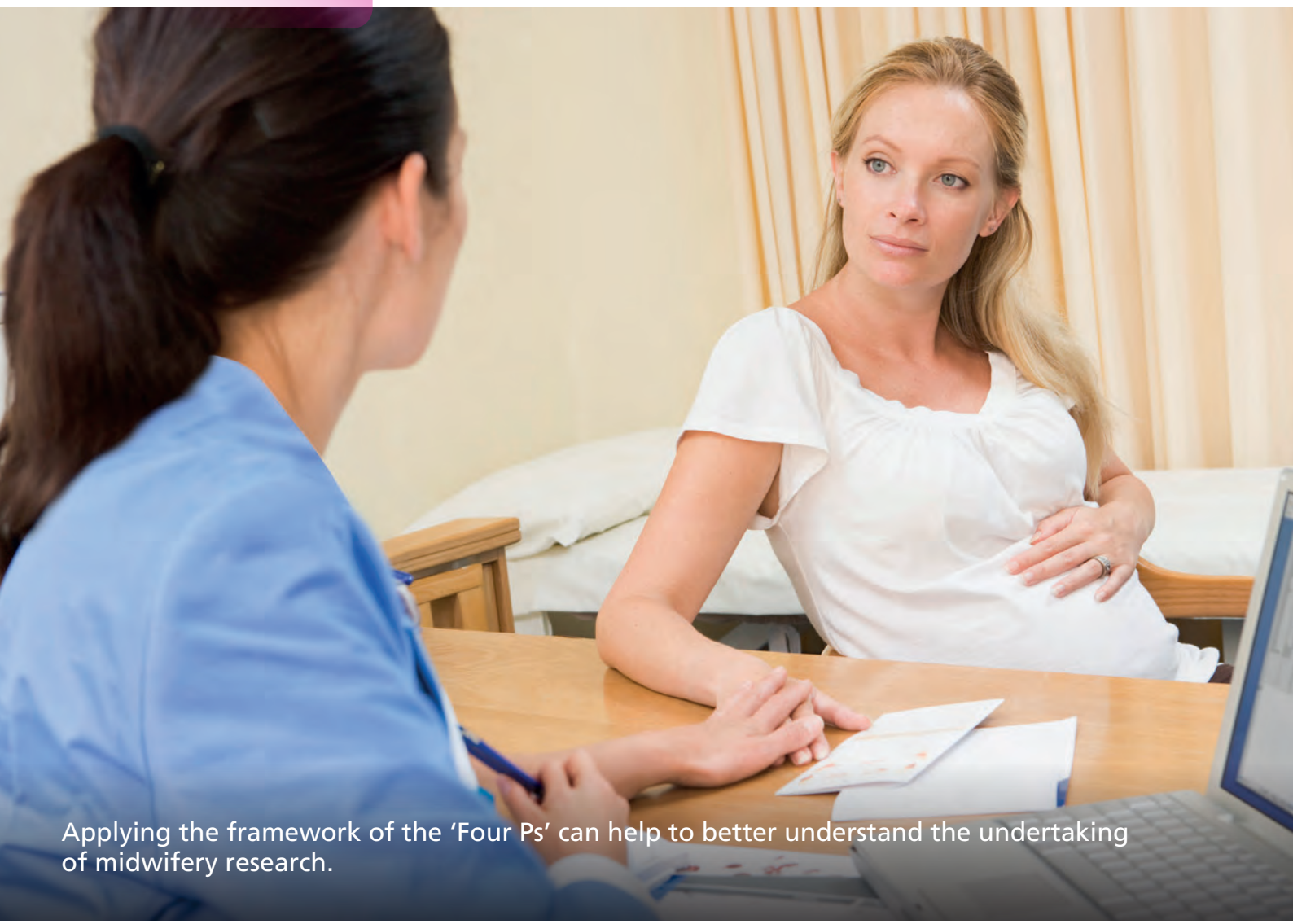
The RAH Registered Nurses' Association is proud to invite applications from Registered Nurses and third (3rd) year direct entry students, living in South Australia, to apply for one of three scholarships to assist with midwifery training. Each scholarship is valued up to $10,000. Registered Nurses or third (3rd) year direct entry students who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are encouraged to apply.

For enquiries or applications, email rahrnassociation@gmail.com or send to PO Box 396, Greenacres SA 5086

Applications to close the 5th March 2027



Gwendoline Dinah Henderson was a highly decorated World War II nurse whose vision was to grant an Annual Scholarship to assist nurses to undertake Registered Midwifery Training.



Applying the framework of the 'Four Ps' can help to better understand the undertaking of midwifery research.

