



Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation
NORTHERN TERRITORY

**December 2025
- January 2026**

'NT Chatter'

The Newsletter by
Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation
NT Branch



Heidi Crisp

NT Branch Secretary

secretary@anmfnt.org.au

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Outgoing Branch Secretary | Cath Hatcher

Cath finishes in the office 19th December 2025 after completing a formal handover to Heidi.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for their unwavering support over the past six years during my time as ANMF NT Branch Secretary. It has truly been a privilege to serve in this role. Your encouragement, guidance, and willingness to work collaboratively have made an enormous difference—not only to me personally, but to the strength and effectiveness of our Branch as a whole.

Throughout this period, I have been surrounded by dedicated members, committed colleagues, and passionate advocates who consistently put the wellbeing of our profession and our communities at the forefront. The challenges were many, but so too were the achievements, and each milestone was made possible because of the collective effort and solidarity within ANMF NT.

I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in me, the constructive conversations, the shared determination, and the support offered in moments of pressure and change. These experiences have shaped me both professionally and personally, and I carry forward immense pride in what we have accomplished together.

Thank you for standing with me over these six years—it has been an honour to work alongside you all.

As I move into retirement, my husband and I hope to make the most of our time by travelling around Australia in our caravan, while also supporting his parents as they navigate the challenges of dementia.



Merry Christmas to all.

Wishing you a safe and restful holiday period. Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and continued commitment—especially across this busy time with public holidays and increased service demands. Your efforts are truly appreciated.

Incoming Branch Secretary | Heidi Crisp

Heidi officially commenced in her role as ANMF NT Branch Secretary on 30th November 2025, and her term completes on 29th November 2029.

Dear Members,

I would like to extend my heartfelt and humble thanks to every one of you who supported me and stood beside me throughout this journey. It is an honour to step into the role of ANMF NT Branch Secretary, and I do so with deep gratitude and an unwavering commitment to you.

I am a proud and passionate unionist, I wholeheartedly believe that nurses and midwives are worth every penny of investment. Throughout my tenure, I will work tirelessly to advocate for you; for safe workloads, fair conditions, and the respect our professions deserve.

My background is as an RN/RM. My husband and I arrived in Alice Springs in 2007 for what was meant to be a three-month contract. Eighteen years later, we've raised our family here and grown to love Alice and the Territory deeply.

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from the branch office

I've worked across the Maternity Ward at ASH, in NGOs as a Remote Outreach Midwife and Women's Health Nurse, and most recently in Urban Primary Health as a Lactation Consultant and Child Health Nurse. These experiences remain close to my heart, and they ground the way I lead. I understand the reality of your days — the overtime, the extra patients, the emotional weight, and the exhaustion that follows you home. I see you, and I feel for you, because I have lived it too.

As the holiday season approaches, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas. Please take care, stay safe, and find moments to rest where you can. I am proud to represent you, and I look forward to walking alongside you in the ANMF NT.

Warm regards,
Heidi

NTG Nurses and Midwives EBA

As we prepare for the 2026 NTG Nurses and Midwives EBA negotiations, the voice from NTG nurses will be essential. Shortly, you will receive a comprehensive survey. I strongly encourage you to take the time to complete it. Your responses shape our priorities, strengthen our position, and give us the leverage we need at the bargaining table.

I encourage you to connect within your workplaces: get to know your Job Delegates (often called workplace representatives in other states) or find out if you have one. If your workplace doesn't currently have a Delegate, please consider nominating. Delegates are the backbone of union strength on the ground. You simply need three financial members from your site to nominate you.



Organiser Report

Chiara Caswell | organiser2@anmfnt.org.au

As we are near the end of 2025 and with only weeks until Christmas, ANMF NT Branch would like to take this opportunity to thank all our valued members and Job Delegates (JDs) for their hard work and dedication to making the nursing, midwifery and health care industry the best it can be.

As we do each year, our Organisers have visited Batchelor, Adelaide River, Pine Creek, Katherine, Mataranka, Northeast Arnhem Land, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Darwin and Palmerston.

Our annual Job Delegate training, and Biennial Job Delegate Conference was held in Darwin in May, having the always engaging Genivieve from QNMU deliver important and insightful education on *Workplace Representatives Advanced and Making a Difference - Building a Strong & Effective Union*.

The ANMF Biennial National Conference was held in October, as was the Australian Labour and Employment Relations Association (ALERA) National Conference, attended by our Industrial Organiser Shane.



from the branch office

In November, ANMF and other stakeholders, attended a face-to-face consultation workshop in Darwin to better understand the Vocational Education & Training (VET) sector's research enrolments & completions project. This project is undertaken by HumanAbility, the Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) by the Federal Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. The 5 sectors in focus are Aged Care and Disability Services, Children's Education and Care, Human Services, Sport and Recreation, and Health. Federal funding for this research project is currently until June 2026.

