

Media Release

Tuesday 29 September 2015



Providing education in the face of adversity, NSW Northern Rivers nurse a finalist in national nursing awards

Today, HESTA announced Myra Sessions — a Northern Rivers nurse for providing educational leadership and mentoring, as well as delivering high-level and inspirational professional service — as a Nurse of the Year finalist in the 2015 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

Mrs Sessions, a nurse at the Mareeba Aged Care facility — in the fishing village of Maclean — northeast of Grafton, is responsible for nurse education and staff development in the 119 bed facility, albeit with a chronic disease.

“Despite being mostly confined to a wheelchair as the result of multiple sclerosis, my focus is on what I can do rather than on my physical limitations. Also, my experience means I understand the mobility challenges some of our elderly residents face,” said Mrs Sessions.

“Although it can be unpredictable, my balance is affected by my condition and I’m confined to an electric wheelchair. However, I think I’m lucky to work in an aged care facility where I don’t have any of the access barriers I might encounter in another workplace.

“Education and training are the areas that I’m most passionate about, and I am encouraging staff to become more actively engaged. A recent staff training program lifted the overall self-confidence and sense of professionalism across the entire facility and that’s fantastic to see.

“Face-to-face learning, self-directed education packages, facilitated online learning, and the use of a range of apps □ all feature in my training. It’s about using whatever methods help staff manage a training schedule to get the qualifications they want to pursue.

“Knowledge is the key to using the best, evidence-based practices to promote consistent, quality care, which can only come from enhancing staff expertise. It means we are all better able to cope with the more clinically complex care needs of our residents.”

The Nurse of the Year and Outstanding Graduate 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

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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