

# Media Release

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## Victorian nurse wins national graduate nursing award

Shelley Cook, a graduate nurse at Alfred Health in Prahran, Victoria was named Outstanding Graduate at the 2016 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards in Melbourne last night.

Ms Cook was recognised for showing courage and leadership in advocating for patient care and for playing a leading role in developing a staff training project aimed at raising awareness about communication strategies when working with culturally and linguistically diverse patients.

Ms Cook paid tribute to the support she had received from colleagues and mentors at Alfred Health during her graduate year, saying the challenges nurses new to the profession face could initially be daunting.

“I think that already having experienced being young in a profession helps, as I have a previous background in psychology,” Ms Cook said,

“But even though I have more life experience to draw on, it can sometimes seem overwhelming, you have the care of patients in your hands and it’s a massive responsibility — but it’s definitely the career for me.”

Upon completion of her graduate year, Ms Cook was recognised with an award from Alfred Health and has since taken on the role of mentor to colleagues starting out their careers in nursing.

HESTA CEO, Debby Blakey presented Ms Cook with the Award at a ceremony in Melbourne on International Nurses Day.

“We are pleased to recognise the leadership, drive and initiative shown by Shelley — particularly given she is starting out in her career in nursing. It’s wonderful that she is using her collaborative skills to provide mentoring to fellow nurses that are new to the profession.”

“I would encourage all nursing graduates and graduate program coordinators to think about the innovation they bring to their profession and nominate for the next HESTA Australian Nursing Awards,” Ms Blakey said.

Ms Cook received \$10,000 in a **ME** EveryDay Transaction Account, courtesy of proud Awards sponsor, **ME**.

She said that she would use the prize money to go back and help a community in Uganda she previously volunteered in, providing much needed primary healthcare as a nurse.

Other award winners were Nurse of the Year, Angie Monk from Ramsay Health Care’s Joondalup Health Campus, in WA, who also received \$10,000 in **ME** EveryDay Transaction Account.

The Clinical Service Team from integratedliving Australia, NSW took out the Team Excellence Award and received a \$10,000 development grant, also courtesy of **ME**.

For more information visit [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au)

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