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Development of the nurse practitioner role in New Zealand

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The Nurse Practitioner as an autonomous advanced nurse is a relatively new concept to the healthcare system of New Zealand. Despite the fact that the role was first developed at the beginning of this century there are still only approximately 300 NP's throughout the country and in a variety of hospital based or community settings and covering a wide range of specialty areas. Many NP's in their roles consistently meet government and local health targets managing complex cases, promoting health initiatives and disease prevention but are still a 'niche' group and the role poorly understood by employers, organizations and the general public. Whilst the role is slowly making in-roads into traditional healthcare delivery there are a number of legislative and professional barriers to overcome. This presentation will look at: The journey to become an NP from the individual's perspective, some of the initial barriers that made this a difficult career pathway, some of the funding barriers that exist that often prevent the NP from being able to work at their full potential and the initiatives to addresses in order to have a credible and sustainable work force, workforce development in NZ - is the current model sustainable? How the role is positively impacting on the delivery of health care within this country, and creating a flexible workforce and away from the traditional medical model.

Biography

Michael Geraghty was the first Emergency Nurse to become a Nurse Practitioner in New Zealand and works in the Adult Emergency Department in Auckland City. He holds a Master's degree in Nursing, is an honorary professional Teaching Fellow at the University of Auckland and the Editor of the College of Emergency Nurses Journal. He acts on behalf of the Nursing Council of New Zealand assessing portfolios and as a Panel Assessor for nurses who have been mentored to become NP's.

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