



# Nurses: part of the solution

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# About nurses...

- ▶ 14 May 2018 = 401,944 nurses and midwives registered in Australia
- ▶ Over 80,000 nurses in Australia identify themselves as working in primary health care roles
- ▶ Approx 14,000 nurses working within general practice Approx 63% of general practices employ at least one GPN
- ▶ GPNs likely to have a range of clinical skills and varied scopes of practice depending on their specific nursing roles within the practice, and their personal and professional circumstances

Refs: AML Alliance 2012; APNA 2015; APNA 2014; NMBA 2018

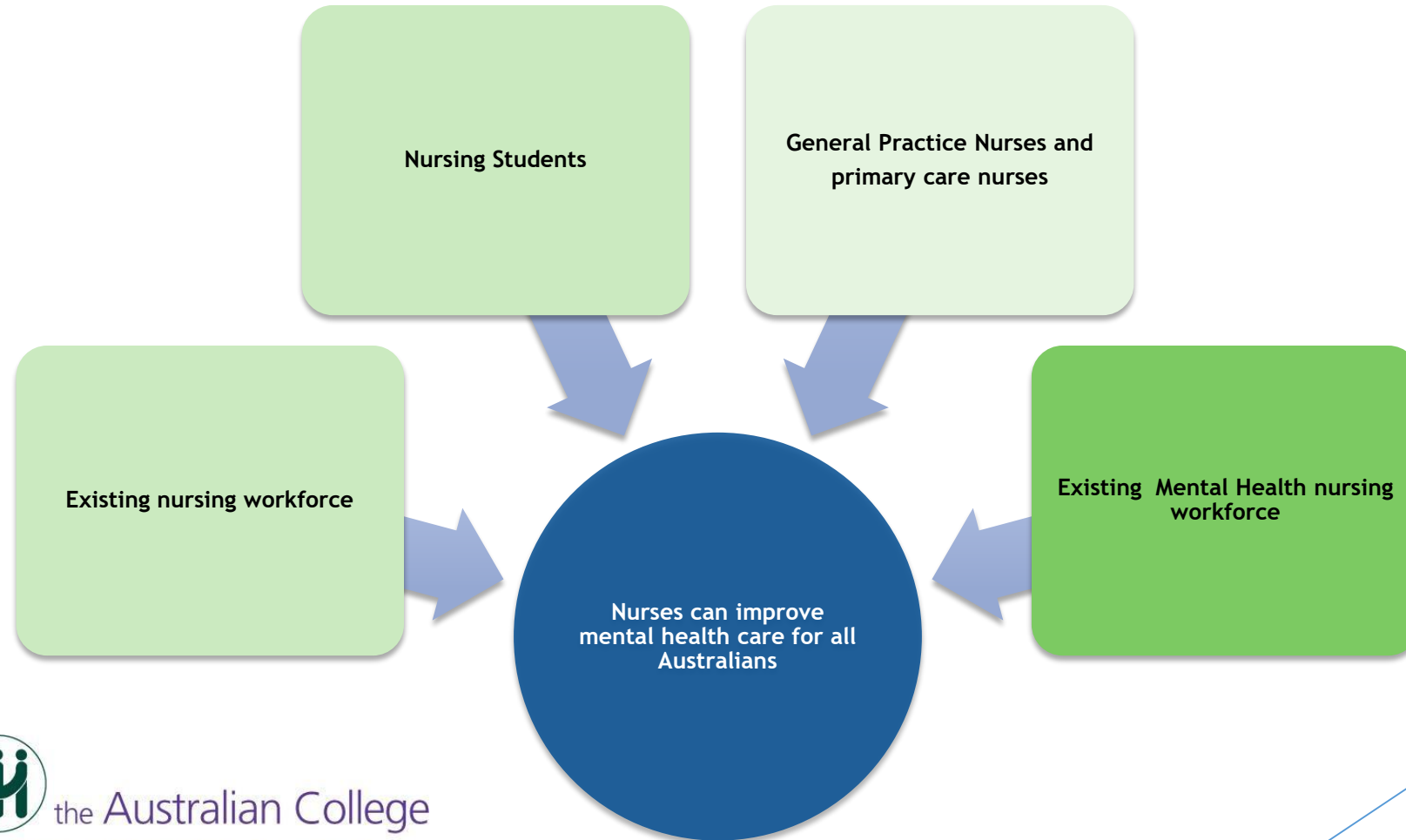


# Why people visit the GP

- Psychological 61%
- Respiratory 55%
- Musculoskeletal 40%
- Endocrine and metabolic 32%
- Circulatory 28%
- Female genital system 22%
- Preventive 18%



# Nurses can improve MH care, integrated mental and physical health care, and access to MH services for all Australians



# Support primary care nurses to provide mental health care in a stepped care approach

## ACMHN Workforce Project 2017-2018

1. Mental Health Practice Standards for primary care nurses
2. Education and training to support primary care nurses work to their scope of practice

This project addresses the wide variation in the capacity and readiness of primary care nurses to provide the required level of integrated physical and mental health care within their scope of practice.

