

# Media Release

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 2016**



## Study placement showcases aged care to nursing graduates

Aged care organisation ACH Group is working with the University of South Australia to attract more nursing graduates by showcasing aged care as an exciting career choice.

After a successful 12-month trial, UniSA has now established an ongoing eight-week Aged Care Specialty Nursing Student Placement for third year Bachelor of Nursing students.

The placement replaces the traditional four-week model and is designed to ignite a passion in students who have an interest in working in aged care, while providing them with real insight and support to develop the skills required to be an aged care specialty nurse.

UniSA School of Nursing and Midwifery Course Coordinator Dr Catherine Hall says it is critical that students are given the chance to engage in experiential learning opportunities in the sector.

“It is essential that students better understand the diversity and demands of the sector,” she says. “It is very important for UniSA to be able to work with ACH Group so we can focus on enhancing the residential and community aged care clinical placement experience for both nursing students and facilities.”

Dr Hall says another important feature of the pilot is the introduction of the Aged Care Tool Kit, developed at UniSA.

“The Tool Kit is a comprehensive reference point for what students should consider while they are on placement,” she says. “It reinforces four key practice areas: Care Planning, Advanced Care Planning, Nutrition and Hydration and Mental Health.”

ACH Group ViTA Interprofessional Learning Coordinator Kirsty Marles says attracting graduates to the aged care sector will become more important than ever in South Australia as its workforce and the general population ages.

“This unique approach encourages students to consider aged care as an exciting and specialist career choice,” she says. “We welcome UniSA’s commitment to investing in developing aged care specialty training and actively promoting aged care as an interesting and rewarding career. The program will help change attitudes and encourage more students to consider working in aged care, where there are many career opportunities available.”

One of the students who took part in the trial, Rajni Jindal, enjoyed her placement at ACH Group’s Perry Park residential living facility at Port Noarlunga so much that she applied for a job at ACH Group immediately after graduation.

She now works as a Registered Nurse at ACH Group residential living site Kapara at Glenelg South.

“Some people might think that hospital work will be more exciting, but I enjoy this work because it is all about early intervention and restoring health, which is very rewarding,” she says. “When I did my placements I was impressed by ACH Group. It’s a warm and friendly environment and everyone is made to feel welcome.”

## EXTRA INFO:

Like many South Australian workplaces, ACH Group has an ageing workforce. According to the *ACH Group Workforce Report* published in June 2015, of the company's 1716 employees, the average employee age this year is 46.3, up from 45.5 years. The average has remained within the 45 to 55 age range – 55.3 per cent of the workforce is older than 45 (up two per cent from the previous year).

According to the Australian Government's Productivity Commission, the number of aged care places will need to increase by about four times over the next 30 years. In turn, the nursing workforce will need to grow between three and four times over the same period. In its latest report *An Ageing Australia: Preparing for the Future* (released June 2014), the population aged 75 or more years is expected to rise by four million from 2012 to 2060, increasing from about 6.4 to 14.4 per cent of the population. In 2012, there was roughly one person aged 100 years old or more to every 100 babies. By 2060, it is projected there will be around 25 such centenarians. People aged 65 and over make up the majority of hospital admissions, at over 60 percent, which is set to add to the nursing requirements in primary and acute care.

\*End Media Release\*

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## About ACH Group

ACH Group is a not-for-profit aged care organisation that has been offering services to support good lives for older people in South Australia since 1952.

As well accommodation options across Adelaide, the Fleurieu Peninsula and East Melbourne, the group offers a range of health, wellbeing, respite and support services, help at home and social activities.

Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

**For further information or comment, please contact Anna Randell on (08) 8159 3632, 0417 856 361 or [ARandell@ach.org.au](mailto:ARandell@ach.org.au). NOTE: A high resolution photo of Rajni with an aged care resident is available on request.**