GIVING BIRTH TO EVIDENCE:

THE FOUR PS TO ADVANCE MIDWIFERY-LED RESEARCH

Midwives have always understood that labour progress is rarely determined by a single factor. The well-known framework of the 'Four Ps' reminds us that labour outcomes are influenced by power, passage, passenger and psyche. Perhaps it is time we apply the same thinking to another endeavour that can be equally rewarding, and at times equally challenging: midwifery/midwife-led research.

The profession has never been short of questions. Every day, midwives identify opportunities to improve care, enhance women's experiences and strengthen outcomes for families. Yet too often, these questions remain unanswered. The issue is not a lack of curiosity. Rather, it is whether the conditions exist for research to progress.

The first P, power, reflects the drivers that move research forward. Power in midwifery research is not simply about influence; it is about access to the resources and platforms that enable research to occur and create change. The lack of dedicated roles for midwife researchers and limited investment in midwifery-led research constrain the profession's ability to generate evidence and demonstrate its impact. In clinical settings, midwives often manage heavy workloads, workforce pressures and increasingly complex care, meaning research is sustained through goodwill rather than structured support. To build a strong and sustainable evidence base for midwifery, investment is needed in protected research time, dedicated career pathways, leadership, mentorship and funding for clinician researchers.

ANMF SA has long championed professional development and evidence-based practice, providing an important foundation upon which greater research

capacity can be built. Importantly, ANMF SA also supports the Rosemary Bryant Foundation, the only research funding organisation in Australia dedicated exclusively to supporting nurse and midwife-led research. Through research grants, partnerships and capacity-building initiatives, the Foundation is helping to ensure that nurses and midwives are not only consumers of evidence, but leaders in its generation.

The second P, passage, refers to the environment through which research must travel if it is to have impact. Generating evidence is only the beginning; research must be able to move through organisations, health systems and policy structures to influence practice and improve outcomes. Supportive cultures, investment in research infrastructure, collaborative partnerships and streamlined governance processes create clear pathways for knowledge translation. In contrast, bureaucratic barriers, workforce pressures and limited organisational support can stall progress, leaving valuable evidence unheard, underutilised and unable to shape the decisions that matter most.

Midwifery-generated evidence must be valued, visible and used to inform policy, guide service reform and influence decisions that affect women, babies, families and the profession itself.

The third P, passenger, is critical. In labour, the passenger is the baby. In research, the passengers are both the people and the questions that matter most.

In this sense, 'passengers' should be considered the partnerships, and the inquiry that is generated through them. While capable and supported midwife researchers are critical, we must also recognise the central role of women, families and communities. Consumers increasingly identify the issues that require investigation, highlight gaps in care and help determine research priorities. Their lived experiences ensure research remains focused on what matters most rather than what is merely convenient to study.

Midwives occupy a unique position between consumers and the health system. They hear women's stories, understand their priorities and witness firsthand the opportunities for improvement. The strongest midwifery research emerges when clinicians and consumers work together to identify questions, design studies and translate findings into practice. In this sense, the passenger is not only the midwife researcher but also the women and families whose experiences shape the research journey and whose outcomes ultimately determine its success. Research priority-setting exercises have repeatedly demonstrated the value of bringing clinicians and consumers together to identify the areas where research investment will have the greatest impact.

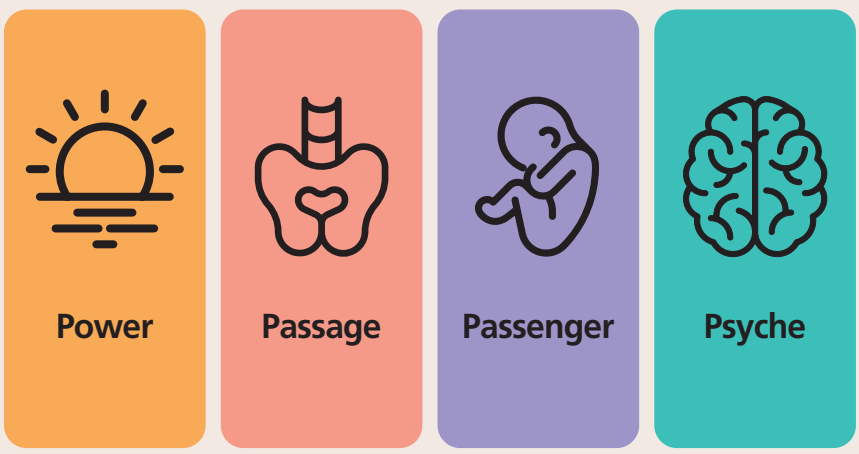
Finally, there is psyche. Arguably the most powerful and least tangible of the four Ps. Psyche is the shared belief system of a profession. It is the collective understanding that research matters, that questioning practice is valuable, and that the discoveries of midwives deserve to be recognised and celebrated. When colleagues, managers, organisations and government embrace this mindset together, research shifts from being an optional extra to becoming part of the fabric of practice. In this environment, midwives are empowered not only to consume evidence but to create it. The future of the profession depends on more than individual researchers; it depends on a collective commitment to fostering, supporting and celebrating the incredible research undertaken by midwives.