## Mental Health Practice Standards FOR NURSES IN AUSTRALIAN GENERAL PRACTICE



## PC: Level 1 Mental Health Essentials

This introductory mental health eLearning program addresses identification, screening, assessment and care planning, to enable nurses to incorporate mental health knowledge and skills into every day practice.



Not attempted

### PCMHE Module 1: About Mental Health

As a general practice nurse, it is likely that every day you will be working with people who are experiencing or will experience mental illness. Find out about mental health in Australia and the interrelationship between mental and physical health. (30 - 60 mins)

Begin module



Not attempted

### PCMHE Module 2: Mental Illness & Ways to Engage

Explore some of the mental illnesses in more detail and current models of care in mental health. As well explore some practical communication strategies that enhance engagement and facilitate safe, high quality person-centred care. (30 - 60 mins)

Begin module



Not attempted

### PCMHE Module 3: Therapeutic Approaches for Everyday Practice

The focus of this module is on therapeutic approaches that are useful for people experiencing mental health challenges, and what these look like in practice. (30 - 60 mins)

Begin module



Not attempted

### PCMHE Module 4: Mental Health Assessment & Risk Assessment

This module looks at informal and formal mental health assessment, including the principles and practices of risk assessment. As the level of nursing involvement in mental health assessment as part of the healthcare team in general practice varies considerably, the information is deliberately broad and inclusive. (30 - 60 mins)

Begin module



Not attempted

### PCMHE Module 5: Referral, Documentation and Care Coordination

This module addresses the purposes and types of referral, and referral pathways in the stepped-care model, with a focus on documentation. It includes a discussion of care coordination, and the ways in which you, as a nurse working in general practice, are ideally placed to provide care coordination services. (30 - 60 mins)

Begin module

Addressing the health care needs of people at the their point of entry

Early intervention and promotion

Free until 31/12/2018

[www.acmhn.org](http://www.acmhn.org)

A rounded approach to improving both mental health and physical health skills of all nurses

Module 1: About Mental Health

11% COMPLETE

Mental health and mental illness

Mental health of Australians

Physical and mental health interrelationships

Mental health in General Practice

Your role in mental health care

QUIZZES

How did we do?

Assessment quiz

The impact of comorbid mental illnesses on psychological health is also substantial. People with two or more mental disorders are five times more likely (55.9%) than the general population (11.7%) to report high to very high levels of psychological distress.<sup>45</sup>

The reasons for the high rates of chronic disease and reduced mortality in people with mental illness are multifactorial.

**Research suggests that the gap in life expectancy in people with mental illness is largely due to preventable physical illnesses.**<sup>36</sup>

Increased engagement in behaviours that are high risk for chronic disease such as hazardous alcohol consumption, smoking, drug use, physical inactivity, and poor diet contribute significantly to poor physical health in people with mental illness.<sup>24,19</sup>

Module 1: About Mental Health

11% COMPLETE

- People with **mental illness** are almost three times as likely to have **chronic obstructive pulmonary disease** (5.7%) than those without mental illness (2.0%).<sup>45</sup>


Recent research also highlights the influence of psychological determinants on physical health.<sup>44</sup> For example, there is growing evidence to suggest that cardiovascular events and mental disorders share a common epidemiology, and that there is a ‘fundamental pathway’ linking these conditions.<sup>44,46</sup>

*Heather Smith, Nurse Supervisor and Practice Nurse, talks from experience of the devastating outcome of a past mental health condition overshadowing a physical health condition. (1 min 17 secs)*

01:17

# Next steps

## 1. Develop a check list for all nurses in relation to physical health checks



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### PHYSICAL HEALTH CHECK

Premature morbidities related to CVD, diabetes, COPE and cancer are common in people with mental illness. Improving physical health outcomes requires annual:

- Review of smoking, alcohol and drug use
- Blood pressure check
- Cholesterol check
- BMI and waist circumference measurement
- Diet and physical activity review
- Fasting BSL
- Cervical screening/Prostate & testicular exam
- Enquire about cough, sputum, wheeze
- Check accuracy of prescribed medication
- Ask about sexual health side effects of medication

Ref: Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (n.d.) Looking after mind & body: Primary Care Toolkit – Physical Health Checks for people with severe mental illness.

### PHYSICAL HEALTH CHECK

# Next steps

## Mental Health Practice Standards for Midwives

- ▶ Online learning for nurses and midwives supporting practice change through knowledge, confidence and skill development
- ▶ Developed by nurses and midwives to address the unique day to day practice issues faced by nurses and midwives

# EVENTS

#ACMHN2019

Integrated physical  
and mental health  
care

Key Nursing Conferences

2019

ACN

APNA

CATSINaM



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# Thank you!

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