

## ADF NURSES INFORMATION

### NEWSLETTER - March 2005

The Directorate as always remains busy.

The Nursing Officer's Career Structure will again be presented to the Personnel Steering Group (PSG) in May 2005. The three Single Services have been approached and their support for the proposed ADF Nursing Officer Career Structure is still being sought.

The Credentialling Database still requires your assistance to complete the database, 60% response is disappointing after 12 months. Please forward completed Form PM522-1 to Leut Barrett, SO3 Nursing Projects as soon as possible if you have not already done so. This database is utilised by commands to deploy personnel so up to date information is necessary if you want an opportunity to deploy.

Preparation for the 4th ADF Nursing Officer Conference November 08, 10 & 11 November 2005 is well on the way and we have called for abstracts. The theme "Go There with Resolve, Competence, Confidence and Ethics" looks at the Australian military nurse and the professionalism they demonstrate when performing their duties wherever they are.

The Military Nurse Practitioner project continues to gain momentum and remains on a par with State Registration Authorities.

With the increased ADF operational tempo, many of our ADF nursing colleagues continue to serve overseas. As the Directorate receives newsletters from deployed areas these are sent through your HOC/ Sponsors for dissemination to all. Following is a newsletter from one of our colleagues who served in Bana Aceh.

An experience from Banda Aceh.

The following is a recount of the events that placed me as part of the Military Hospital the Australian government sent to an Acehenese province in Indonesia. The personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Health Support Battalion were placed on standby immediately following the tsunami on the 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

A task was asked of me to setup and manage an Intensive Care Unit (ICU)/High Dependency Unit (HDU) in Banda Aceh, Sumatra, as part of the tsunami relief. I watched all of the six o'clock news footage, and listened to the dramatic commentary accompanying the news items, trying to imagine what I would need, to provide relief to a nation shattered by a natural phenomenon. Having been through a few disasters with the Australian Defence Force (ADF) I used that knowledge to gather what I believed would be necessary to provide the *most good for the most people*.

After 16 hours of flying, including two stops along the way, in a cold noisy Hercules C130 transport plane, we arrived at our destination and setup. A group of New Zealand Military Hospital personnel collocated with us and helped establish the ANZAC Field Hospital.



Open for business and soon the first victims arrived. We unsuspectingly accepted several severe cases of pneumonia, associated with the near drowning caused by aspiration of tsunami floodwaters. I say unsuspectingly

because the pneumonia was a particularly virulent one called Melioidosis. This causes necrotizing pneumonia and has 100% mortality.

The first patients were children who survived the flooding only to succumb to the effects of their illness. The longer the children stayed in the ICU/HDU area the better we knew them and the stories surrounding their demise. A language barrier existed and initially it

became difficult to communicate as we were armed with Indonesian dictionaries but these people spoke mostly Achenese. Soon we were able to ask what is troubling them and what are they calling out. Sadly we learned what one little girl had been continually crying out for several days; *'Daddy the water... help me daddy.'* Crushed by this news I suppressed the emotions we all began to feel, and just do the job asked of us.

Following this surprise I noted that many of the patients admitted had lost either one or both parents and often with several members of their family, and we could only guess at the level of grief which surrounded these people.

Exhaustion set in and I realized we had worked without a break for five weeks doing 12 hour shifts and covering two wards with only a sleep day to transition from night duty to day shift. Spirits were low as we had five slow deaths and only two survivors. To help recoup some energy we all took turns to have an overnight stay aboard HMAS KANIMBLA. This recharged the batteries and allowed us to complete our mission.



The days and weeks went by until the time came for me to leave. I go with the feeling of a job well done. We provided a small amount of hope to a country ravaged by unique occurrence; a tsunami. But I leave also knowing that as an individual I will shine in my own way, but as a team our light and warmth were enough to save a nation.

**Richard Delbridge**

Major

Thank you Richard for sharing your thoughts with us all following such a horrific catastrophe.

## THE ADF NURSING OFFICER'S CONFERENCE

Planning for the 2005 ADF Nursing Officer Conference is well on the way and this year's theme "Go There with Resolve, Competence, Confidence and Ethics" provides an opportunity to think out side the box. So start thinking about the papers you wish to submit.

ADF Nursing Officers are held in high regard wherever they serve. Your professionalism and compassion leaves an indelible mark on those who you have the privilege to provide care.

The Call for Abstracts and Registration Form for the next conference have been enclosed below.

4th AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE  
NURSING OFFICERS' CONFERENCE

***"GO THERE WITH RESOLVE, COMPETENCE,  
CONFIDENCE AND ETHICS"***

09 - 11 NOVEMBER 2005

R1 THEATRETTE  
RUSSELL OFFICES, CANBERRA



The Director of Defence Force Nursing is convening the 4th Australian Defence Force Nursing Officers Conference on 09, 10 & 11 November 2005.

**This is a preliminary notice and a call for abstracts.**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS.**

The deadline for the receipt of abstracts is Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005. The abstract should if possible have some affiliation to the conference theme but all submitted abstracts will be considered. The text must be no more than 250 words, highlighting the main points to be communicated and include a presenter profile.