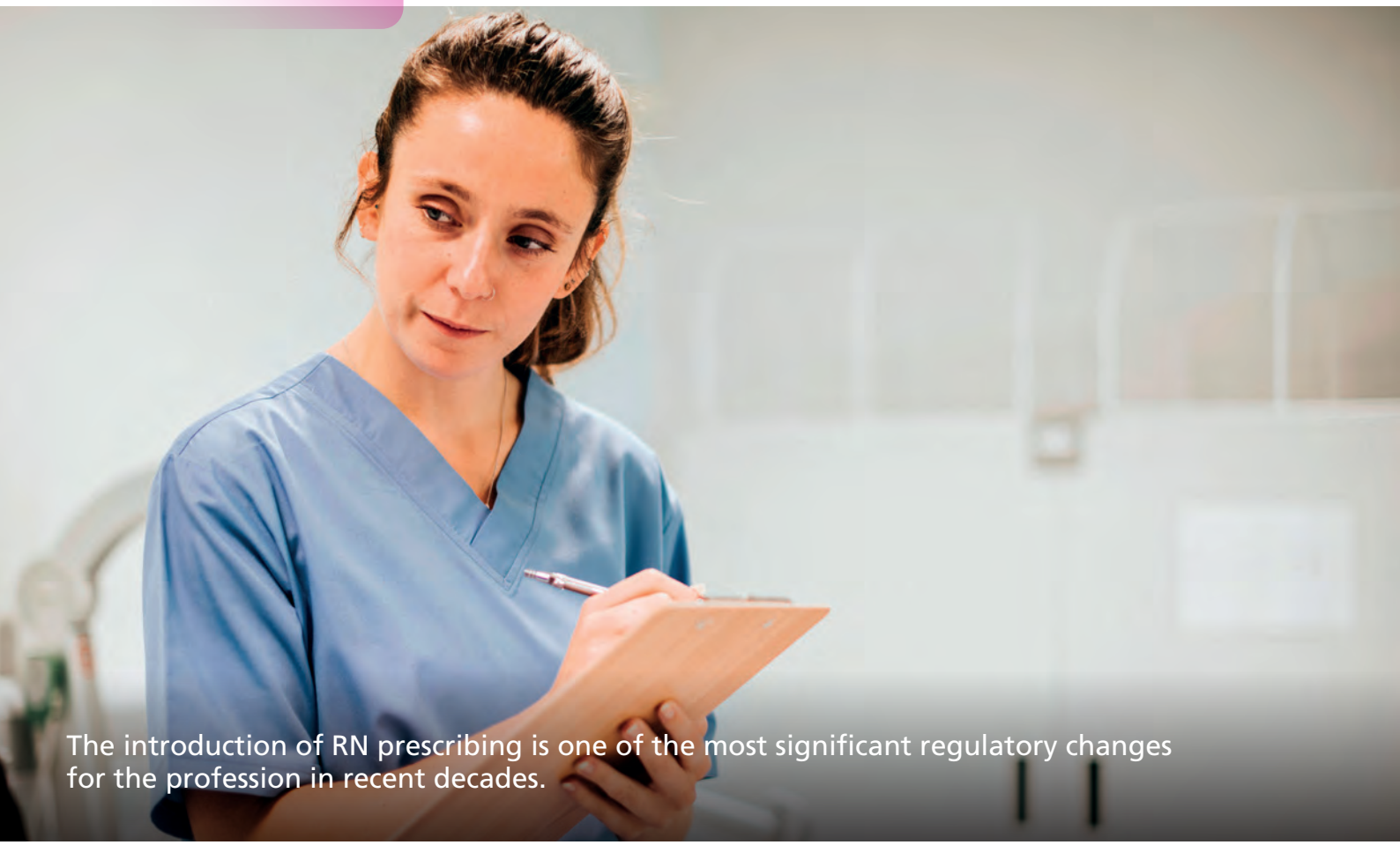
ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM said strengthening research capacity within the profession is critical to improving care and ensuring midwives have a strong voice in shaping the future of maternity services.