In the context of ANMF, the scope of this research relates to Enrolled Nurses (EN's) Patient Care Assistant's (PCA's), and Assistants in Nursing (AIN's). It was great to discuss the enrolments & completions research workshop project, and the VET Sector more broadly. For further information please visit: <https://humanability.com.au/>. If you are part of the project scope and would like to participate, please refer to the below student survey links:

[Current VET students survey – Fill out form](#)

[Former VET students survey – Fill out form](#)

November also brought the outcome of the ANMF NT Branch Secretary election. Please join us in welcoming our new Branch Secretary Heidi Crisp. Cath's term officially finishes 30th November, and Heidi's commences as of 1st December 2025.

In 2026, our biggest enterprise agreement negotiations for the Northern Territory Public Sector Nurses and Midwives will commence. The current agreement will expire in August 2026 and ANMF NT are already underway consolidating claims that have been put forward. Please keep an eye out for the member survey in 2026.

Our office hours over the holiday period are that we will be closed from 1200 on Tuesday 23rd December 2025 and will open on Monday 0800 on Monday 5th January 2026.



Organiser Report

Liza Licera | organiser3@anmfnt.org.au | P: 08 8920 0706 | M: 0437 821 203

AHPRA's Rapid Regulatory Response Unit and Professional Responsibilities for Prescribing and Dispensing Medicinal Cannabis

In Australia, the regulation of healthcare professionals is overseen by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), which plays a crucial role in ensuring that medical practitioners adhere to professional and ethical standards, especially when it comes to prescribing and dispensing medicinal cannabis. With the growing acceptance and use of medicinal cannabis, AHPRA has developed mechanisms to address regulatory concerns swiftly, including the Rapid Regulatory Response Unit (RRRU), which helps address misconduct or concerns related to healthcare providers who prescribe or dispense medicinal cannabis.

This article explores the professional responsibilities for prescribing and dispensing medicinal cannabis within the framework of AHPRA's regulatory oversight, the role of the Rapid Regulatory Response Unit (RRRU), and how healthcare professionals can ensure they meet their obligations under Australian law and professional guidelines.

Medicinal Cannabis Regulation in Australia

In Australia, medicinal cannabis is regulated under both federal and state laws. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) oversees the approval and regulation of cannabis products for medical use, while individual states have their own rules for access, prescription, and dispensing. AHPRA, together with the Medical Board of Australia and other regulatory bodies, ensures that registered healthcare professionals, including doctors and pharmacists, adhere to the legal and ethical standards governing medicinal cannabis prescription and dispensation.

Under Australian law, medicinal cannabis products are classified as Schedule 4 or Schedule 8 controlled substances depending on their formulation. Healthcare professionals can prescribe these products through Special Access Schemes (SAS) or by becoming Authorised Prescribers, but they must comply with strict guidelines to ensure patient safety and minimize misuse.

from the branch office

AHPRA's Role in Regulating Medicinal Cannabis Prescribing and Dispensing

AHPRA is the central regulatory body for health practitioners in Australia. It works alongside National Boards (such as the Medical Board of Australia and the Pharmacy Board of Australia) to establish professional standards and enforce codes of practice for healthcare professionals, including those involved in prescribing and dispensing medicinal cannabis. Healthcare professionals are required to operate within these standards and legal frameworks to ensure safe, ethical, and evidence-based practices.

Key Professional Responsibilities in Prescribing Medicinal Cannabis:

1. **Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis:** Healthcare providers must thoroughly assess whether a patient is eligible for medicinal cannabis under the relevant regulatory frameworks. This includes evaluating medical history and considering whether other treatments have been ineffective or are contraindicated.
2. **Informed Consent:** Before prescribing medicinal cannabis, healthcare professionals must ensure that patients understand the potential risks and benefits, including side effects, legal implications, and the potential for misuse or dependency. This is an essential ethical requirement for obtaining informed consent.
3. **Adherence to Legal and Ethical Standards:** The healthcare provider must ensure that the prescription adheres to legal requirements. For instance, Special Access Scheme (SAS) or Authorised Prescriber Scheme guidelines must be followed, including completing the necessary documentation and obtaining approval when needed.
4. **Monitoring and Follow-Up:** Healthcare professionals must monitor the patient's progress on medicinal cannabis therapy, checking for efficacy, side effects, and signs of misuse. Regular follow-up appointments and ongoing assessment are necessary to adjust doses and treatment plans as needed.
5. **Professional Development and Education:** Given the evolving research and regulatory guidelines related to medicinal cannabis, healthcare professionals must stay informed about the latest developments in clinical practice, cannabis formulations, and legal frameworks. A commitment to continuous professional development is crucial.

AHPRA's Rapid Regulatory Response Unit (RRRU)

The Rapid Regulatory Response Unit (RRRU) was introduced by AHPRA to swiftly address concerns related to healthcare professionals' conduct or performance. This unit's role is crucial in regulating the prescription and dispensing of medicinal cannabis, particularly when there are concerns about misuse, over-prescription, or deviation from ethical and legal standards.

