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West Australian emergency nurse — finalist in national nursing awards

A West Australian emergency department nurse, whose work contributed to reducing the risk of hospital acquired infections, is a finalist in the 2014 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

Michelle Buchanan — of the Peel Health Campus in Mandurah — is recognised as one of five finalists in the Outstanding Graduate category, for a project she initiated to examine the management of intravenous (IV) cannulas by staff in the emergency department.

Ms Buchanan benchmarked the clinical practice of the insertion of IV cannulas, (a tube inserted into a vein, primarily for the administration of intravenous fluids, for obtaining blood samples and for administering medicines), against procedural standards, highlighting areas for improvement, following up with a secondary audit.

As a result, she increased by 41 per cent, the use of standard precautions by doctors undertaking the procedure in the emergency department.

Hospital management described the result as “significant” in terms of improving patient care outcomes by reducing hospital acquired infections.

Through her project, the risk of needle stick injury to staff has been reduced and more attention is focussed on the correct disposal of medical sharps and other waste.

The judges noted that by bringing both nursing and medical staff together, Ms Buchanan has delivered better outcomes for patients. As a result, she has been invited to join the hospital’s Peak Safety Review Committee.

The judges commended the nomination for demonstrating an outstanding approach to clinical research and implementation, and the capacity to improve team services.

Ms Buchanan and the other interstate finalists will be flown to Sydney to attend the awards dinner, where the winners will be announced on Thursday 8 May 2014.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, courtesy of long-term HESTA awards supporter, ME Bank. The Outstanding Graduate Award winner and the Nurse of the Year will each receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* transaction account and a \$5,000 education grant. The Team Innovation Award winner will receive a \$10,000 development grant.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 770,000 members and \$27 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

Visit hestaawards.com.au for tickets for the awards dinner or to learn more about the awards.

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