Mental Health Nursing

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN CLINICAL NURSING
COURSE CODE: 1GD019:1GD519
1 year full-time; 2 years part time
External mode
Fees: Commonwealth Grant Supported
Admission is processed by SATAC GradStart
www.satac.edu.au

ABOUT THE STREAM
This stream within the Graduate Diploma and Master of Clinical Nursing will provide nurses with the knowledge and evidence based skills required for working in the specialty area of mental health nursing. This stream will prepare nurses for working in community and tertiary mental health treatment settings, from urban to rural and remote, with clients with disorders across the lifespan. Graduates will be prepared to practice interdependently within multidisciplinary teams, and with further study to undertake Mental Health Nurse Practitioner studies for more independent roles.

COURSE OUTLINE
Underpinning knowledge comes from: the latest evidence based practice research in mental health nursing, psychiatry and psychology; a deeper understanding of professional roles related to our unique culture, geography and health care system; a functional application of physical, psychological and sociological assessment; and pharmacology in general, and specifically as it relates to mental health management. Skill development comes from practice in clinical specialisation units in which students are expected to further develop mental health practice by applying evidence based practice competently with clients and their families.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must be registered with the Nurses and Midwifery Board of Australia as an RN and be employed in a suitable mental health setting at a minimum of 0.6FTE. The Stream Coordinator will liaise with the students and service providers to ensure sufficiently varied and relevant clinical placement.
INFORMING PRACTICE WITH EVIDENCE (HEA402)
Congruent with current evidence based practice, this unit will focus on critical evaluation of systematic reviews of the literature for the development of mental health nursing skills which are proven effective in the management of mental health issues across the lifespan. Students will review literature, interpret systematic literature reviews such as those from the Cochrane data base of EBP. Counselling, motivational change, neuroscience, family education, cognitive behavioural therapy, and recovery and tidal models are examples of some of the areas explored.

CULTURE IN PRACTICE (HEA401)
This unit aims to increase awareness of, and the ability to critique the construct of culture as it applies to the individual, the professional and the communities in which mental health nurses work across Australia and beyond. Starting with global mental health agendas, then leading to national, state and mental health plans students will examine their practice in their local context. Students will be expected to examine and critique the way culture impacts on our work, and to explore ways of working with clients across cultures to enhance well-being for individuals and families in mental health care settings. Culturally appropriate communication and related interpersonal strategies will be highlighted. This unit will focus on the consumer as the recipient of care in interaction with mental health institutions and address issues enabling or constraining safe and competent mental health care practice.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT IN A BIO/PSYCHO/SOCIAL CONTEXT (HEA408)
This unit prepares student with the necessary knowledge and understanding, and the skills needed to complete a comprehensive assessment of an individual in their social context. Physical assessment skills will be paired with neurological assessment so that students will develop sufficient skills to make informed decisions on the holistic as well as mental health of clients and families.

PHARMACOLOGY FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS (SNP402)
This unit starts with fundamental scientific principles of pharmacology as they relate to a wide range of disease states, then students apply this knowledge to their practice as mental health nurses. Pharmacotherapy will be related to human physiology and pathophysiological processes and then applied to contemporary drugs used in mental health care.

CLINICAL SPECIALISATION 1 (HEA420)
The first of the units examines the development of contemporary mental health nursing and its relationship to psychology and psychiatry. Students will explore the history of the mental health nurses’ role within institutions, in the community, and up to the present where professional and government bodies have acknowledged credentialing and independent practice. Nursing theories that have influenced practice are examined for their evidence and practical rigor and contrasted to the current modes of psychotherapy in practice.

CLINICAL SPECIALISATION 2 (HEA440)
This unit builds on HEA420 by examining the current evidence based trends in mainstream mental health care across the lifespan, in urban and rural care settings. Contemporary assessment and management of major mental health issues such depression, suicide, anxiety, drugs and alcohol, schizophrenia and dementia will be explored and students will be assessed on their abilities to undertake a comprehensive assessment and implement evidence-based counselling.

CLINICAL SPECIALISATION 3 (HEA450)
In this unit students will approach more independent practice issues in challenging environments such as conflict and power in health care institutions, forensic mental health care, remote rural care, child and adolescent mental health. Primary mental health care, health education and specialised family and group therapies will provide the basis for students to explore a clinical area of their own interest.

ELECTIVE
The elective is a 10 credit point unit in which students may take one of several units across the university, or by learning contract explore an area of interest in mental health nursing practice.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
For further information about the course contact the School of Health Academic Liaison Unit
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For enrolment procedures, closing dates and other administrative issues please contact Student Services and ask for a member of the Higher Education Enrolment Team
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