The Purpose of the RRRU:

The RRRU exists to address urgent regulatory issues quickly and efficiently, particularly those that may arise from concerns about:

- Overprescription or misuse of medicinal cannabis.
- Failure to adhere to informed consent protocols.
- Unprofessional or unethical conduct by prescribers or dispensers.
- Lack of clinical evidence or justification for prescribing medicinal cannabis.

This unit responds to complaints or incidents and can initiate an investigation into the actions of registered healthcare professionals. The goal of the RRRU is to protect patient safety by ensuring that healthcare providers maintain high standards of care when it comes to prescribing and dispensing medicinal cannabis.

Examples of RRRU Actions:

- **Investigating complaints:** If a complaint is made against a practitioner for prescribing medicinal cannabis outside of the regulatory guidelines or in a manner that poses a risk to patients, the RRRU can initiate an investigation.
- **Taking interim action:** In cases where there is an immediate risk to patient safety, the RRRU can take swift action, such as suspending a practitioner's license or placing them under supervision, pending further investigation.
- **Regulatory Guidance and Support:** The unit also provides support to healthcare professionals who may be unsure of their responsibilities in prescribing medicinal cannabis. Through guidance and education, the RRRU helps professionals better understand the legal and ethical frameworks they must work within.

from the branch office

Professional Responsibilities for Dispensing Medicinal Cannabis

Pharmacists have significant roles in the dispensing of medicinal cannabis and are equally responsible for adhering to the legal and ethical guidelines in Australia. They are required to:

1. **Verify the Prescription:** Pharmacists must ensure that prescriptions for medicinal cannabis are legitimate, comply with the relevant state and federal regulations, and are issued by authorized healthcare providers.
2. **Patient Education:** Pharmacists are responsible for educating patients on the safe and correct use of medicinal cannabis. This includes advising on proper dosage, administration methods (e.g., oil, vaporized form), and the potential risks or side effects.
3. **Monitoring Drug Interactions:** Medicinal cannabis may interact with other medications, and pharmacists must be proactive in checking for potential drug-drug interactions. They must inform patients of these risks and provide appropriate counselling.
4. **Record-Keeping and Compliance:** Pharmacists must maintain accurate records of medicinal cannabis prescriptions and ensure that all dispensed products are compliant with regulatory standards.
5. **Reporting Issues of Misuse:** If pharmacists suspect misuse or diversion of medicinal cannabis, they must report it to the relevant authorities, including AHPRA, to ensure patient safety and compliance with the law.

Ethical Considerations and Challenges

Healthcare professionals face several ethical challenges when prescribing or dispensing medicinal cannabis:

- **Balancing the Benefits and Risks:** Given that medicinal cannabis remains a controversial treatment, healthcare professionals must balance the potential benefits with the risks, such as dependency, side effects, or misuse. This requires a careful, evidence-based approach to prescribing.
- **Ensuring Patient Safety:** Healthcare professionals are expected to prioritize patient safety by continuously monitoring the effects of medicinal cannabis, adjusting dosages where necessary, and ensuring that patients are not exposed to unnecessary risks.
- **Maintaining Professional Integrity:** Prescribers and dispensers must uphold their professional integrity by avoiding financial or personal conflicts of interest, ensuring that prescriptions are made based solely on patient needs and clinical evidence.

Conclusion

In Australia, the AHPRA plays a critical role in regulating healthcare professionals, particularly with regard to the prescribing and dispensing of medicinal cannabis. Through the Rapid Regulatory Response Unit (RRRU), AHPRA ensures that healthcare practitioners adhere to professional, ethical, and legal guidelines. For healthcare professionals, this means staying informed about the evolving landscape of medicinal cannabis and following stringent protocols for prescription and dispensation to ensure patient safety.

With the continued expansion of medicinal cannabis use, healthcare professionals must remain vigilant and adhere to regulatory standards to prevent misuse, overprescription, and other ethical issues. By doing so, they can provide effective, safe, and compassionate care while protecting public trust in the healthcare system.

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from the branch office

Courtesy Matters: Respecting ANMF NT Staff

At the ANMF NT, we are proud to represent and support our members across the Territory. Our staff are dedicated to providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to members every day, often in complex and high-pressure situations. We kindly remind all members to be respectful and courteous when contacting ANMF NT staff. Whether it's over the phone, by email, or in person, treating staff with professionalism and kindness ensures that we can provide the best support possible.

ANMF NT staff work hard to resolve issues and to ensure that members' voices are heard. At times, some matters may take longer than expected, or the outcome may be limited by legislation, workplace agreements, or external processes. Even so, our team will always do their best to guide and assist you.

Everyone deserves to feel safe and respected in their workplace. Just as we advocate for safe and respectful workplaces in nursing and midwifery, we ask the same courtesy be extended to ANMF NT staff.

Together, we can foster a professional, supportive, and respectful environment that strengthens our union and benefits all members.

From Liza



Membership Report

Christina McDougall | membership@anmfnt.org.au | P: 08 8920 0702

Hello members!

