

MEDIA RELEASE

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Trailblazer Finalists demonstrate the excellence and diversity of nursing leadership *2024 Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers*

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is proud to reveal the four nurses who have been selected as Finalists in the 2024 Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers.

In its sixth year, the Award recognises and celebrates nurses whose leadership has led to innovative solutions to address key challenges facing our health and aged care systems. The Award is administered by ACN on behalf of the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP.

The 2024 Trailblazer Finalists are Ms Stephanie Dowden, Professor Marion Eckert MACN, Professor Lorna Moxham FACN, and Dr Nina Sivertsen MACN.

They were selected from 24 nominations by a panel of expert nurse leaders:

- Professor Donna Waters FACN, Vice President, Australian College of Nursing
- Emeritus Professor Leanne Boyd FACN, Interim CEO, Australian College of Nursing
- Adjunct Professor Debra Thoms FACN DLF, Interim CEO, Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia and New Zealand)
- Ms Frances Rice MACN, Senior Nursing Advisor, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Division, Department of Health and Aged Care

ACN Interim CEO, Emeritus Professor Leanne Boyd FACN, said the Finalists demonstrate the excellence and diversity of nursing leadership and innovation in Australia.

"These nursing leaders have developed pioneering nurse-led solutions to address the complex contemporary health needs of the Australian population," Professor Boyd said.

"They have used their expertise and passion to improve health and save lives. They have made a difference in their local communities and beyond.

"They are an inspiration for all nurses. They are living proof of diverse and rewarding career pathways in nursing. And they are gold standard role models to show governments the value of nurse-led health care and innovation," Professor Boyd said.

About the 2024 Trailblazer Finalists:**Ms Stephanie Dowden**
NursePrac Australia

NursePrac Australia is a social enterprise addressing children's health through a three-fold strategy: healthcare provision, healthcare consultancy, and health education and training. Since 2017, NursePrac has seen almost 4500 children, teens, and parents in 10,000 appointments via their community-based nurse practitioner-led clinic. They offer in-reach clinics at two high schools, and pop-up clinics are held, targeting areas with higher levels of social disadvantage and limited access to paediatric health services.

Professor Marion Eckert MACN
Project Check Mate: Nurse-Led rural and regional pop-up skin check clinics

This intervention provides free nurse-led skin checks at regional and rural community events, with local nurses trained in dermoscopy (examination of the skin using skin surface microscopy). Project Check Mate addresses a number of challenges that were identified in the 2022 State of the Nation – Report into Melanoma, A National Health Priority, with an innovative solution. The aim is to bring a novel and sustainable approach to early detection of skin cancer through upskilling nurses in underserved rural and regional areas.

Professor Lorna Moxham FACN
Recovery Camp

Recovery Camp is an innovative re-conceptualisation of the mental health clinical placement experience whose extensive evidence-base shows a positive impact on the mental health recovery of consumers, and on the learning of health students. Recovery Camp takes place in a non-traditional adventure-camp setting, where students and people with mental illness spend 4 nights and 5 days together, facilitated by Registered Nurses. It is founded on principles of self-determination theory to support mental health recovery, and social-contact theory to support mental health education.

Dr Nina Sivertsen MACN
Kumangka Tirkanthi – Learning Together as One

The Kumangka Tirkanthi model is a nurse-led method of delivering a subject focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and cultural safety. The subject is co-delivered by nursing academics and Aboriginal cultural navigators who bring the richness of lived experience to content and students' learning. Students analyse colonisation, racism, discrimination, and historical and contemporary events/policies influencing the Aboriginal health status in Australia. This innovation enables Bachelor of Nursing students to critically examine cultural safety as it relates to health and nursing practice.

The winner of the 2024 Health Minister's Award for Nursing Trailblazers will be announced at the Australian College of Nursing National Nursing Forum (NNF) in Cairns on 16 August.

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