

Make a choice. Make a difference. Nursing in Victoria.

health

Factsheet 1

Nursing and midwifery A career with choice

Sign up for a career that offers:

- great pay and conditions
- varied roles and work settings
- the chance to work anywhere
- flexibility to work your own hours
- career advancement opportunities.

Match your career with your lifestyle

Few professions can offer the diversity of nursing, allowing you to match your career with your lifestyle.

Varied working hours with the flexibility of shift work means that nurses and midwives can choose to work part-time, leaving time for family commitments, travel or other interests.

Choose diversity

Working opportunities for nurses are diverse.

Nurses can work in hospitals, aged care facilities, community settings, schools, prisons, holiday resorts, cruise ships, large organisations/industries, rural and remote areas and aid organisations to name a few.

While most nurses work in a clinical area providing direct care and health care services to patients and clients, there are also opportunities to work in research, education/teaching, management, quality and risk management and policy areas.

Work anywhere

Nurses and midwives make up the largest health professional group in the world. They are constantly in demand and there are always jobs for nurses and midwives in Victoria, interstate and around the world. The portability of nursing and midwifery offers the choice of where, when and what type of work you do.



Join a respected profession

Nursing is consistently voted as the most ethical and honest profession in Australia. Nurses are highly valued for the range and extent of skills and knowledge they have.

Fast track your career

There are career advancement opportunities in every area of nursing so you can always progress professionally and financially.

Nurse practitioners, for example, are nurses who have reached the peak of clinical practice. They are able to diagnose and manage clients in their own right and have special authority to do things that other nurses do not, such as prescribing medicines.

Nursing and midwifery are well-paid professions. And with allowances for shift work and additional qualifications, there is the opportunity to earn even more.

Make a difference

Nurses and midwives make a positive and lasting contribution, not only to the people they care for, but to the whole community. They do this through their roles as carers, advocates and educators, working within a team of skilled health professionals.

Becoming a nurse

In Victoria, there are two levels of registered nurses:

- Division 1 nurses are degree-qualified through the tertiary education sector (including midwives)
- Enrolled nurses hold a minimum Certificate IV from the Vocational Education Training sector.

Nursing qualifications can be combined with other disciplines like law, marketing, health promotion or psychology, providing even more possibilities for interesting work and dual careers.

Courses for nursing and midwifery combine theory with clinical experience. Student nurses study areas such as nursing practice, anatomy, physiology, ethics, law, physics, chemistry, psychology and communications.

All nursing and midwifery courses include a mandatory unpaid clinical practice component that generally involves spending blocks of time (days or weeks) working alongside experienced nurses or midwives in a range of health service settings.

Enrolled nursing

In Victoria, Enrolled nurses are highly valued and more training opportunities and innovative roles for Enrolled nurses have been created. In fact, Victoria has the greatest number of Enrolled nurses across Australia and we are planning for more.

After completing a Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled/ Division 2 Nursing) and registering with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, Enrolled nurses can begin work in a variety of settings and clinical environments.

Enrolled nurses can develop their knowledge and skills and become responsible for giving medicines, managing intravenous lines and working in acute or specialised areas such as emergency departments, nurseries and maternity units and operating theatres.

Midwifery

In midwifery, there are career pathways both in the hospital and in the community, where midwives care for women through pregnancy, labour and birth, and the postnatal period.

Nurses choosing to become midwives undertake a three-year degree in nursing and then complete a postgraduate qualification in midwifery to become registered as a midwife.

Three-year university degrees in midwifery as well as double degrees (nursing and midwifery) are available in some states including Victoria.

Midwives can work in a range of areas and some midwives go on to complete additional qualifications to work as maternal and child health nurses or in neonatal intensive care units.

Want to know more?

Refer to Fact sheets 2, 3 and 5.

To find out about more about nursing in Victoria, visit www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing

For graduate information, visit the Graduate Careers Australia website at www.graduatecareers.com.au and search 'nursing'.