I wanted to share some information regarding your ANMF NT Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) if you are to work outside of the Northern Territory.

Financial memberships qualify for PII when working in the Northern Territory only. Any work you outside of NT will require you to get in touch with our office. Please see further information below.

ANMF state and territory branches work autonomously under the ANMF umbrella, and our Membership teams remain in contact for our members who are commencing work outside of their main ANMF branch state or territory to ensure their PII cover.

Working interstate?

You can request a ANMF [Cross Border Agreement](#) which is where your primary ANMF Branch (currently ANMF NT), will ask the State or Territory for your membership to be recognised and you be offered services for up to 12 weeks. If your contract is more than 12 weeks, you will need to request a [Branch Transfer](#).

Cross Border Agreements can be requested to all ANMF branches across Australia. It is as easy as an email to Membership with the details: membership@anmfnt.org.au

Working overseas?

Members volunteering to work as a nurse overseas will also need to contact ANMF NT Membership. You will need to complete our 'Applicability form' as your PII must be checked by our insurer.

Changing work location or employer?

You can update your details on the Member Portal. Log on with your User ID: (member number), and Password: if unknown, select 'Forgot password'.

For any issues logging on to the Member Portal, please contact our office.

Please stay in touch with any changes or questions, we are here to help.

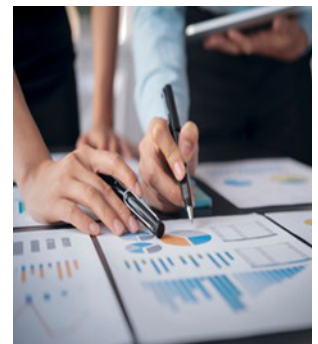
You can email membership@anmfnt.org.au or call: 08 8920 0702.

8am-4pm weekdays.

Kindest regards,

ANMF NT Membership Officer

Christina McDougall



Llorabel reynolds scholarship recipients

Llorabel Reynolds Scholarship Recipients - What it has meant to receive the scholarship

Emil Tabbada

The scholarship granted will greatly assist in professional development. As a nurse who lives in remote NT, I am limited by the tyranny of distance in accessing professional development opportunities available across Australia. The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand as an organisation is in the forefront of advocacy for lung and respiratory health, with numerous interest groups advocating for patients who suffer acute and chronic respiratory conditions. It is a privilege to be part of such an organisation, and to participate in conferences and meetings held by it, not only for the purpose of self-development but also for the purpose of participating in a worthwhile cause.

The conference, personally, allowed me to forward two motions for the ANMFNT Biennial Conference held this year. The motion to legislate the limitation of access of e-cigarettes and vapes for purposes of smoking cessation will hopefully protect adolescents from accessing these products, thereby preventing these from becoming gateway products towards nicotine addiction. The motion to legislate the appointment of lung cancer nurse specialists will greatly assist the nationwide program of lung cancer screening.

Being afforded the scholarship to attend the conference not only resulted in personal career growth, it has also allowed for the development of an ethos that is essential for the growth of the nurse as a moral person that advocates for all Australians with respiratory conditions.

Kathryn Colbert

Attending the *Convergence of Rebellious Midwives Conference* significantly enriched my professional development and brought tangible benefits to the health services I work for. I had the rare opportunity to hear Ina May Gaskin speak—likely her final public engagement—where she shared powerful insights into experiential knowledge and the enduring challenges faced by midwives. Her reflections reinforced the importance of preserving autonomy and wisdom in midwifery care.

Dr. Bashir Kumar Hazard, an Australian lawyer, presented on human rights in childbirth—a topic she became passionate about following the birth of her first child. Her talk highlighted critical issues around informed consent and the rights of childbearing women, which are directly relevant to our practice and policies.

Equally valuable was the networking. Informal discussions over meals and breaks allowed me to exchange ideas with midwives from diverse models of care. We explored funding structures, staffing challenges, and strategies for maintaining sustainability while preserving choice for birthing women.

The knowledge and connections gained are already informing improvements in our program, enhancing care quality, promoting advocacy, and supporting cost-effective, culturally safe maternity services. I'm grateful for the funding support that has enabled this experience and its thought-provoking sessions that have impacted on my practice.

I hope to be able to attend again next year.

Emily McGrath

I've just returned from an incredibly fulfilling week in Noosa, where I attended the Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Clinician Australia Conference. I was honoured to receive a Llorabel Reynolds scholarship from the ANMF NT, which supported my participation in this event.

Clinicians from across Australia and New Zealand came together, joined by keynote speakers from the UK and USA. The theme—"Healing with hope, empowering experts for a safer tomorrow"—set the tone for a diverse range of presentations. Topics included supporting people with intellectual disabilities who have experienced sexual assault, strengthening the nursing workforce through mentorship and technology, trauma-informed clinical strategies, and practical guidance for clinicians appearing in court as expert witnesses. In addition to the high-quality presentations, the conference fostered rich conversations and meaningful networking. It was a valuable space for clinicians working in this challenging field to connect, share, and learn from one another.



