

An Australian Nursing Informatics Competency Project

Ms Lee Thomas

Australia

Session 2A

12/3/2010

Nurses in Australia have been found to have limited access to information technology especially in their workplaces. This trend is particularly worrying as we draw closer to electronic health records and other systems that require IT competency.

As a result, in 2007, the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) undertook a study on the use of information technology by Australian Nurses in their workplace. The study of over 10,000 nurses determined that nurses recognise benefits to adopting more information technology in the workplace although there were significant barriers to its use.

The objectives of this study were to:

- Identify the extent to which nurses have access to and use information technology and information systems
- Identify the purposes for which nurses use information technology
- Identify the readiness for nurses to participate in e-health initiatives such as *HealthConnect*
- Understand the barriers that prevent nurses from benefiting from information technology
- Recommend better ways to use information technology and overcome the barriers.
- Prepare a road map for access, education and training to meet the needs of nurses.

The study also identified a gross deficit in the capacity of the nursing workforce to engage with computers to process information. Following completion of the study in 2008, the ANF commenced work on a number of key recommendations from the report in order to overcome the identified barriers and provide opportunities for nurses to better utilise information technology and information management systems. One of the recommendations was to develop national nursing informatics competency standards.

With Australian Government funding secured the ANF in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology, is currently developing these competency standards for use by all nurses.

The presentation aims to raise awareness of the methodology for the project and the completed Australian Nursing Informatics Competency Standards will be presented.