



# A career in nursing – Kellie’s journey to make a difference in caring for our Elders

**Name:** Kellie McCarthy

**Studying:** Bachelor of Nursing, Charles Sturt University

**Tell us a bit about yourself**

I grew up in Newcastle surrounded by large family. I attended school in Maitland. We are from Worimi – Port Stephens and Great Lakes area of NSW.

I was the first member of my large family to complete my HSC, in 1990, and one the first to attend university (later in life).

A career in the navy as a nurse was always my goal, but due to an accident during my HSC I was unable to gain entry to the defence force at the time.

**Why did you apply for the Bachelor of Nursing at Charles Sturt?**

Once my parents and elderly family members began declining in age and mobility, I followed in my daughters’ footsteps and undertook the Cert 3 In Individual Support (Ageing) to enable me to help them with their health issues and care.

During this study, I gained a job from my student placement component. This motivated me to undertake my Diploma of Nursing as I felt I could offer more in the aged care sector. I have a fascination with neuroscience, specifically how the brain works in relation to cognition and dementia type disorders.

After completing my Diploma of Nursing, I decided to continue with my bachelor’s degree. Choosing Charles Sturt allowed me to complete online study, beginning mid-



**Nursing students in action at Charles Sturt University.**

year in NSW. I researched several Universities and Charles Sturt I believe is the best choice for me.

**What sort of support have you received and how has this helped you with your studies?**

I have found the First Nations cohort extremely helpful both academically and

personally. I have been extremely grateful for the amount of support for both aspects of uni, from gaining extensions to academic writing support.

I would definitely recommend other First Nations people consider nursing at Charles Sturt.

When applying for university I was not

aware of the level of support that was available to First Nations nursing. The cohort is a fantastic way of different mobs coming together and learning from each other’s life experiences. The smaller group allows for more relaxed one-on-one time with the teachers, gaining more knowledge specifically related to First Nations health issues. I really enjoyed undertaking cultural activities together and learning about different mobs.

**What are you enjoying most about your studies at Charles Sturt?**

I really like the flexibility of online study as opposed to face to face, especially when caring for others and working. The tutors are experienced in nursing and academia, area very helpful and caring when issues arise.

I am excited to go on clinical placement – hoping that I can travel remotely and train with other first nations nurses in the community.

**Where do you hope your nursing qualification will take you?**

I am hoping to continue work in aged care but would also like to travel to remote Indigenous communities to gain insight in how to better care for our Elders, and what is most important to them on their health journeys. I believe an increase in First Nations nurses can connect generations and collaborate more effectively with allied health professionals in treating mental health issues in all communities.



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