"Midwives are uniquely positioned to identify the questions that matter most to women, babies and families. When we invest in research capability, create clear pathways for clinician researchers and foster a culture of inquiry, we strengthen not only the profession, but the quality and safety of care delivered across the health system. Midwives must be empowered to lead research, generate evidence and shape the future of maternity care."

Like labour itself, progress depend on getting the conditions right. When power is harnessed, the passage is opened, the passenger is supported and psyche is strengthened, midwifery-led research can progress from isolated projects to a sustained movement. The evidence we need for the future of maternity care is waiting to be born.

The Four P's





The introduction of RN prescribing is one of the most significant regulatory changes for the profession in recent decades.

REGISTERED NURSE PRESCRIBING:

A NEW ERA FOR NURSING PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA

Australian nursing practice entered a new era on 30 September 2025, with appropriately qualified Registered Nurses now able to prescribe certain medicines within a collaborative prescribing framework.

The introduction of Registered Nurse (RN) prescribing is one of the most significant regulatory changes for the profession in recent decades, recognising the clinical expertise of experienced nurses and creating new opportunities to improve access to healthcare, particularly for communities where timely treatment can be difficult to access.

For many years, nurses have been assessing patients, monitoring symptoms, coordinating care and identifying treatment needs. The new prescribing endorsement builds on these existing clinical responsibilities, enabling eligible nurses to prescribe medicines within clearly defined governance arrangements and collaborative models of care.

Importantly, the reform is designed to complement existing healthcare services and strengthen multidisciplinary care, helping patients receive timely treatment while maintaining high standards of safety and quality.

ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM said the introduction of RN prescribing represented an important milestone for the nursing profession.

"This reform recognises what nurses have long demonstrated through their practice: the clinical knowledge, judgement and expertise to make a significant contribution to patient care. Registered nurse prescribing is about ensuring the workforce is utilised effectively and that patients can access the right care, at the right time, from the right clinician.

"It also creates new career pathways for experienced nurses while supporting more responsive and accessible healthcare services, particularly in areas where workforce shortages continue to impact patient access to treatment."

A New Pathway for Clinical Practice

To become endorsed as a designated RN prescriber, registered nurses must hold unrestricted registration, demonstrate substantial clinical experience and successfully complete a Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA)-approved prescribing education program.

Interest in nurse prescribing is already growing across Australia, with a number of universities now offering approved programs. The availability of local study options in South Australia through Flinders University has created additional opportunities for nurses seeking to expand their scope of practice and develop advanced clinical skills.

For the profession, the endorsement represents more than an additional qualification. It signals a shift towards greater recognition of nursing expertise and a healthcare system increasingly focused on enabling clinicians to work to their full scope of practice.

Supporting safe prescribing practice

Patient safety is at the centre of the Registered Nurse prescribing framework.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) has established a range of safeguards to support the safe implementation of prescribing by registered nurses. Newly endorsed nurse prescribers are required to undertake six months of clinical mentorship with an authorised health practitioner, maintain an active prescribing agreement and practise within an approved governance framework. Authorised health practitioners may include medical practitioners and nurse practitioners.

To maintain endorsement, nurse prescribers must also demonstrate ongoing recency of prescribing practice and complete an additional 10 hours of continuing professional development annually related to prescribing and the quality use of medicines.

These requirements help ensure prescribing decisions remain evidence-based, clinically appropriate and focused on achieving safe, high-quality outcomes for patients.

For nurses considering the prescribing pathway, ongoing education in medicines management and pharmacology will be essential. ANMF (SA Branch) supports members through a range of online CPD opportunities, including medication management and medicines safety modules. These resources provide a convenient way for nurses to strengthen their knowledge, support safe clinical decision-making and contribute towards their continuing professional development requirements.

Members can explore the full range of online CPD offerings via the ANMF (SA Branch) website.

What does this change mean for healthcare?

While nurse prescribing has the potential to deliver benefits across a range of healthcare settings, some of the greatest impacts are expected to be seen in rural and remote communities, primary healthcare services and residential aged care.

In many settings, patients already receive ongoing assessment, monitoring and care from experienced registered nurses. Prescribing endorsement will enable appropriately qualified RNs to initiate and manage medicines as part of that care, reducing unnecessary delays and streamlining treatment pathways rather than requiring patients to access another clinician for routine prescribing decisions.

By enabling experienced nurses to prescribe within collaborative models of care, patients may benefit from more timely access to treatment, improved continuity of care and more responsive healthcare services.

The reform also supports more efficient use of healthcare resources by allowing nurses to work to their full scope of practice while maintaining patient safety and quality use of medicines principles.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation has long advocated for nurses to be enabled to practise to their full scope, and the introduction of RN prescribing represents an important step in that journey.

