



# EXPANDING HORIZONS: THE DYNAMIC ROLE OF THE NEONATAL AND PAEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER

Ruth Irwin Nurse Practitioner (NP)

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CLINIC

## What's a NP anyway?

- "A Nurse Practitioner (NP) is a Registered Nurse with the experience, expertise and authority to diagnose and treat people of all ages with a variety of acute or chronic health conditions. NPs have completed additional university study at Master's degree level and are the most senior and independent clinical nurses in our health care system."

(ACNP 2025)



# How do you become an NP?



Registered Nurse



5000 advanced practice  
hours



Masters degree



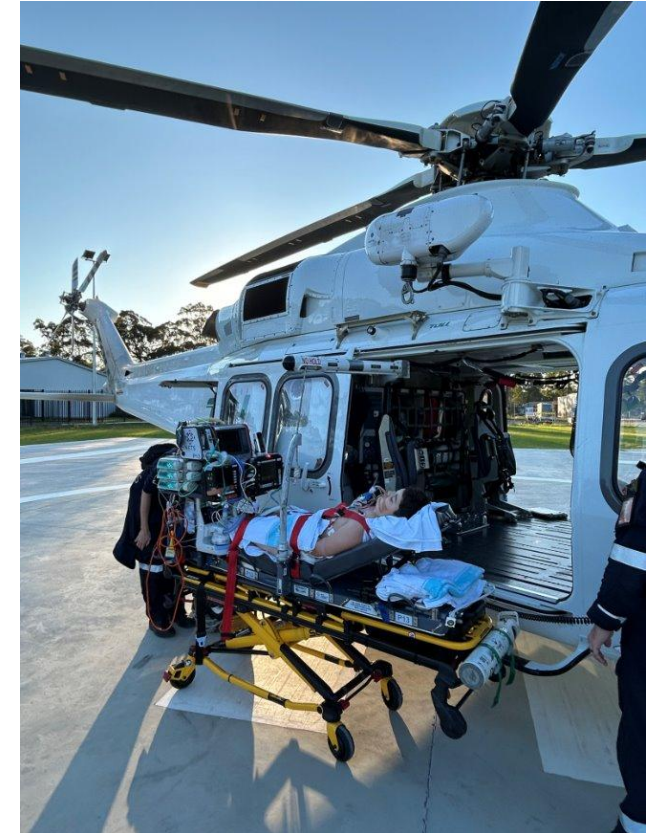
Compliance with National  
Nurse Practitioner  
Competency Standards



Continuing professional  
development as required  
by the standards



## Dual Role



RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The effect of care provided by paediatric critical care transport teams on mortality children transported to paediatric intensive care units in England and Wales: a retrospective cohort study

Sarah E. Seaton<sup>1\*</sup>, Elizabeth S. Draper<sup>1</sup>, Christina Pagel<sup>2</sup>, Fiona Chan-Dominy<sup>1,2</sup>, J. Davies<sup>2</sup>, S. Hanna<sup>2</sup>, S. Riphagen<sup>2</sup>, I. Murdoch<sup>2</sup>, M. McDougall<sup>2</sup>  
on behalf of the DEPICT Study Team



Specialist retrieval nurse practitioners can be competent leaders in interhospital transport of critically ill children

A. Chan-Dominy<sup>1,2</sup> · J. Davies<sup>2</sup> · S. Hanna<sup>2</sup> · S. Riphagen<sup>2</sup> · I. Murdoch<sup>2</sup> · M. McDougall<sup>2</sup>



Early Human Development  
Volume 83, Issue 2, February 2007, Page 134



Early Human Development  
Volume 85, Issue 8, August 2009, Pages 487-490



## Neonatal transfers by advanced neonatal nurse practitioners: Is it time to end the debate?

Joanna Morrison, Irfan Ulhaq Cheema\* ✉

Evaluation

## The role and scope of retrieval nurse practitioners in the UK

Jo Davies MSc, BSc, RSCN, RGN ✉, Fiona Lynch MSc, BSc, RSCN, Andrew Nyman MRCPCH, Shelley Riphagen FCP (Paeds) SA; FRCP; Dip. Obs. (SA); MBCh B

First published: 28 February 2015 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/nicc.12167> | Citations: 4

Specialist retrieval nurse practitioners and paediatric registrars

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Best Practice Guideline article

## Who should staff neonatal transport teams?

Alan C Fenton<sup>a</sup> ✉, Andrew Leslie<sup>b</sup> ✉

# Why do we need NP's at NETS

Advanced trainee rotations

6 to 12 months

Royal college of physicians mandatory requirement 25 neonatal retrievals

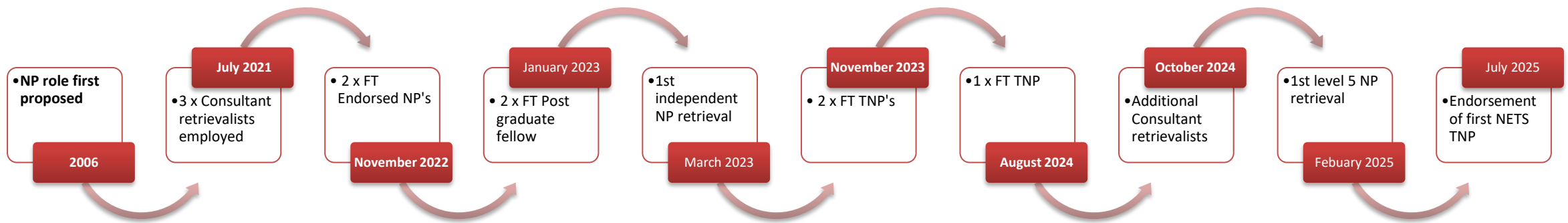
Historically NETS retrieval teams Registrar/Retrieval Nurse

