



## **The role and expected outcomes of the “Kids Cancer Research Trust (KCRT) Paediatric Oncology Nursing Research Fellow”**

This position is held by Susan Dyer who is a registered nurse with post graduate qualifications including a Bachelor of Children’s Cancer Nursing and a Masters degree in Paediatrics. Susan has been working in this role for over five years including two years full time and three years in a part time capacity.

The aim of the KCRT nurse is to support nurses working at the bedside with research related activities. The KCRT nursing research fellow role has been designed to be responsible for initiating, developing, promoting, publishing and implementing research and evidence based nursing care within the paediatric oncology service at the Women’s & Children’s hospital. To achieve this Susan works alongside bedside nurses every step of the way on the research journey. This includes designing a research question, searching the literature, reviewing the literature and designing a method to investigate the problem. The nurse is also supported with collecting data, analysing data, recommending practice change and presenting results to the clinical area and at conferences.

Some examples of the types of projects Susan has worked on with bedside nurses include; improving the consistency of care for children who need to be fed by a tube in their nose; improving the nursing management of administering antibiotics via a catheter in the vein to help reduce the risk of bugs contaminating equipment; designing an educational folder for children who donate their bone marrow to a brother or sister to give them better information and support; and introducing a program in the unit for all nurses and doctors to follow that will ensure good hand washing and handling of

equipment to reduce the risk of unnecessary bugs making kids sick. These are just a few of the projects that have been completed since the introduction of the nursing research fellow role and there are several more projects that are still ongoing. Susan also assists nurses to present their work at national and international nursing and medical conferences and to date there have been 16 oral presentations and 9 poster presentations in three Australian states and five different countries.

There are barriers in nursing that can make it difficult for nurses to participate in projects that improve patient care and nursing standards and these include time, funding and knowledge. The funding that is given by the Kid's Cancer Research Trust to support the paediatric oncology nursing research fellow role is fantastic because it is the first step in breaking down these barriers and give nursing an opportunity to be able to engage in relevant research that improves care for children living with cancer. By supporting this position the Kid's Cancer Research Trust has also supported nurses at the bedside because they have access to a credible and experienced haematology/oncology research nurse who has the time to support them and the knowledge necessary to participate in research projects