

Position Description

Aboriginal Nursing Cadetship

Classification:	RUSON – YP12
Business unit/department:	First Nations Health Unit (program owner) in partnership with Nursing Workforce Unit/ Ward / Clinical Nursing Education Department
Work location:	Austin Hospital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)
Agreement:	Nurses and Midwives (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2024-2028
Employment type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	8
Reports to:	Day-to-day: Nurse Unit Manager Program governance: Director – First Nations Health (Program Sponsor) Cultural mentoring: First Nations Health Unit cultural mentor(s)
Direct reports:	N/A
Financial management:	Budget: Nil
Date:	November 2025

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

As this is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait designated position, only applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples will be accepted. We acknowledge the deep and enduring connection that First Nations Peoples have to this land, and we honour their strength, resilience, and leadership. We are committed to creating a culturally safe and supportive workplace where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard, valued, and empowered.

Position purpose

The **First Nations Health Cadetship Program (Nursing – RUSON)** is a culturally grounded initiative that supports Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students to gain **paid, supervised clinical experience** within Austin Health while completing their **undergraduate nursing** studies. This role provides cadets with structured opportunities to develop clinical and professional skills, strengthen cultural identity in the workplace, and build confidence as future health professionals.

The program is designed to:

- Enhance the cadet's knowledge and practical nursing skills in line with the **RUSON core activity** framework.
- Provide **cultural and clinical support** through mentoring, supervision, and peer networks.
- Foster a **culturally safe environment** that empowers Aboriginal voices and promotes **self-determination**.
- Contribute to Austin Health's strategic priorities, including the **Cultural Safety Plan** and **Aboriginal Employment Plan**, by creating pathways for Aboriginal workforce development.

Through this cadetship, Austin Health aims to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by **embedding cultural safety into care** and strengthening the representation of Aboriginal professionals in **nursing**.

About the First Nations Health Unit

The First Nations Health Unit at Austin Health is a strategic department established to lead and coordinate efforts that improve the health, wellbeing, and cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Led by the Director of First Nations Health, the Unit drives key initiatives including the implementation of the Cultural Safety Plan, Aboriginal Employment Plan, and oversight of the Ngarra Jarra Aboriginal Health Service.

The First Nations Unit's core responsibilities include embedding cultural safety across all services, supporting Aboriginal workforce development, leading cultural education programs, and strengthening engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. It plays a central role in truth-telling, reconciliation, and improving institutional understanding of the historical and ongoing impacts of racism and colonisation on health outcomes.

About the Wards

The **First Nations Health Cadetship Program (Nursing – RUSON)** will work within an allocated ward/area for the term of the contract, providing delegated elements of clinical nursing care within the team nursing structure.

The location of employment may be at Austin Hospital, Heidelberg Rehabilitation Hospital or Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre.

The required days and shifts will be AM and/or PM shifts, as per the ward's requirements.

Organisational Context

The **First Nations Health Cadetship (RUSON)** operates within Austin Health's clinical services and is supported by the **First Nations Health Unit** to ensure cultural safety and workforce development.



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Cadets work within their **allocated ward/clinical area** at any Austin Health site, enhancing their skills and knowledge in nursing to support successful progression through their studies.

Cadets work **under the supervision of experienced clinicians**, observing and providing appropriate nursing care within scope, while contributing to culturally safe practice. All activities are undertaken **under supervision** and **delegation** and within the **defined parameters of the RUSON role**.

Program governance includes:

- **Program Coordinator** (First Nations Health Unit)
- **Clinical Supervisor** (Nurse Unit Manager and supervising Registered Nurse)
- **Cultural Mentor** (First Nations Health Unit)

This governance structure ensures alignment with Austin Health's **Cultural Safety Plan** and **Aboriginal Employment Plan**, creating a culturally safe environment that empowers Aboriginal voices and promotes self-determination.

Position responsibilities

- **Culturally safe, person-centred care:** Promote and contribute to culturally safe nursing care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, families, and communities.
- **Learning & development:** Participate in orientation, cultural safety training, nursing education sessions, and maintain a **learning portfolio**.
- **Teamwork & communication:** Work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams; seek and act on feedback; escalate concerns promptly to the supervising RN.
- **Quality & safety:** Adhere to Austin Health policies, infection control, privacy/confidentiality, and **National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHSS)**.
- **Values:** Demonstrate Austin Health values – *our actions show we care; we bring our best; together we achieve; we shape the future*.

Role-specific responsibilities – RUSON

- The RUSON works **under the supervision and delegation of a Registered Nurse (RN)** at all times and only accepts delegated activities that are within their level of educational preparation and assessed competency.
- **Foundation of care (delegable activities under RN supervision):**
- **Hygiene & personal care:** Showering/bed bath, grooming, basic eye care, hair care (no prescribed treatments), oral hygiene (no medication-containing products), nail care (no cutting/trimming).
- **Nutrition:** Prepare for meals; assist with feeding where appropriate (excludes **dysphagic patients**); support oral hydration (excludes **fluid-restricted** patients); measure weight/height; complete Food/Fluid Balance Charts as delegated.
- **Mobility & handling:** Position changes in bed/chair; transfers (including hoist use) per care plan; assist ambulation as delegated; safe patient handling practices.
- **Elimination:** Assist with toileting; manage, empty, measure **urethral urinary catheter bags**; report abnormalities to RN; complete relevant charts.
- **Comfort & skin integrity:** Assist with pressure area care; re-application of anti-embolic stockings **if previously fitted** (no initial measurement/fitting); re-application/maintenance of **low-flow nasal prong oxygen therapy** only if within defined parameters (note exclusions below).



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- **Environment & safety:** Bed making (occupied beds, not discharge preparation), ward stocking, cleaning of equipment when appropriate, maintain safe/tidy environment, respond to call bells and escalate requests beyond scope.
- **Psychological/sociocultural support:** Participate in handover/huddles, diversional activities (conversation, music, games, reading), orientate patients/families to ward, assist simple errands, support documentation of valuables per RN direction.
- **Observations (with competency):** Vital signs, blood glucose levels, urinalysis—**only** after completing Austin Health competency and when delegated for **indirect supervision**.
- **COVID-19 specific (with competency):** Collecting specimens for COVID-19 PCR testing (oropharyngeal and deep nasal swabs) under RN delegation (serology excluded).
- **Clinical practice extension (only if competency completed and RN delegates for indirect supervision):** Patient observations: **vital signs, BGL, urinalysis, COVID-19 PCR swab.**

Selection criteria

Essential:

- Identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Currently enrolled in an allied health degree or related tertiary program (beyond first year) and maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
- Demonstrated commitment to cultural safety and improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Ability to work collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team and follow supervision.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Positive approach to learning and professional development.

Desirable:

- Previous experience in a healthcare or community setting.
- Understanding of Aboriginal health and cultural values.
- Basic knowledge of allied health practices and patient care principles.
- Familiarity with Austin Health's values and person-centred care principles.

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.



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- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.
- Sound understanding of information technology including clinical systems and Microsoft Office suite

General information

Cultural safety

Austin Health is committed to cultural safety and health equity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise cultural safety as the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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