

Media Release
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Awards put Australia's top nurses in the spotlight

The Australian community is being urged to nominate the nation's most accomplished and dedicated nurses, midwives, personal care attendants and assistants in nursing for the 2010 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

"This is a great way for the community to thank the dedicated nurses who are the heart of our health system," HESTA CEO Anne-Marie Corboy said.

"These awards recognise the skill, inventiveness and courage to be found in the nursing profession. They also acknowledge the extraordinary work nurses do every day, to support people through the highs and lows in their lives."

With a prize pool of \$25,000 across the categories of Nurse of the Year, Innovation in Nursing and Graduate Nurse of the Year, the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards are one of Australia's most prestigious nursing awards.

Ms Corboy said 1,400 nurses had been nominated since the awards were founded four years ago, and the calibre of the nominations continued to impress.

"The standard of nominations for the Awards has traditionally been fantastic and we are looking forward to another great year of inspiring entries," Ms Corboy said.

Last year's award finalists included Melbourne paediatric heart transplant coordinator Anne Shipp, Adelaide graduate nurse David Copley, who developed an Aboriginal mental health service, and Northern Territory rehabilitation nurse Kay Stevens, who became a permanent respite carer for a teenage assault victim.

The Nurse of the Year winner was Victorian midwife Lyn Olsen, for her work to ensure that every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in her care begins life at the starting line and not behind it.

Royal Hobart Hospital nurse Stav McDevitt, who retrained as a nurse after many years working in a laboratory, won the Graduate Nurse of the Year category and Jamie Rutherford from Melbourne Health took out the \$10,000 Innovation in Nursing award for slashing dialysis times for ABO incompatible transplant patients.

Nominations for the Nurse of the Year category can be made by nurses, colleagues, patients and patients' families, while teams and individuals usually self-nominate for the Innovation in Nursing category. Graduate Nurse Coordinators may nominate their most promising graduates for the Graduate Nurse of the Year category.

The Nurse of the Year wins \$10,000 in education and travel grants, the Innovation in Nursing winner receives a \$10,000 grant for their service or program and the Graduate Nurse of the Year will benefit from \$5000 in education and travel grants. The prize money is provided by ME Bank, who is supporting the awards for the third consecutive year.

“If you know a remarkable nurse, I urge you to take the time to nominate them for these awards. Whether they work in midwifery, palliative care, aged care, community nursing, emergency care or another area of nursing – we want to hear about them,” Ms Corboy said.

“Our judging panel of trained nurses, academics and industry representatives looks forward to learning about another group of amazing nurses in 2010.”

Every person making a nomination will receive a certificate to present to the nurse they nominate, ensuring that even nurses who don't make it through to the finals of the awards know their work is appreciated.

Nominations close on 28 February 2010. Finalists will be announced in April and those from interstate will be flown to Melbourne for a gala awards ceremony, at the Crown Entertainment Complex, on Thursday 13 May 2010.

The Awards program and event is coordinated by HESTA, one of Australia's largest superannuation funds. HESTA has more than 650,000 members and is the industry super fund for those working in the health and community services sector.

Visit www.hestanursingawards.com to make a nomination and to purchase tickets for the awards ceremony.

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