

I have recently completed a PhD investigating the factors driving emergency department (ED) presentations in Tasmania. My research identified a link between increased ED utilisation by the elderly in the South of Tasmania and patient-perceived access to care in the community for the management of chronic conditions. As part of undertaking a course of doctoral study it is considered good research training to present at conferences and publish manuscripts. This provides the opportunity for experts to provide input into the research before it is complete. In mid-2017 I was preparing a manuscript to present at the 6th Annual Worldwide Nursing Conference in Singapore in June 2018. Although I was keen to have my manuscript accepted to give me the opportunity to present my findings to an international group of my peers I was unsure if financially I would be in a position to attend. I decided to apply for a Florence Nightingale Award: The Nelle Espie Study Grant.

In early October 2017 I received a letter from Francine Douce, chair of the FNGA Committee, to say my application had been successful. This gave me the confidence boost I needed to continue with my submission for the conference. Ultimately my manuscript was accepted for an oral presentation. The monies attached to my award meant that I could accept the offer, register for the conference and book flights and accommodation.

My attendance and presentation at the conference benefited me and my research in many ways. The presentation was very well received, with a number of international experts offering me advice on how I could improve the next stages of my research project. I also made a number of connections with Australian and international nursing academics that I remain in contact with today. My hope is that this will lead to opportunities for future research collaborations. One highlight for me was attending a presentation by four young undergraduate nursing students from Japan. As a group they

had undertaken their own nursing research project and then presented it at an International conference. I and the rest of the conference participants were blown away by this group, and definitely left with the feeling that with these students on board, the future of nursing was in good hands.

Since the conference I submitted my PhD in October 2018. The manuscript I presented in Singapore was one of three incorporated within my final thesis. I received notification that I had fulfilled the requirements to be awarded my degree in April 2019, and will graduate from the University of Tasmania in August 2019. I commenced in the role of Statewide Nursing Director, Magnet® at the Tasmanian Health Service in November 2018. The skills, knowledge and networks made during my doctoral journey will undoubtedly assist me as I endeavour to drive Magnet® across the THS.

I met with some of Nelle Espies' family members at the FNGA ceremony in 2018, giving me the chance to explain to them how the award had assisted me, as well as the opportunity to express my gratitude. I would also like to thank the FNGA Committee. Being a successful award recipient made a huge difference to me and my studies. Thank you.