

# ENGAGE, EMPOWER AND INSPIRE A SMALL NURSING TEAM TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Ann Whitfield, Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group, Murdoch, Western Australia,  
[Ann.whitfield@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Ann.whitfield@health.wa.gov.au)

## ABSTRACT

### Introduction

Infection prevention (IP) is an integral part of healthcare and can significantly influence the safety of our patients, staff, visitors and community. Building capacity and sustainability within an IP nursing team is essential for an effective IP program which can reduce healthcare associated infections (HAIs) and improved patient outcomes. A developmental program was designed and implemented to engage, empower and inspire nurses working in IP.

### Aim/Objective

The aim of the program was to empower a small specialist nursing team to improve patient outcomes and to develop resilience for individuals within the team. The program sessions incorporated evidence-based practice using National and International IP programs and Western Australia (WA) health policy and wellbeing introducing the Hospitals Nursing and Midwifery "Caritas" Professional Practice Model of Care.

### Method

The program targeted IP nurses from three different healthcare sites with different experiences and levels of expertise. Training modalities included presentations of policy/frameworks, reflection, scenarios and problem-solving real events.

### Results

Qualitative results identified participants experienced an increase in confidence knowledge and greater understanding of organisational role responsibility to improve patient safety. Nurses acknowledged the reflective practice supported an understanding to prioritise duties, teamwork and building resilience. For some participants it was noted with exposure to the multi-faceted nature of an IP program, there was a feeling of pressure they needed to know everything about IP. This was counteracted with the networking opportunity achieved through the program and the offer and availability of 'phone a friend' network between the IP experts.

### Conclusion

The program was successful in developing teamwork and resilience to provide a proactive IP program reducing harm. The recommendation is to evolve the program into an annual event and develop an IP service delivery model in collaboration with IP nurses.