



Media Release
For Immediate Release
Monday 9 May 2011

In the footsteps of Florence
International Nurses Day, 12 May 2011

If you enjoy improving the health and well-being of people around you, why not look to Florence Nightingale for some career inspiration, like Denise, and consider a career in nursing.

A nurse since 1971, Denise began her training at Royal North Shore Hospital, working in large and small public and private hospitals, pathology clinics, nursing agencies and intensive care units before finding herself with UnitingCare Ageing.

When questioned as to how she ended up in the aged care sector, Denise explained that “the short answer is that I rather like old people.

“They are, I believe, our greatest resource.

“They have lived through a turbulent period, through the War and Depression, before antibiotics and safe anaesthetics when infants died from now banished diseases and young mothers died in childbirth.

“Yet they endured and had marriages of sixty years, raised swarms of children with no money and valued happiness above the dollar.”

Denise describes nursing older people as a privilege and loves listening to their stories as she goes about her daily tasks.

“Tender romances, heart wrenching tragedies, daredevil escapes and hilarious anecdotes - where else would I find such an Aladdin’s cave of life experiences?”

Denise disagrees with the perception of her clients that they are ordinary and just got on with things, making the best of what they had, saying that “these are the stories of families, of histories rich and surprising”.

Passionate about each individual, Denise believes feels that in hearing their stories new values can be learnt and generations given context about where they have come from.

As she grows older herself, Denise has been inspired by the people she serves to turn to her own grandchildren “so that when they’re my age and remember their nanna, they will know *my* story, and from whence they came”.

International Nurses Day is an annual event which commemorates the birth of Florence Nightingale who is widely appreciated for her contributions to nursing. It is also an opportunity to applaud the hard work and dedication of nurses around the globe.

UnitingCare Ageing, the largest single aged care provider in NSW and the ACT is celebrating International Nurses Day with a call for more nurses in the aged care sector.

Joanne Toohey, Director Operations, UnitingCare Ageing, said that “in an increasingly ageing population more nurses in the aged care sector are imperative.

“Not only is it a fabulously rewarding career, there is also an opportunity for career advancement as the clinical needs of older people increase nurses are able to develop their clinical assessment and case management skills.

The aged care sector is one of the largest employers of nurses in Australia. UnitingCare Ageing delivers care in a range of settings including a person’s own home, day centres, sub-acute respite services, independent living and residential aged care which provides the chance of experience in a range of areas; work in partnership and alongside other allied health and care professionals.

For more information on a career with UnitingCare Ageing please visit www.unitingcareageing.org.au/careers/current_opportunities.

END

For more information or to arrange an interview with Joanne Toohey, Director Operations, UnitingCare Ageing, please contact Ingrid Hoff, Media and Communication Officer, UnitingCare NSW.ACT on 02 9376 1415 or ihoff@unitingcarenswwact.org.au.