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Nurse celebrates 57 years of patient care

Bowral & District Hospital registered nurse, Patricia Wright says her milestone 57-year nursing career reflects the journey of women in the workforce.

Ms Wright said nursing was one of only three career choices offered to female students when she completed her high school education in 1964.

“The career choices were teaching, nursing or secretarial work. I chose nursing and have loved every minute of it,” Ms Wright said.

“We have come a long way and I am grateful for the wonderful career opportunities I have been given in nursing. I have worked alongside so many wonderful people and I have had great pleasure in supporting my patients from ill health to discharge.”

Starting out as a nurse in Wollongong on 26 July 1964, Ms Wright has worked in a variety of nursing roles in women’s surgery and medicine, neurology, aged care and geriatric care in hospitals in NSW and Queensland.

She has also worked as a Director of Nursing and a night supervisor before taking up her current position as a registered nurse at Bowral & District Hospital 17 years ago.

“My career has been an incredible journey and I have gained skills and knowledge which I have been able to take to the next position. I have enjoyed the diversity of nursing and that every day is different,” she said.

Encouraged by her children, Ms Wright will retire on the day she celebrates her 57th anniversary in nursing, on 26 July 2021.

She plans to devote more time to her two children and grandchild and to continuing her volunteer work in the disability sector.

Ms Wright’s parting advice for nurses starting their careers is to spread their wings.

“Follow your passion and seek the education and position that will take you there,” she said.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Performance Sonia Marshall said Ms Wright was a wonderful role model and inspiration for other nurses.

“I thank Patricia for her devotion to her profession and her patients for 57 years and wish her all the very best for the future,” she said.

South Western Sydney Local Health District celebrated International Nurses Day on Wednesday 12 May by hosting award ceremonies, a breakfast on the lawn, lunches and morning teas.

Staff and the community were also encouraged to join the Healing Hearts campaign and wear and post the blue and purple hearts, representing the colours of nursing and midwifery on social media using the hashtags #IDM2021, #IND2021 and #ExceptionalCare.