A Review was conducted in 2018 on the NETS service

More consistency with retrieval skill set and experience

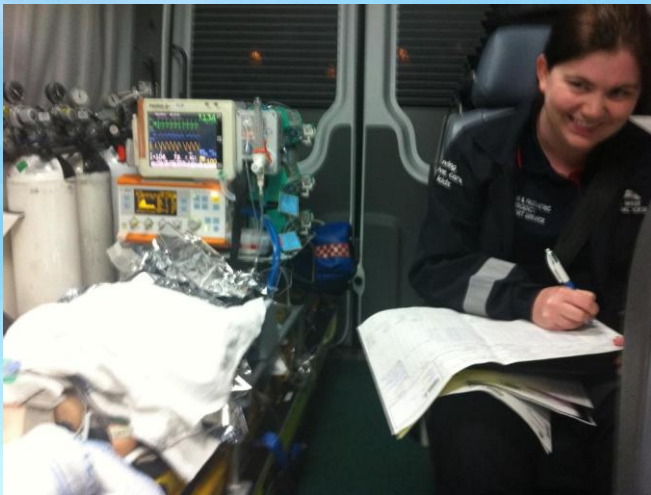
Stability in a trained workforce

# The long road to Implementation



# Meet the NETS NP group

**Jenna McGeever**  
Transitional NP



**Sarah Binchy**  
Transitional NP



**Laura Scerri**  
Endorsed NP



**Ruth Irwin**  
Endorsed NP



## Scope and role Planning

### Level 4 retrieval: (NP + RN or Dr + RN)

#### Neonatal:

- RDS, stable on prostin for duct dependent CHD, pre-term baby for ROP review

#### Paediatric:

- DKA moderate, asthma, bronchiolitis  
+ *Non-invasive ventilation*

### Level 5 retrieval: (NP + RN or Dr + RN)

#### Neonatal:

- RDS, NEC, from Level 5 to Level 6 NICU's, Pre-term baby for ROP review, prematurity >27 weeks

#### Paediatric:

- Severe DKA, bronchiolitis, toxicology  
+ *Invasive ventilation, UVC, ICC, single inotrope*



Defining professional roles and establishing a clear scope of practice



Developing a comprehensive clinical training program



Integrating and refining the NETS model of care



Designing a structured pathway toward full clinical independence

# Clinical Skills and Role Planning

## *Training and education modalities*

- Clinical teaching, (both on and off campus)
- Direct clinical supervision and structured feedback
- Case base discussions
- Direct observation of procedural skills
- Peer review
- Clinical placements in areas such as Anesthetics, NICU's ED's both internally and externally to our Network



# Pathway to full independence

- **Stage 1:**

- complete tertiary study
- Gain AHPRA endorsement
- Pass annual reviews
- Demonstrate core competencies (including hard and soft skills)
- Demonstrate independence in managing Level 4
- Gain ratification of competence (Medical Director and Nurse manager)
  - Able to independently lead Level 4 retrievals within the Sydney basin on day shifts
  - Coach support available for Level 5 retrievals or missions outside of the Sydney basin.

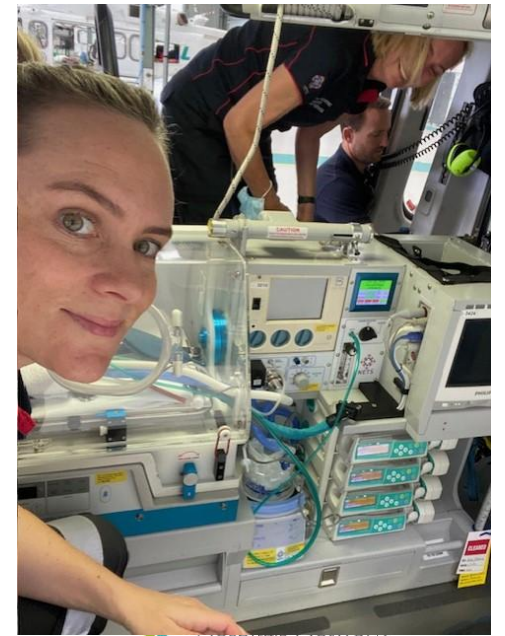
- **Stage 2:**

- Continued demonstrated safe clinical proficiency through completion of key competencies
- Demonstrated independent execution of Level 5 retrievals
- Full completion of all skills
- Gain ratification of competence (Medical Director and Nurse Manager)
  - NP is rostered for Level 1 - 5 retrievals independently
  - Initially on day shifts within the Sydney basin, then expanding to all shifts including nights across the state.

# Looking to the future

- Support NP education and credentialing in retrieval medicine.
- Secure educational funding to meet the growing educational demands of the NP role.
- Empower NPs to lead retrieval missions with confidence and support.
- Encourage and mentor more nurses to pursue careers as Retrieval Nurse Practitioners





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