Applicants will be notified if their abstract has been accepted by 14<sup>th</sup> October 2005. Abstracts and expressions of interest to attend the Conference can be submitted by Email to [robin.barrett@defence.gov.au](mailto:robin.barrett@defence.gov.au) or [vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au)

**Surface mail, (please include a copy on disk or CD)**

LEUT Robin Barrett, SO3 Nursing Projects, CP2-7-011, Defence Health Service Branch, Campbell Park Offices, Canberra, ACT 2600. Ph: (02) 6266 4001, Fax: (02) 6266 3784

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE  
THE 4th ADF NURSING OFFICER CONFERENCE  
"Go There with Resolve, Competence, Confidence and Ethics."

REGISTRATION FORM

Theatrette 1, Russell Offices. CANBERRA  
09, 10, & 11 November 2005

Address registration with payment enclosed to the:

Directorate of Defence Force Nursing  
CP2-7- 011  
Campbell Park Offices  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Telephone: (02) 6266 4001 Fax: (02) 6266 3784  
Email: [robin.barrett@defence.gov.au](mailto:robin.barrett@defence.gov.au) or [vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au)

REGISTRATION & TAX INVOICE when payment is made. ABN: 68 706 814 312

Title/Rank: ..... PM Keys .....  
Surname: ..... First Name: .....  
Mailing Address: .....  
Suburb/City: ..... State: ..... Postcode: .....  
Telephone: ..... Fax: ..... Mobile: .....  
E-Mail: .....

**COST:**

Registration Fee \$110 (GST Inc) Dinner Cost \$ 70 (GST Inc) Total Cost \$180 (GST Inc)

**FORUM DINNER:**

I will be attending the Forum Dinner: YES  NO  WITH PARTNER

**CREDIT CARD PAYMENT:** YES  NO

Please debit my: Bankcard,  MasterCard,  Visa Card

Number:     -     -     -

Card holder's Name .....

Card Expiry Date: ..... Total Authorized Amount: \$.....

Signature .....

**CHEQUE PAYMENT:** YES  Amount ..... NO

Please return your registration form and cheque payable to DDFN ADF Nursing Officer Forum.

**UNIT PAYMENTS:** YES  Amount \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Units must pay by Roman into DDFN Costing Code 147200 & Account Code 21926.

Provide your unit's financial information:

Costing Code \_\_\_\_\_ Account Code \_\_\_\_\_

The Receiver of Public Moneys, not DDFN, will issue receipts for payments. Receipts will be issued only to the credit card holder or the person that issued the check.

## DDFN MOVEMENTS

DDFN and SO2 SHI will be presenting papers at the Asia Pacific Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam in May 2005 and SO1 Nursing Projects has deployed OS.

DDFN attended the welcome home function for 1 HSB, the hospital that provided care during OP SUMATRA ASSIST in Banda Aceh. It was a great night and was indeed very pleasing to spend time with both those who deployed and did a fantastic job as well as the staff that remained behind and worked the very long hours to keep the static facility functioning as well as supporting those who had deployed and their families. Amongst the many who attended this function was Mr Ray Martin who had been the journalist/TV presenter we saw nightly on our TV screens where his team showed us what our folks were doing in Banda Aceh. It was obvious from the cheers that went up at the function that the staff of 1 HSB and Ray now have an inseparable bond.

## MILITARY NURSE PRACTITIONER

Previously the Defence Health Service Steering Committee (DHSSC) had endorsed the Military Nurse Practitioner (MNP) concept as part of the enhanced Health Capability Project (JP2060). On 10 December an information brief on the way ahead for the MNP was given to the DHSSC and was once again endorsed. Once the ADF Nursing Officer Career Structure has been accepted by the single Services, the MNP will be further developed. There are issues with Force Structure and SED numbers. Positions have to be identified in each Service for MNP postings. As new developments occur, DDFN will keep you informed.

There are also scholarships available for nurses who are undertaking their masters degree with a view to applying for endorsement as a nurse practitioner. The guidelines and application form can be found on the nursing in Victoria website <http://www.nursing.vic.gov.au/furthering/practitioner.htm> the closing date is 25 March 2005, but as you will know this is Good Friday so effectively this means the closing date is 24 March. Please contact DDFN if you have any queries.

## JOANNA BRIGGS NURSING MANUAL

The responsibility for the promulgation and use of the Joanna Briggs Nursing Manual has been transferred to the DDFN Directorate from JHSA. LT Vanessa Pilla has been appointed the SO4 Joanna Briggs Project within the directorate to manage the contract and assist ADF personnel accessing and using the differing forms of the manual. Please contact LT Pilla on (02) 6266 2528 or [vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.pilla@defence.gov.au). with any concerns you have regarding this manual. More information will available soon regarding this manual.

## ADF NURSING OFFICER CAREER STRUCTURE

The Nursing Officer's Career Structure concept paper will be presented to the PSG (Personnel Steering group) May 2005.