While the endorsement pathway remains in its early stages, confidence in the model is growing. Early investment by the South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing has supported 14 nurses within the Yorke and Northern Local Health Network to undertake prescribing education. Initiatives such as these will provide valuable insights into how nurse prescribing can be implemented across a variety of healthcare settings and help inform future workforce planning and service delivery.

As graduates of approved prescribing programs begin entering the workforce over the coming years, the broader impact of the reform on patient access, workforce capability and health outcomes will become increasingly clear.

Looking ahead

For registered nurses considering the pathway, prescribing endorsement represents an exciting opportunity to expand their scope of practice, enhance clinical autonomy and further contribute to the delivery of high-quality, patient-centred care.

ANMF (SA Branch) will continue to support members as this important reform evolves through advocacy, professional updates and education. Members interested in pursuing prescribing endorsement are encouraged to review the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) *Registration Standard: Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines – Designated Registered Nurse Prescriber* and the accompanying guidelines for registered nurses seeking endorsement.

Members are encouraged to regularly visit the ANMF (SA Branch) website for information about upcoming education opportunities, webinars and professional development events. As nurse prescribing continues to develop nationally, ANMF (SA Branch) will provide members with the practical information, resources and support needed to confidently navigate the new prescribing framework and its application in everyday clinical practice.



ANMF SA leadership, Worksite Representatives and Health and Safety Representatives at the year's annual conference, held in August.

A NEW ERA OF CARE IN ACTION

MORE THAN 260 DELEGATES GATHER FOR ANMF SA ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

More than 260 nurses, midwives, personal care workers, researchers, educators and health leaders came together for the ANMF (SA Branch) 2026 Annual Professional Conference (APC) and Worksite Representatives (WSR) and Health & Safety Representatives Conference, creating a vibrant forum for learning, connection and professional growth.

Held over two inspiring days, the conference explored

This year's theme, *A New Era of Care: Equity, Innovation and Global Responsibility*, with delegates examining the evolving role of healthcare professionals in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

A diverse line-up of keynote speakers, presenters and panellists challenged attendees to consider how nursing and midwifery can continue to lead positive change across healthcare systems. Discussions focused on some of the most pressing issues facing the professions, including equitable access to care, workforce sustainability, technological innovation and the growing global responsibilities of health professionals.

Through keynote addresses, panel discussions and interactive sessions, delegates were encouraged to look beyond traditional models of care and embrace their roles as advocates, researchers, leaders and changemakers. Conversations highlighted the importance of culturally safe care, collaborative practice and innovative approaches to improving health outcomes for communities both locally and globally.

Beyond the educational program, the conference provided valuable opportunities for networking, sharing experiences and celebrating the achievements of nurses, midwives and care workers from across South Australia. The event showcased the depth of expertise within the professions and reinforced the importance of coming together to learn from one another.

ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Associate Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM said the conference reflected the strength and commitment of the nursing and midwifery workforce.

"The passion, knowledge and commitment demonstrated by delegates reinforced the strength of our collective voice and the impact we can have when we come together," she said.

"As delegates returned to their workplaces, they did so with new ideas, fresh perspectives and renewed inspiration to help shape the future of healthcare. This conference was a powerful reminder that meaningful change happens when we advance equity, embrace innovation and work with a shared sense of global responsibility."

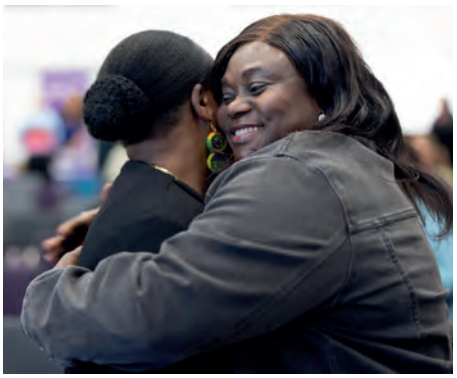
As ANMF SA's flagship annual event, the Annual Professional Conference continues to provide a platform for professional development, leadership and collaboration, equipping delegates with the knowledge and inspiration to help shape the future of healthcare in South Australia and beyond.


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NMH's Jason Garrick, ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Elizabeth Dabars, 2026 Rob Bonner Scholarship recipients Robynn Crowley, Kate O'Leary, Emma Moore and Emily Richards with Leahurst's Jan Thompson.

ROB BONNER SCHOLARSHIP 2025 RECIPIENTS

A NEW REALITY FOR REGIONAL NURSE TRAINING

When logistics proved a barrier to accessing training for staff at nurse-led clinics in Gumeracha, 2025 Rob Bonner Scholarship recipient Erin Lord proposed an innovative solution – using technology to allow them to upskill during a suitable time.

