

Media Release

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Hospital based training a risk to the quality of the health care system

The Australian Government's decision to invest \$170 million to create 25 Australian Hospital Nursing Schools to deliver hospital based training for enrolled nurses might, at first, be perceived as an attempt to address the nursing shortage. In reality, it is an ill-advised decision that fails to recognise or support the current system of enrolled nurse education and is also an announcement that was made without consulting any of the peak nursing bodies.

As with the education of registered nurses in the university sector, enrolled nurse education suffers from insufficient funding for clinical placements. The system of education, in itself, is of a high quality and the Australian Government should be channelling funding to support the current system of nurse education rather than introducing a hospital-based training system where student nurses are at risk of being treated as an addition to the hospital workforce and not as students, thereby impacting on the standard of health care delivery.

We recommend that the Australian Government think twice about jeopardising the quality of the health care system. Quality education for health professionals is fundamental to a robust health care system and the Australian Government would do well to take the advice of experts in health care education before making funding decisions of this nature.

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