

ABSTRACT Template

Exploring registered nurses' attitudes towards postgraduate education

Presenting Author: Linda Ng¹, Rob Eley², Anthony Tuckett^{1,3}

¹School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work, The University of Queensland, Australia

²Emergency Medicine Research Program, The UQ School of Medicine –PAH, Queensland, Australia

Email: Linda.Ng@uqconnect.edu.au

Background: Studies have shown specialty nurses require a higher level of academic knowledge that will enable individuals to combine the science and art of nursing. Specialist nurses require advanced education to increase their ability to positively influence patient care, leading to improved care delivery and improved patient outcomes. Despite the increased requirement for PGE for advanced practice, little has been reported on the barriers.

Method: The NATPGE (Nurses' Attitudes Towards Postgraduate Education) instrument was administered to 1632 registered nurses from the Nurses and Midwives e-Cohort Study (NMeS) across Australia, with a response rate of 35.9% (n=568). Data reduction techniques using principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used.

Results: Accounting for 52.5% of the variance of the scale, the analysis identified a three-factor solution for 14 items: 'facilitators'; 'professional recognition'; and 'barriers'. The one higher order factor, representing facilitators to postgraduate education; accounting for 28.5% of the variance: (1) improves knowledge; (2) increases nurses' confidence in clinical decision making; (3) enhances nurses' careers; (4) improves critical thinking; (5) improves nurses' clinical skill; and (6) increased job satisfaction.

Conclusions: The findings from our research demonstrated that registered nurses' pursue postgraduate education because of the consequent influence on patient care, patient outcomes as well as on quality and safety of patient care; and possibilities of career advancement. These findings have the potential clinical and research applications to support registered nurses' pursuit of postgraduate education.