"The way our model of care is structured means we have one nurse on at a time, making getting away for training quite a challenge and educators too costly to attend the clinics regularly for one-on-one sessions," Erin said.

"This posed the question, 'How do we address this gap in an engaging way?'"

Erin dove into research to gain insight into how her nursing counterparts at a global level were solving an issue common to small, regional and remote sites.

She used her findings to develop a proposal to trial an innovative education solution that uses virtual reality (VR) to deliver immersive, flexible training directly on site.

The awarding of a $10,000 Rob Bonner Scholarship allowed her to this year make it a reality for nurses at Gumeracha, and at Strathalbyn.

The model enables nurses to complete short, interactive modules that replicate real-life scenarios such as Advanced Life Support (ALS), mental health assessment, dementia training and deteriorating patient management and uses simulations for clinical reasoning and patient interviewing.

The use of this technology has been successful in providing relevant, high-quality training without requiring staff to travel away from their communities.

The nurse puts on a headset and are taken through realistic scenarios, ranging from a six-year-old child with a sore throat to a patient having an anaphylactic reaction to a suicidal risk assessment.



2025 Rob Bonner scholarship recipient Erin Lord conducting training with a staff member.

They are required to make decision to assess and manage the patient, in realistic scenarios to mimic clinical settings.

Erin said the Gumeracha clinic was the first in the state to use VR technology in this way.

"One of the barriers was working out the launching phase – I found myself thinking what have I gotten myself into as a nurse trying to do something IT-led!," she said.

"Another learning curve was discovering how to be a good VR facilitator and make sure you are getting the most out of the technology."

The resource had been enthusiastically received by staff, who embraced the opportunity to learn on site in a novel way.

"We love it, we're really excited by it. It doesn't feel as intense as some of the other training", she said.

"We don't want to this to replace face-to-face training but complement it."

Following the success, Erin is working towards rolling out the initiative across the LHN, which involved identifying a site champion to lead the project. **For more information contact Erin: erin.lord@sa.gov.au**

Dementia Walking in Their Shoes

How dementia simulation training is transforming patient care

Wearing goggles that distort their sight, headphones that bombard them with competing sounds, gloves that limit sensation and corn kernels in their shoes to throw them off balance, nurses are getting a firsthand glimpse into the challenges of living with dementia.

But while the simulation lasts just 10 minutes, it has exposed nurses within Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN)'s acute and urgent care inpatient areas to the 24/7 reality for patients living with the effects of dementia.

Nurse educators Zoe Hewitt (Royal Adelaide Hospital) and Sharon Berry (Queen Elizabeth Hospital) used a $10,000 grant courtesy of the Rob Bonner Scholarship fund to invest in the dementia simulation experience kits after identifying a gap in training.

These were used during planned study days that also included insights from the carer of a person living with dementia.

The sessions aimed at improving how staff engage and interact with patients, leading to better outcomes and reduced incidents of agitation, distress or injury,

Fifty-six nurses have now undergone the training across three study days, with survey results – conducted before and immediately after training, as well as three months post training – pleasingly showing increases in staff knowledge and attitudes of dementia.

Participants were asked to write down their thoughts immediately after of the sensory-altering simulations, during which they were given 10 tasks to aim to complete, with common terms including "noisy, overstimulated, confused, overwhelming and challenging".

One participant noted that the experience highlighted the internal factors that may be at play during times when it seems as though a patient's behaviour has seemingly "escalated out of nowhere".

"We are hoping to get more nurses on board and ultimately roll the training out across CALHN and beyond," Zoe said.

"One of the key benefits is helping staff feel more confident managing complex behaviours and challenging situations in a safe, supportive learning environment."

"The training reinforces that every interaction with a patient can have an impact. By building skills in communication, empathy and deescalation, we can reduce the likelihood of someone becoming distressed.

"Ultimately, that leads to better outcomes for patients, a safer environment, and a better experience for staff as well."

From paediatric memory books to music therapy: nurse-led innovations awarded scholarships

Four South Australian nurses are set to turn innovative ideas into reality after receiving 2026 Rob Bonner scholarships to support projects designed to improve patient care, support families and strengthen the future nursing workforce.

The scholarship recipients represent a diverse range of clinical settings, but each project shares a common goal: delivering better outcomes for patients and communities.

Emily Richards, Clinical Nurse Student Facilitator at Mount Barker District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital (BHFLHN), will develop a structured nursing work experience program for high school students.

