

The Nell Espies Study Grant has made a significant contribution towards my HECS fees for the *Graduate Certificate of Counselling* at UTAS. I have now completed 3 out of the 4 Units required for the Certificate. I enrolled in my final unit in Semester 1 of 2020, but unfortunately COVID-19 restrictions imposed on University study made the face to face component of the course impossible this year. As I found these to be the most important and useful part of the course I withdrew from the Unit and plan to enrol again in 2021.

The 2 core units, *Counselling 1* and *Counselling 2* that I studied in 2018 provided me with counselling techniques I was able to use in the clinical setting, working as a midwife and childbirth educator with pregnant women and their families at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

In March of 2019 my family and I moved to Dover, in the far south of the Huon Valley. I resigned from the Women's Health Clinic in Hobart and have been employed by Huon Regional Care as a Registered Nurse at the Dover Residential Care Facility since that time. The Dover Facility has provision for 16 Aged Care Residents and 3 Rural Health Beds, and has a strong focus on End of Life Care.

I studied the Unit *Adjustment to Change* in Semester 2 of 2019. This gave me much valuable information about how to approach sensitive issues with palliative patients, their relatives and their friends, and I feel that it has made me better able to provide the care they need at a difficult time. Overall, the Counselling course has given me increased confidence to provide a safe space in which to help people talk about sensitive and challenging issues.

When I applied for the Nell Espies Grant in 2018 I did not expect to be working in the Aged Care sector. However, I feel the Counselling course, has given me both increased skills and resilience and it has enabled me to adjust to working in a new and challenging field of nursing.

Sally Gregor 2020