

**INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Enrolled Nurse Professional Association

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General Purpose Standing Committee
Regarding – Inquiry into Vocational Educational and Training in NSW

I am writing this submission as President of the Enrolled Nurse Professional Association NSW (ENPANSW) regarding the Vocational Education Training of Enrolled Nurses

Enrolled Nurse training used to be hospital based with students attending TAFE and being paid to work in hospitals as trainees whilst embarking on their pathway to become an Enrolled Nurse. This training was funded by the Department of Health including TAFE fees and their salary.

Enrolled Nurse Training is now run through the TAFE and the trainees are student enrolled nurses undertaking clinical placements in hospitals. Payment for this course is now endured by the student. The structural changes the program has undergone to accommodate the clinical placement model rather than the work-based learning model has resulting in difficulties for students ascertaining their clinical placement.

The education of Enrolled Nurses is of a high standard with the course being approved by ANMAC as one leading to registration as an Enrolled Nurse.

The cost for students to gain this qualification is becoming unobtainable due to the exorbitant fees to complete your Enrolled Nurse Training. These costs range from \$12,000 - \$18,000 depending on TAFE location.

Another concern is the ability to fill Enrolled Nurse positions if there is a significant decrease in Enrolled Nurse registrations, due to the high training costs.

Who will fill these positions? Junior RN's and/or AIN's or both. If this scenario should develop, will these positions, as they become vacant, be advertised as Enrolled Nurse positions when the numbers increase, due to a decrease in the course fees?

Reducing the cost of the Enrolled Nurse training in TAFE will enable people to obtain the education necessary for their chosen career as an Enrolled Nurse. This would also assist in keeping a stable and sustainable number of Enrolled Nurse registrations, therefore positions can be filled by Enrolled Nurses and not lost to other designations.

To ensure the existence of the second level registered nurse these costs need be kept to a minimum and regulated throughout all TAFEs in NSW.

Even though there are students undertaking Enrolled Nurse studies at RTO's, the fees are exorbitant and way out of reach for most people.

It is a difficult task to educate people of the need to invest in their future. People only see the dollar sign, so if the cost is more reasonable the Enrolled Nurse numbers will not decrease to unacceptable levels.

Enrolled Nurses are an integral part of all health facilities must be maintained to ensure safe quality care. Enrolled Nurses are registered and are therefore accountable for their actions whilst working in conjunction with the Registered Nurses.

Due to the fact that TAFE has now been training Enrolled Nurses for about 20 years, they are well equipped to deliver a graduate with a high standard of education.

The experiences members have expressed are many with most saying how the training and further education at TAFE has opened doors to many different areas of practice they thought they could only dream about.

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President ENPANSW