The week-long interactive program will give students firsthand exposure to nursing

through simulation-based learning, clinical scenarios, guest speakers and guided discussions about enrolled and registered nursing career pathways.

Designed to be delivered multiple times each year, the initiative aims to build a stronger pipeline into the profession while reducing the burden on busy clinical staff.

For **Robynn Lindner (Crowley), Nurse Consultant - Retrieval with SAAS MedSTAR Kids**, the focus is supporting children and families during some of their most challenging moments.

Her project will develop a trauma-informed paediatric retrieval memory booklet, or "passport", to help families better understand and process the interhospital retrieval journey. The resource is intended to improve communication, reduce anxiety and emotional distress, and support long-term psychological wellbeing following critical care events.

In the Older Persons Mental Health Unit at Flinders Medical Centre, **Kate O'Leary**, Nurse Consultant, is building on promising early results that show personalised music can reduce distress and improve patient experiences.

Scholarship funding will support a credentialed Music Therapist to provide staff training and bedside mentoring while continuing data collection to strengthen the case for an ongoing role.

Early outcomes have shown reductions in responsive behaviours, restrictive practices and falls, with consumers reporting improvements in mood when personalised playlists are used. The approach offers a meaningful, non-pharmacological alternative that supports dignity, choice and autonomy.

Emma Moore, Nurse Unit Manager of General Medical Ward 2 East at Modbury Hospital (NAHLN), will design and pilot a dementia-friendly inpatient room within an acute hospital setting.

The room will incorporate evidence-based design features including improved lighting, clear signage, contrasting colours, reduced noise and familiar homelike elements. Developed in partnership with clinicians, specialists and consumers, the project aims to reduce anxiety and disorientation while promoting independence, dignity and improved transitions of care.

ANMF (SA Branch) CEO/Secretary Adj Assoc Professor **Elizabeth Dabars** AM said that the projects showcased the breadth of nursing innovation across South Australia,

"What is particularly inspiring about this year's projects is that they address very different challenges, yet all place patients, families and communities at the centre of care," she said.

"From supporting children and families through the trauma of a medical retrieval, to using music as a therapeutic alternative in mental health care, creating dementia-friendly environments and inspiring the next generation of nurses, these projects highlight the creativity, leadership and compassion that nurses bring to our health system every day."

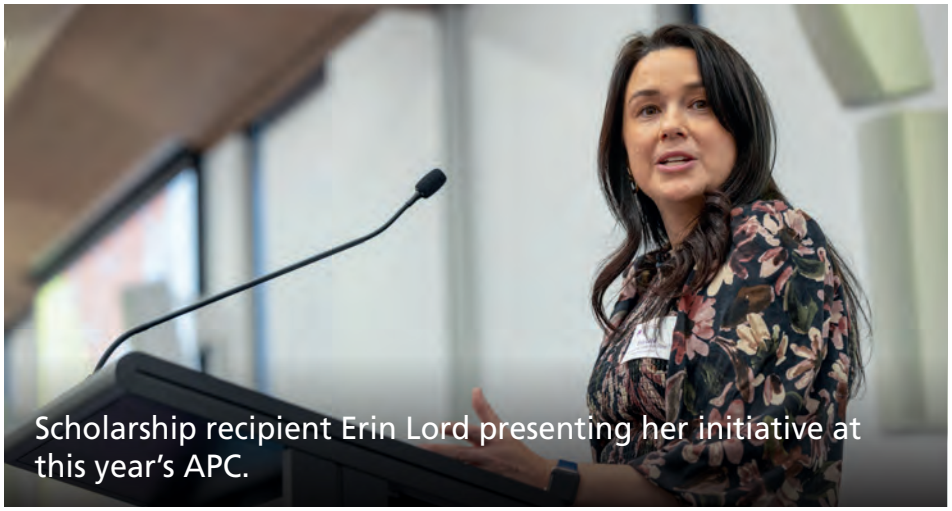
"These scholarships help nurses turn innovative ideas into practical initiatives that can improve experiences, outcomes and workforce sustainability across our healthcare services."

The scholarships highlight the vital role nurses play in identifying challenges, designing solutions and leading improvements that make a lasting difference to the communities they serve.

Thank you to our scholarship sponsors, Leahurst Nurses' Foundation Incorporated, which funded two of this year's scholarships, and Nurses & Midwives Health, which funded one. ANMF (SA Branch) funded the fourth scholarship.



Nurse educator and recipient Zoe Hewitt (left)and Sharon Berry presenting on the dementia training.


Scholarship recipient Erin Lord presenting her initiative at this year's APC.



ANMEC educator Mak Sun delivering the training on site at Kalyra.

