

RUSONs: Learning and providing healthcare better

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RUSONs at South West Healthcare

The Registered Undergraduate Student of Nursing role provides skilled **workforce** assistance in clinical areas under the supervision of Registered Nurses. RUSONs are nursing students who are currently enrolled in their bachelor of nursing and are at the minimum in their second year of study.

RUSONs at South West Healthcare initially worked in the COVID swabbing clinic and Vaccination Centre. The RUSON role currently works across Medical, Rehabilitation and Acute wards and in the Emergency Department. The RUSON program has **grown** to up to 25 employees in 2023 and is showing signs of great success.

The RUSON role improves confidence which assisted the student to further develop key nursing skills like time management and communication. Their presence has given an extra set of hands and eyes highlighting their impact of patient **safety** on the wards. (Kenny et al 2019)

A longitudinal study of the program:

There is a gap in literature related to RUSON programs of similar scale to SWHealthcare in Victoria and also globally. SWHealthcare can contribute to the dialogue surrounding direct benefits to RUSONs and the overall hospital health service.

A study would hope to measure **how** the RUSON program enriches the participant and the workforce.

Anticipated benefits to clinical areas

- **Safety** to prevent falls
- Improve skin integrity
- Decrease malnutrition
- Cost effective **workforce** strategy
- Supervision of delirium
- Detailed, time intensive, basic patient care
- Nurses having **time** to take breaks
- Answering buzzers in a timely fashion
- Nursing have more time to attend to **patients**

Anticipated nursing staff retention

- **Return** as graduates
- Performance as graduates
- Staff with a good foundation for their nursing
 - developing the **future** of the profession
- Feeling ready to join the **workforce**
- Current nursing staff feeling more **supported**

Short Term

Interim

Long Term

Improved student learning

- How does it improve transition from student to graduate
- Witnessing pathophysiology, interventions and outcomes leading to comprehension
- Understanding and providing **holistic care**.
- Hands on learning
- Improved academic results
- Confidence leading to enhanced clinical placements

RUSON Program Aims:

- To increase **graduate** numbers
- To enable improved transition of theory to practice in nursing
- To enhance **workflow** in clinical areas and
- To support provision of **high quality** patient care

Where's
my
RUSON?

Proposed Methodology:

A potential longitudinal study of RUSONs at SWHealthcare would incorporate a variety of data collection methods. These would include surveys of current and future RUSONs, RUSONs who are now SWHealthcare nursing graduates and Registered Nurses working in the areas with RUSONs.

Data would also be collected via interviews and focus groups with RUSONs and by collecting data related to post-graduate endeavours of RUSON graduates.

