Magnet Organisations:
Measurement of Australian health services for characteristics successful in retaining nursing staff

Student: Joanne Joyce (PhD Candidate)
Supervisor: P. Crookes

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

The attraction and retention of professional nursing staff is an important issue for healthcare systems. Shortages in the nursing workforce are being experienced worldwide as a result of fewer individuals entering the nursing profession and the systems' inability to retain nurses.

The term magnet hospitals, was coined in the early 1980's to describe organisations that were able to attract and retain nursing staff more capably than their competitors. These hospitals have been shown to have consistently produced better outcomes for staff and patients as demonstrated in job satisfaction and quality patient care (Aiken et al, 1994, 1997).

The research project currently being undertaken in the Illawarra seeks to develop and apply the concept of Magnet Hospitals to health and welfare organisations. This innovative study has developed a tool suitable for the Australian context that measures organisational features based on the magnet hospital concept. It is envisaged that this research can make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the multiple factors that contribute to the attraction and retention of qualified staff, particularly in regional Australia.