2024
RBRC

As we reflect on 2024, I am proud of the progress we have made and the milestones we have achieved.

I am honoured to have been inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame this year, a recognition that reflects the dedication and impact of our work.

This report highlights some of our major research programs, showcasing the progress we've made in advancing knowledge and driving meaningful change.

Thank you to our research, industry, and community partners for your continued support—we look forward to another year of growth and innovation.

A message from our Director, Professor Marion Eckert

Our Labs

The **Workforce Lab** undertakes workforce safety and wellbeing monitoring and intervention research, and provides tailored leadership & research programs.

The **Co-Lab** undertakes co-production activities, and provides consumer and community engagement strategy advice and researcher education.

The **Clinical Lab** conducts health service evaluations, clinical trials, clinical intervention research, and clinical auditing

The **Performance Lab** conducts health system policy research, and provides health service research strategy advice.

The **Digital Health Innovation and Clinical Informatics Lab** (DHICI Lab), a collaboration between the RBRC and the Industrial AI Research Centre, works on advanced analytic techniques, digital health innovations, and human-centred digital health design.

Congratulations to our Director, Professor Marion Eckert, for her induction into the Sigma Theta Tau International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame

The Australasian Nursing and Midwifery Clinical Trials Network

The RBRC is pleased to be home to the executive office of the ANMCTN, and work with all of our network partners.

The Australasian Nursing and Midwifery Clinical Trials Network (ANMCTN) achieved significant milestones in 2024, reflecting its commitment to advancing research and professional development for nursing and midwifery led research.

By expanding partnerships, enhancing member engagement and promoting professional growth, the ANMCTN continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of nurse and midwife led clinical trials and research.

Key highlights included:

· Introduction of an online membership directory to facilitate connections amongst the 600+ members.

· Advocacy for nurse and midwife-led research through conferences, presentations, and stakeholder meetings.

· Work with government to reinstate the "highest academic qualification" question in the annual Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency Workforce Survey for 2025.

· Liaising with the Medical Research Future Fund to achieve inclusive eligibility criteria for nurse and midwife applicants and remove inadvertently disadvantaging criteria.

· Invited representation on the Stakeholder Advisory Group, a sub-committee of the Inter-Governmental Policy Reform Group, to contribute to improving the operating environment for health and medical research, including driving Australia's clinical trials reform agenda.

The National Policy Research Unit

In 2024, the National Policy Research Unit (NPRU) continued its work in supporting the Federal Office of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) to advocate for nurses, midwives, and carers across Australia by providing evidence-based policy advice and research.

Aged care

The NPRU contributed evidence for many of the ANMF submissions to the Department of Health and Aged Care on the formation of the New Aged Care Act.

Leveraging the best available evidence from published research and the voices and perspectives of ANMF members, the NPRU advocated for reforms to protect the safety of the aged care workforce and enable them to deliver the highest quality care.

Scan to view the research article and its sources.

Nursing and midwifery workforces

The NPRU contributed evidence to the ANMF's scope of practice advocacy work, demonstrating the value of nurse- and midwife-led models of care through peer-reviewed publications and member communications.

The NPRU provided evidence for the work-value case, which resulted in historical pay increases for ANMF members.

Scan to view the research article and its sources.

Gender equity

As the nursing, midwifery, and care workforces are predominantly female, the ANMF and the NPRU address inequality experienced by woman members, including disparate wages, poverty, discrimination, and gender-based violence.

The NPRU provided evidence to the ANMF as well as producing member communication materials to raise awareness of these issues among members.

Scan to view two research articles and their sources.

Spark ✳

In 2024, The Loneliness Project evolved into Spark,
a constellation of initiatives designed to address loneliness
at the community level.

Developed through co-design with 116 women—22 in workshops, 10 in interviews, and 84 through a survey—Spark brought together lived experience and research to create meaningful change.

The four initiatives include Spark Conversation, which encourages friendship and connection; Spark Social, which helps women find their social tribe; Spark Self- Connection, which fosters personal reflection and self-awareness; and the Spark Podcast Series, which raises awareness and reduces stigma around loneliness.

Nineteen trained Sparkies have taken on volunteer roles to support these efforts.

The research team is evaluating the impact of these initiatives and working on a statewide scale-up plan to expand their reach.

By strengthening social ties and empowering women with tools for connection, Spark is laying the groundwork for lasting community impact.

PreHaRM

Nick Marlow completed his PhD in 2024, providing key recommendations for the design and function of the PreHaRM dashboard.

This research explored health professionals' perspectives on the adoption of artificial intelligence enabled technology within Australian healthcare systems.

Through co-design workshops, the key learnings were that the information must be apparent, accessible, and current. Health professionals co-designed various aspects of the dashboard through an iterative process.

The resulting design will enable the PreHaRM tool audience to identify and navigate through patient risk data to understand the number and type of adverse events forecast to occur in their area within their shift.

This will provide the opportunity for nurses to prepare mentally and practically for their shift. Importantly, the focus is to preclude the occurence of adverse events and result in safer patient care, shorter hospital stays, and increased nursing satisfaction.

600 NURSES PROJECT

In 2024, the 600 Nurses Project continued to train rural and regional primary care nurses in clinical dermoscopy and improve skin check access in underserved communities.

The team held three pop-up skin check clinics in rural and regional areas, along with additional clinics at a prison health service and Parliament House.

This added to the research evidence from earlier clinics across 2022 and 2023. The impact was significant—over half of attendees had never had a skin check, and 10–15% were classified as above-average risk for melanoma. Consumers overwhelmingly accepted the service, and general practitioners supported the model.

In 2024, the team also launched the Professional Certificate in Clinical Dermoscopy, with enrolments open for 2025. The first of its kind, this qualification will support the upskilling of rural and regional nurses nationally.

☆STAR **nurse**

The Transition Care Model is an evidence-based, time-limited service model to reduce hospital readmissions and improve continuity of care.

After adapting this model for the local context and testing its feasibility, the team employed two STARnurses (Supporting Transitions and Referrals Nurses) and commenced a pragmatic Randomised Controlled Trial at two hospitals in Adelaide.

Interim findings highlighted the complexity associated with multimorbidity participants and hospital readmission risk, and the importance of considering challenges beyond health.

STARnurse, Stan Minyaev, undertook a study tour with Professor Mary Naylor and her team at the University of Pennyslvania to learn more about the Transition Care Model.

Stan returned with valuable considerations for scale-up of the model in South Australia, including augmentation of the home environment to support risk monitoring, the effects of transportation and housing on implementation of the model, and personcentred prioritisation of care goals.

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The Rosemary Bryant AO Research Centre was established through the foresight of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (SA Branch) and is a partnership between the University of South Australia and the Rosemary Bryant Foundation, accelerating nursing and midwifery-led research.