Llorabel Reynolds scholarship recipients

Receiving this scholarship has meant a great deal. It provided me the opportunity to share my experiences with colleagues from around the world and to bring new insights back to the Northern Territory, where rates of sexual violence remain among the highest in Australia. I thank you very much for this opportunity.

The next FAMSACA conference will be held in our own backyard, Darwin, in 2027. I look forward to sharing more about the work FAMSACA and working with people who have experienced sexual violence.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have an interest working in this space – I can assure you; we are surrounded by the most compassionate people working for our truly most vulnerable.

Richelle Tabbada

As a Clinical Nurse Specialist in the Ophthalmology Department, attending this conference will be instrumental in enhancing my professional skills and clinical knowledge. It will ensure I stay up to date with the latest advancements in ophthalmology, ultimately translating to improved patient outcomes and care delivery.

This opportunity also supports my commitment to ongoing professional development and helps me meet the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements set by the Nursing and Midwifery Board for my registration. The broad scope of educational content covered during the conference will allow me to gain a wide range of insights in a short period, which I can share with my colleagues upon my return.

Beyond personal development, I see this as an opportunity to serve as a valuable educational resource for both my patients and team. I am excited to bring back new knowledge, techniques, and innovations to our department to benefit both patient care and staff development. It is also an opportunity to develop my practice in providing culturally responsive care for First Nations patients.

It is an investment not only in my professional growth but in the quality of care we provide to our ophthalmology patients.

Anna Huigen

As a Nurse Education Coordinator - Ophthalmology at Alice Springs Hospital, it was very exciting to receive the assistance with funding from the ANMF NT Llorabel Reynolds Nursing Scholarship to attend the Australian Ophthalmic Nurses' Association (AONA) Conference and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmology Congress Conference in Melbourne in mid-November 2025.

The scholarship meant that I was able to afford to attend both conferences - an expensive exercise when travelling from Central Australia as the scholarship paid for the conference attendance fees. Conference attendance meant that I was able to not only learn about up-to-date best practice, projects happening elsewhere, latest research, and latest equipment and medication releases in ophthalmology, but was also able to meet and network with interstate and international eye nursing colleagues.

I also presented a 30 minute session at the AONA conference on "*Vision for Learning: Eye education e-modules for NT Health*". My current work has included developing e-modules staff (*Module 1: Eye Anatomy and Function* published to date) on the MyLearning platform for NT Health who have little or no eye nursing experience but who are involved in patient eye care. The presentation was very well-received with much interest from nurse unit managers in private and public Australian eye health facilities. I was also able to promote the NT as a great place for nurses to come and work.

Thank you very much to the ANMF NT and for the generous Llorabel Reynolds Scholarship funding - it really does contribute to helping increase NT nursing knowledge and skills which I will be sharing with my colleagues back home, plus it's so inspiring to see what is happening in the eye nursing world around Australia and overseas.

Sherine Lauverjon

I am proud to share that I have recently completed my Post Graduate Certificate in Primary Health Care, an achievement that has significantly contributed to securing a permanent position in my current role. This milestone represents not only a professional accomplishment but also a personal journey of growth and resilience.

Llorabel reynolds scholarship recipients

When I first considered enrolling in the program, I felt apprehensive. It had been many years since I last engaged in formal study, and I questioned whether I could balance academic demands with my professional responsibilities. However, I quickly discovered that returning to study was not only manageable but also deeply rewarding. The course provided me with valuable knowledge and practical skills that I now apply directly in my workplace, enhancing both the quality of care I deliver and my confidence as a health professional.

It has shown me that stepping outside of my comfort zone can lead to meaningful opportunities and personal empowerment. I now feel better equipped to contribute to my team, support patients more effectively, and pursue further professional development with enthusiasm. This experience has strengthened my belief in the importance of education as a foundation for career success.

Siji Issac

Receiving the Llorabel Reynolds Nursing Scholarship for 2025 has been an incredible honour and a significant milestone in my academic and professional journey. As an emerging researcher, this scholarship has provided me with the financial support and recognition needed to pursue my academic and professional goals. It has not only eased the financial burden of attending the TSANZSRS Annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide but also opened doors to a wealth of opportunities in the field of respiratory science.

This scholarship has allowed me to connect with leading experts and like-minded individuals, all while gaining exposure to the latest innovations and research in respiratory medicine. The opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research and participate in thought-provoking discussions has been truly inspiring. This esteemed event has broadened my knowledge, deepened my passion for research, and inspired me to continue contributing to the scientific community.

On a personal level, receiving this scholarship has boosted my confidence, affirming that my work and contributions are valued. It has also reinforced my commitment to advancing the understanding and treatment of respiratory diseases. I am immensely grateful for this support, and it motivates me to work even harder toward achieving my long-term academic and research aspirations. The Llorabel Reynolds Scholarship has truly been a pivotal moment in my journey.

