

# Media Release

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## Melbourne palliative care nurse a finalist in national nursing awards

Today, HESTA announced Carly Firman, a Melbourne nurse with a strong focus on patient advocacy and safety, as an Outstanding Graduate finalist in the 2015 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

Working in a busy specialist ward at the Alfred Hospital in Prahran, Ms Firman has been recognised for her strong interpersonal skills, with both patients and colleagues, and her astute awareness of patient needs — caring for the most challenging and acute patients.

“It was quite challenging at first — caring for a palliative patient near the end of their life — but it’s important to create a sense of ease, so I learnt early on to explain everything to my patients, regardless of whether they appear conscious or not. Upholding a patient’s level of dignity is what’s important,” Ms Firman said.

“It can be difficult to fill that role in a palliative patient’s room as it is often a sensitive time for families — it’s about comforting the family members as well as the patient. Also critical, is having detailed bedside handover discussions with other nurses involved in their care.”

Leading patient safety issues, Ms Firman is also involved in a ward research project examining the safe handling of cytotoxic medication used in cancer treatment.

“I collaborated with another graduate colleague and together we completed a project to develop an educational resource to help our colleagues and patients,” Ms Firman said.

“We obtained staff feedback throughout the initiative to refine the content. As our colleagues’ self-confidence grew, we all gained a better understanding of cytotoxic therapy, to better able to fill identified knowledge-gaps.”

Since completing her graduate program, Ms Firman has been engaged as a ‘preceptor’ (mentor) to new nurses undertaking their graduate year, leveraging her knowledge and skills to accelerate others.

HESTA Australian Nursing Awards finalists are in the running for a share of \$30,000 in prizes, from proud awards sponsor **ME**.

The Outstanding Graduate and Nurse of the Year Award winners will each receive a \$5,000 **ME** EveryDay transaction account and \$5,000 towards further education. The Team Innovation Award winner will receive a \$10,000 development grant.

**ME** CEO, Jamie McPhee, said, “We’re delighted to give these outstanding individuals the opportunity to develop their careers, while also supporting innovative health programs which benefit the entire sector and community.”

Winners will be announced at the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards dinner on Thursday, 15 October in Brisbane.

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

Follow the Twitter conversation [@HESTANurseAwdz](https://twitter.com/HESTANurseAwdz)

*The 2015 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards is a HESTA initiative, run in partnership with the Australian College of Nursing (ACN) and proudly sponsored by the bank owned by industry super funds, **ME**.*

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