AWARD-WINNING PARTNERSHIP

PUTS AGED CARE LEARNING INTO ACTION

A groundbreaking partnership between ANMF (SA Branch)'s education provider ANMEC and aged care organisation Kalyra has been recognised with a prestigious industry award, highlighting the potential of innovative workforce development models to help address the growing demand for skilled aged care workers in South Australia.

The joint initiative, developed through a Skills SA-funded Course Development Project and delivered in partnership with Kalyra and The Action Learning Institute (ALI), recently received recognition at the Innovation Transforming Aged Care (ITAC) Awards for its innovative approach to delivering the Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing).

An expanded version of the project has also been nominated as a finalist in the Australian Training Awards.

The project was designed to increase workforce participation, strengthen staff retention, reduce time to competency and contribute to building a sustainable aged care workforce for the future.

"At a time when aged care providers across Australia are grappling with workforce shortages, the award recognises a training model that challenges traditional approaches to vocational education," said ANMF SA CEO/Secretary Adj Assoc Professor Elizabeth Dabars AM.

"Rather than relying primarily on classroom-based learning, simulated assessments and evidence gathered outside the workplace, the project placed the workplace itself at the centre of the learning experience."

For ANMEC and Kalyra, the partnership was born from a shared commitment to finding practical solutions that support both learners and the people receiving care.

The pilot focused on home support workers employed by Kalyra, one of South Australia's most trusted aged care providers. Working alongside ANMEC educators and ALI specialists, participants completed their qualification through a workplace action learning model that integrated education directly into their day-to-day roles.

What set the project apart was its emphasis on person-centred learning. Each participant developed and completed a learner-led project designed to improve the quality, safety, independence or wellbeing of a client they supported.

Through consultation with clients, supervisors and other stakeholders, learners identified opportunities for improvement, implemented changes and reflected on outcomes, creating a direct link between training and better care outcomes.

The result was a learning experience that moved beyond theory and simulation to focus on genuine workplace challenges and real-world solutions.

For one student, this meant working with a client living with a chronic health condition who wanted to regain confidence using mobility equipment and return to activities she previously enjoyed. Through careful planning, risk assessment and collaboration with the client's support network, the student helped the client safely resume gardening and undertake community outings independently. The project ultimately improved the client's confidence, independence and wellbeing.

Another supported a client experiencing declining mobility and increasing social isolation. By exploring meaningful activities and introducing new support options, the learner helped the client become more open to using mobility equipment and engaging with the community, contributing to improved social participation and quality of life.

These projects demonstrate the strength of the model, which embeds learning within authentic care relationships and allows participants to see the impact of their developing skills firsthand.

As part of the process, evidence was gathered through real workplace activities, reflective conversations, project documentation, manager feedback and measurable client outcomes.

This evidence was then rigorously mapped against qualification requirements, ensuring participants met national standards while demonstrating competence through actual practice rather than simulated scenarios.

Technology also played a supporting role. AI-enabled tools assisted with transcript review, evidence extraction, assessment mapping and reporting processes. Importantly, these tools were not used to replace professional judgement but to improve consistency, traceability and the overall quality of assessment documentation.

Early results from the pilot highlight why the initiative attracted industry recognition. All 12 participants successfully completed the program, delivering a 100 per cent completion rate.

The model significantly reduced traditional training requirements by integrating learning activities into existing work practices while maintaining robust assessment processes and strong learner support.

The impact was felt not only by learners but also by clients and managers involved in the program.

Participant Emma described the experience as both professionally and personally rewarding.

"This project was really rewarding. I got to understand my client better, build trust, and learn how to balance safety with independence," she said.

"It boosted my confidence and reminded me why I love supporting people to live with dignity and independence."

For ANMEC, the award is not simply recognition of a successful pilot but validation of a model that could help reshape workforce development across the aged care sector.

Following the success of the initial trial, the partnership is already expanding. The next phase will see the model adapted across a broader cross-section of aged care providers, supporting 30 students across four metropolitan and regional settings.

The expansion will help build a shared understanding of how workforce development can be embedded into service delivery while creating a sustainable, sector-ready approach to addressing workforce shortages.



Kalyra staff members took part in training on site.

UPComing

2026

JAN

01
New Year's Day

24
International Day of Education

26
Australia Day/ Survival Day

NOV

11
Remembrance Day

14
World Diabetes Day

25
International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women

DEC

01
World AIDS Day

03
International Day of Persons with Disabilities

10
Human Rights Day

20
International Human Solidarity Day

25
Christmas Day

26
Boxing Day

31
New Year's Eve

Reminder

Public Sector Enterprise Agreement 2025

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