Archana Khadka Shapkota

Receiving the ANMF NT Llorabel Reynolds Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship has been both an honour and a transformative opportunity in my professional journey. This generous award represented a significant step forward in my career as a research nurse and will allow me to contribute meaningfully to public health and evidence-based practice. This support has not only eased the financial burden of postgraduate study but has also empowered me to pursue advanced education in public health and health research with greater focus and confidence. This dual degree has equipped me with the skills to better understand population health trends, critically evaluate data, and design research that informs public health policy and practice. The scholarship has given me the opportunity to grow as both a clinician and a researcher. I am deeply grateful to the ANMF NT scholarship committee and all the associated stakeholders for investing in my growth, and I am committed to using this opportunity to give back to the profession and the people we care for.

Stephanie Silva

I am thankful to be receiving the ANMF NT Llorabel Reynolds Scholarship, as this has supported my journey to becoming a specialised nurse. By receiving this scholarship, it has not only eased the financial burden of tuition, but has also allowed me to dedicate more time to my studies and hands-on learning, which is essential for my growth as a clinical nurse specialist.

This scholarship has also motivated me to work harder and strive to make a more meaningful impact within the child and family health field. This scholarship isn't just a financial contribution; it's an investment in my future and the future of those I will care for. I am truly grateful for the opportunity, and I am committed to upholding the values of empathy, hard work, and dedication throughout my nursing career.

news in brief



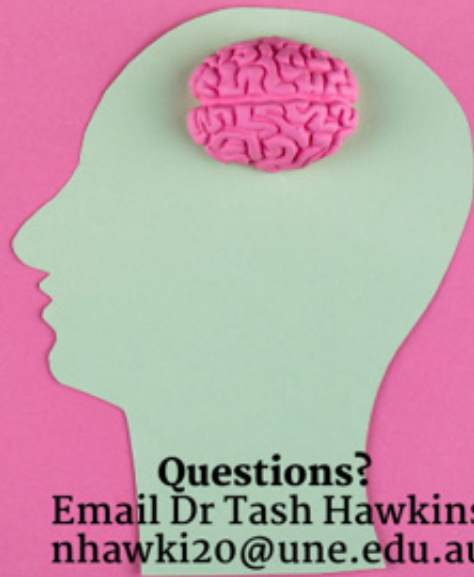
Participate in a Study Exploring the Workplace Experiences of Early Career Neurodivergent Nurses

We invite you to participate in a 20-minute survey exploring your workplace experiences. The findings aim to inform strategies that improve workplace inclusivity, support, and retention within the nursing profession.

Please consider participating if you are:

- An early career Registered nurse (less than 5 years experience)
- Identify as neurodivergent (with or without an official diagnosis)
- Aged 18 and over
- Proficient in English

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Workcover experiences for nurses in the Northern Territory (NT)

Words hold immense power. The language we use and the stories we tell influence emotions, shape identities, and have profound impacts on lives. Words can ignite hope, strengthen resilience, and build connection, but the wrong words deepen feelings of powerlessness and isolation, especially when decisions about a person's life are made without their voice or input.

Imagine being treated as though your qualifications, contributions, and identity mean nothing. Reduced to a passive recipient of care; coerced, restricted, with no advocate, no one to listen, and no recognition of your expertise. Decisions are made about you, not with you. For many nurses and midwives, their profession is more than what they do; it defines who they are. To be unable to work or feel dismissed, left in the dark, and disconnected from decisions about their care disrupts their sense of self. This isolation, feeling cut off, pressured, or ignored, can leave these health professionals questioning their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, profoundly impacting their mental wellbeing.

A recovery-oriented approach holds the power to shift this narrative. This approach has far-reaching implications, transforming individual care and how insurance companies, healthcare providers, and systems interact with people. Recovery-oriented practices emphasise hope, genuine participation, and encouragement, promoting self-determination, dignity, equity, and fairness. These practices prioritise consumer autonomy, not by forcing decisions or restricting options, but by enabling individuals to take control of their care and life choices.

No one should feel labelled, discredited, or judged based on preconceived notions. Yet, many are unfairly treated as malingerers or subjected to scrutiny, with their efforts overlooked and voices unheard. This treatment promotes alienation, erodes trust, and weakens recovery. When individuals feel like bystanders in their own care, the effects ripple across their wellbeing continuum.

True consumer engagement means creating partnerships. It's about respecting people as whole, multifaceted beings, recognising their strengths, and working with them as equal partners in their care. It is about cultivating self-determination, clear and transparent communication, and treating individuals as valued contributors to their own recovery journey.

When individuals are met with respect, empathy, and recognition, hope and optimism can flourish. Recovery becomes more than an aspiration; it becomes a reality, supported by systems that empower, not restrict. Equity, fairness, meaningful participation, and autonomy pave the way toward resilience and healing.

In the Northern Territory and Norfolk Island, are the only jurisdictions that do not align with national legislation, where workers' compensation allows injured workers to accrue and take annual leave and long service leave while receiving incapacity payments. Hopefully, we can work to change this injustice.

