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PRIVATE HOSPITAL

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A Focus on Veterans – It's All in the Family

When Anna Shepherd's grandfather left Australian shores for World War I, it is certain he never thought that his actions would have such a profound effect on his granddaughter years later.

Anna leads Regal Health Services, a home health service in Sydney that cares for many whose lives have been altered by war. Anna's mother, Patricia R Shepherd established Regal Health Services in 1966 after training and practising as a RN at Concord Repatriation Hospital for many years. She had two goals: firstly a commitment to the highest standard of care for patients who have the right to live with dignity, quality of life and independence in their own home and to provide a service that supports Community Nurses by providing a workplace that respects their need to be recognised and supported to provide the best care.

Regal Health continues today as a service to veterans and others in the community.

"As the grand daughter of a soldier who served in both World War I and World War II I feel privileged to lead a home health service that cares for so many whose lives have been impacted by war," says Anna. "I had three uncles who served in World War II who have shared with me their many experiences of war and wisdoms passed down through generations. I am grateful for the many sacrifices our war veterans have made that allow us our freedom today."

Anna says, "Supported by a committed team, I aim to ensure that Regal Health Services is acknowledged as a service of excellence in home healthcare throughout Australia for the benefit of our clients. I believe that a team that is comprised of like minded professionals

produces excellent results in terms of service delivery and job satisfaction. My aim is to do whatever it takes to acknowledge and support my team empowering them to achieve excellence for the benefit of our patients."

To that end, Anna has established an award in her mother's name for community nursing. The Patricia R. Shepherd award for community nursing is an annual award granted to a community nurse who is nominated by peers, patients and the management staff.

As a leader Regal Health also provides two scholarships that are open to all Community Nurses across all sectors each year. The first is for wound management in community nursing and provides the winner a \$2,000 scholarship towards education, research and/or conference participation for wound management. The second award allows the winning community nurse to attend and present an abstract at the biennial Joanna Briggs Colloquium and International Nursing Conference which in 2008 will be held in Cordoba, Spain.

The investment in her staff pays off, insists Anna. "We were the first private nursing service in Australia to achieve ACHS accreditation in 1994. And of course, we have excellent clinical outcomes. We achieve higher than the DVA's benchmarks for wound healing."



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Veterans' Health to be Examined

The Centre for Military and Veterans' Health (CMVH) has been contracted by the Australian Defence Force to conduct a survey into the health of ADF personnel who have deployed on operations. They will compare the health of those deployed to East Timor and/or Bougainville with the health of those who did not deploy to these locations. More than

12,000 Defence personnel are being invited to take part.

The study will contribute to increasing the knowledge about Service-related health and ill health. It may also assist the ADF in developing the most appropriate supportive and protective measures against future health threats.

CMVH is a University of Queensland led consortia, with University of Adelaide and the Charles Darwin University, supported by the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs, as an Australian Government initiative.

More information about the study is available at www.uq.edu.au/dhsp.