Story of an NT nurse with 30 years of experience

A registered nurse recalls, "I just went to work one day, and this is what happened to me." More than two years later, they remain trapped in the WorkCover system. The trauma was from a near miss during a small aeroplane landing, "what happened was next level."

At their last independent medical examination (IME), the psychiatrist's report confirmed they would likely never work again. Their experience with WorkCover has been unrelenting. "It is a powerless experience. I feel no one is in my corner. I am floundering, and I don't know what is happening next." There is no clear path to justice, only constant delays, bureaucratic obstacles, and a system that disregards the profound financial and psychological toll.

With no access to annual leave, sick leave, or superannuation, this nurse reports that the insurance process has been unpredictable, with a secondary claim taking 18 months to be approved. Currently surviving on 75% of their wage and unable to make personal superannuation contributions for two years, their long-term financial security is further compromised. Despite this, the employer continues to classify them as employed, blocking access to superannuation unless deemed in financial hardship.

The nurse lives in a constant state of hypervigilance, with their nervous system entrenched in survival mode. They report persistent chronic pain, exhaustion, and psychological distress that overwhelm every aspect of daily life. Even minor triggers can quickly escalate into intense panic, further reinforcing the cycle of dysregulation and despair.

After years of study, dedication, and sacrifice to their profession, they now feel discarded in their time of need. The final blow came when they were advised to start volunteering, specifically in a dress shop. "I identify as a nurse; I would be going from earning \$130K a year to working in retail." Stripped of financial security, clear guidance, and dignity, they feel they are left trapped in a system that seems designed to break them. They lastly state, "my recovery starts when I am off WorkCover."

news in brief

Story of an NT nurse for over 40 years' experience

WorkCover claims to protect injured nurses, but it serves the organisation, not the employees. Nurses are left feeling powerless, their rights unclear. Complaints feel dangerous. There is no transparency, no clear path forward, only confusion, brain fog, and mistrust. Rehabilitation is not about recovery; it is about control. Support feels like a trick; a scripted promise that fades the moment real help is needed.

The financial strain of WorkCover is brutal. Income barely covers basic expenses, yet nurses on compensation lose superannuation contributions, despite still being employees. This directly undermines long-term financial security, raising questions about how such policies align with future financial planning. Worse still, nurses are often pressured to exhaust personal sick leave for a work-related injury, further depleting their resources. Limited access to human resources, payroll, and salary support adds to the stress, leaving nurses uninformed and without the guidance they need.

Appointments over video calls create another layer of disconnection. Case managers rotate in and out, forcing individuals on Workcover to repeat their story. Return-to-work plans are not designed for healing but serve as rushed, box-ticking exercises before the next person takes over. The pressure is relentless, the process exhausting.

Legal battles are a maze of confusion, filled with too many people and too many moving parts. Speaking up feels like a risk, one misplaced word, and the consequences can be severe.

And then there's the racism. How do you name it? How do you call it out when fear keeps you silent? It manifests as bullying, harassment, intimidation, gaslighting, and lateral violence, yet without the right tools, it stays hidden, dismissed, ignored. At the heart of it all is fear: fear of speaking up, fear of losing a job, fear of a system designed not to heal, but to wear workers down until they give up.

This is not support. This is survival.


Studying through Charles Darwin University (CDU)?

Click on 'Scholarships' on the home page and look for the Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) under External Scholarships.

Click on 'How to apply' or head to: <https://mycpp.cdu.edu.au/>. If the eligibility requirements are met, click on 'Apply Here'.

[Home](#) > [Scholarships](#) > [Commonwealth Prac Payment \(CPP\)](#)

Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP)



The Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) is a government program that offers eligible nursing, midwifery, teaching and social work students financial support while undertaking mandatory placements. This support will enable them to gain practical experience and develop professional competence without feeling financial stress.

Amount	When	How to apply
Receive \$331.65 per week	Effective from 1 July 2025	Applications can be submitted through MyCPP

Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP)

The Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) is a new financial support initiative established by the Australia Government to assist students with the costs associated with undertaking mandatory placements as part of their course. From July 2025, eligible students will be able to access \$331.65 per week while they're undertaking a placement.

To be eligible for the CPP, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a domestic student enrolled in a Commonwealth Support Place (CSP)
- Be completing a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Nursing, Midwifery, Teaching, or Social Work
- Be undertaking mandatory placements that are, on average, 30 hours or more per week for the duration of the placement

Meet one of the following financial criteria:

- Be on a [Commonwealth Income Support Payment](#), or
- Meet the means testing criteria based on
 - [The Need to Work Test](#), and
 - [The Income Test](#)



[Apply Here](#)



KNOW YOUR ANMF NT JOB DELEGATE

Dean John Blackney

Critical care Nurse/Midwife/Paramedic - CareFlight NT

ANMF NT welcome Dean to this vital role in our union's activities.

Job Delegates are the people who work with nurses and midwives to ensure their workplace rights are met. Dean will be the vital link between members, the Organiser and the union office.

Job Delegates always work in close co-operation with the ANMF NT office and ANMF NT Organisers, assisting with effective communications and advocacy on matters of concern.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation is the largest national union and professional nursing and midwifery organisation.

Dean John Blackney has been nominated by your work colleagues for the position of ANMF NT Job Delegate. As Job Delegate Dean will provide support and to be your first point of contact for information and issues about your workplace including:

- Pay issues
- Conditions of employment
- Mediation
- Support/recruitment
- Advice
- And much more.

**AUSTRALIAN
NURSING AND
MIDWIFERY
FEDERATION**
NT Branch



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COMMONWEALTH PRAC PAYMENT

FAQs FOR NURSING & MIDWIFERY STUDENTS

In its 2024-25 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$427.4 million over four years to establish the Commonwealth Prac Payment to support higher education and VET students while undertaking mandatory placements. From 1 July, eligible domestic students will be able to access \$331.65 per week.

What is the Commonwealth Prac Payment?

From 1 July 2025, the Australian Government will provide a new Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) to support nursing and midwifery students while they are undertaking mandatory clinical placements.

Who is it designed to support?

After lobbying from organisations including the ANMF, the payment was introduced to help students experiencing 'placement poverty' manage the significant financial costs associated with completing their placements. These include loss of income from their usual jobs and paying for a range of out-of-pocket costs such as travel and tolls, accommodation, parking and uniforms.

How much will students receive?

Under the CPP, eligible students will receive a weekly amount of \$331.65, benchmarked to the single Austudy rate for 2025.

When does it start?

University students (Bachelor and Masters) will be able to access the CPP from **1 July 2025**. The ANMF recommends that you apply as soon as possible once available via your higher education provider.

For students enrolled in a Diploma of Nursing at TAFE or Registered Training Organisation (RTO), the CPP (VET) is being delivered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. Applications are now [open](#).

How do I know if I am eligible?

- Yes, if you are a domestic student or permanent resident or New Zealand citizen. International students are not eligible for the CPP.
- Yes, if you are enrolled in a nursing or midwifery degree OR enrolled nursing diploma course. You can be studying full or part-time.
- Yes, if you are enrolled in an approved placement unit with a confirmed placement arranged with your education provider.
- Yes, if you are undertaking a mandatory placement that is on average **30 hours** or more per week for the duration of the placement, or:
- Yes, you are undertaking a continuity of care placement (as part of a course of study in midwifery) which prevents the student from being able to maintain paid work due to the need to ensure their availability during the placement.

Yes, if you meet **ONE** of the following criteria:

- Be on a Commonwealth income support payment (eg, ABSTUDY, Austudy, Youth Allowance or DVA Education Allowance). **OR**
- Meet means testing criteria based on how much you work and earn.

What is the means testing criteria?

- You need to work more than 15 hours per week during your normal studies to support yourself financially. You will need to demonstrate you work on average more than 15 hours a week either in the four weeks prior to applying for CPP or the four weeks prior to commencing your placement, (whichever is earlier).

AND

- You do not earn more than \$1,500 per week (pre-tax) on average during the same period. It must include any money earned by scholarships or government assistance.
- There are no assets or partner income tests required.

I have some exceptional circumstances. Can I still apply?

If you're at risk of 'placement poverty' and experiencing exceptional circumstances that prevent you from meeting the income or placement-hours eligibility criteria (but you meet all other requirements), you may still be able to receive the payment.

This could include:

- Where a student has a disability, illness or caring responsibilities and has a demonstrated need to change the number of placement hours to less than 30 hours per week on average as part of reasonable adjustments

Your education provider will assess your application on a case-by-case basis. If your application is accepted, you'll receive payment only for the weeks you were affected by exceptional circumstances.

How do I apply?

- University students apply through their **education provider**. You will be required to apply with supporting documentation **prior** to going on your clinical placement. This information will be relevant to your own individual circumstances. Further details on how to apply will be made available via your education provider.
- For students enrolled in a Diploma of Nursing at TAFE or Registered Training Organisation (RTO), the CPP will be delivered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.
- Applications for the CPP (VET) are now [open](#).
- You cannot apply for CPP placements that occur before 1 July 2025.

Is the CPP taxable?

- The CPP is taxable as income. It is your responsibility to comply with your own tax liabilities and reporting obligations with the tax office.

Will the CPP affect my Income Support Payment?

Students who receive Income Support Payments such as ABSTUDY/Austudy will be responsible for reporting their CPP payments to Services Australia, just like current obligations for other forms of income and financial assistance.

When will I know if I have been successful?

You will receive an email to notify you if you have been successful. If your application is approved, you will receive a single upfront payment for each placement into your nominated bank account. The education provider will aim to provide you with your payment as close to the start date of placement as possible.

What happens if my application is rejected?

Please discuss the outcome with your education provider to understand why your application has been rejected. Normal grievance procedures are allowed for all applications.

Further information

More information about the Commonwealth Prac Payment can be found [here](#).

Authorised by Heidi Crisp Branch Secretary | Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (NT Branch)

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