Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Health Nursing

This program prepares nurses and midwives for advanced practice in community child and family health as a maternal and child health nurse.

You will develop the ability to critically analyse and apply principles of primary health care, to help you secure a rewarding role as a maternal and child health nurse.

RMIT is one of the oldest providers of nursing education in Australia and continues to be at the forefront of nursing education and research.

Learning and teaching
You will experience a range of learning approaches including learner-centred curriculum, learning activities and projects. Your learning will be further supported by face-to-face lectures, some online learning, independent study and clinical experiences across a range of early childhood services.

Industry connections
RMIT University is committed to providing you with an education that strongly links formal learning with professional or vocational practice.

Career outlook
Graduates work in maternal and child health nursing in local government, early parenting centres and community services.

Professional recognition
Graduates can join professional organisations such as the Victorian Association of Maternal and Child Health Nurses.

Program structure
The Graduate Diploma in Child and Family Health Nursing consists of 96 credit points. The program is structured to enable you to:

- critically analyse and apply the principles of primary health care related to child and family health
- analyse and evaluate nursing strategies designed to promote and maintain wellbeing for children and their families
- apply evidence-based practice to primary care within the scope of the Maternal Child Health service
- critically examine key ethical issues relevant to professional health care practice in community settings.

You will complete seven core courses and one elective course.

Child and Family Health Assessment
You will be introduced to physical and developmental assessment skills and the associated range of validated screening tools.

You are expected to undertake a minimum of 120 hours of clinical visits and placements in addition to class-based coursework and workshops.

Family and Community Studies
In this course you will investigate the socio-ecological model of health and how it gives context to support for families. The concept of contemporary families and their diversity of structure, function, strength and resilience will be examined. A particular focus will be vulnerability and the experience of vulnerable families.

Health Promotion for Early Parenting
In this course you will critically examine the concepts of health promotion and health education in the context of primary health care. Key parenting concerns for the 0-6 year age group such as infant mental health, sleep and settling, safe sleeping, play, behaviour and safety will be examined from an evidence-based perspective. You will also appraise contemporary parenting programs and plan and evaluate a parent group session for a Maternal and Child Health service. Throughout the course the focus will be on working in partnership with families.
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Program structure (continued)

Working in Partnership with Families
This course involves intensive experiential workshops focusing on the theory and skills of the helping process. These workshops will further enhance your ability to work in partnership with families and will also address working with culturally and linguistically diverse families and motivational interviewing.

Child and Family Nutrition
This course explores nutrition issues affecting infants, young children and their families. It encompasses the assessment and management of breastfeeding concerns, the appropriate use of infant formula, the introduction of first foods, and nutritional requirements of young children and their families.

Child and Family Nursing in the Community
You will explore the range of health issues that can affect on children and families in the community. Identification, assessment, management and referral of these issues will be considered in terms of the supports and agencies available to families. Risk assessment and the maternal and child health nurses’ responsibility for mandatory reporting will also be critically discussed.

Maternal and Child Health Clinical Practice
This course comprises 180 hours of clinical experience. It is predominantly based in MCH centres where you will practise individual consultations, home visits and group sessions supported by a MCH nurse preceptor. This will enable you to achieve the competencies required for practice as a MCH nurse in Victoria. Clinical workshops and debrief sessions on campus provide further clinical support.

You will also complete one of the following elective courses:
- Parent-Infant Mental Health
- Context of Mental Health Nursing Partnerships
- Therapeutic Initiatives in Mental Health
- Health Inquiry Critique

Clinical practice
To meet course requirements, you must complete a minimum of 300 hours of clinical experience in approved early childhood agencies. While most experience occurs in approved MCH centres, almost one-third of your clinical experience will include observations and visits to community agencies. These include childcare centres, early intervention services, early parenting centres, MCH Line, community day stay programs and other key services.

How to apply
Direct to RMIT University: rmit.edu.au/programs/apply/direct

Application dates Semester 1, 2017
- Applications open 14 August 2016
- Timely applications close 10 November 2016
Late applications will continue to be accepted after this date if places are still available.

Entry requirements
To be considered for admission into the program you should normally hold:
- A Bachelor of Nursing degree or equivalent, and a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery or Bachelor of Midwifery degree or equivalent
- Current registration with AHPRA as both a nurse and a midwife
- You must also have a minimum of one year of EFT graduate experience in both nursing and midwifery.
You should be able to demonstrate recent clinical experience, defined as having worked in nursing or midwifery for a minimum of one year in the past five years.
Applicants are required to arrange a clinical place with a local MCH service and submit confirmation of this as part of the application process. You are encouraged to discuss this early in the application process with the program coordinator, who will also provide a specific form for this requirement.

Fees
2017 indicative fees
Commonwealth supported places (CSP) range from AU$6,349 to AU$10,596
Full-fee: AU$19,200 per annum
How much you’ll pay will depend on whether you’re offered a Commonwealth supported place or a full-fee place. Entry for this program is primarily through Commonwealth supported places. Government financial assistance is available to eligible students regardless of the type of place you enrol in.

Fees shown above apply to 2017 only and are based on an annual full-time study load of 96 credit points unless otherwise noted. A proportionate fee applies for more or less than the full-time study load. Tuition fees are adjusted on an annual basis and these fees should only be used as a guide.

For more information and to learn how to calculate your exact tuition fees see: rmit.edu.au/programs/fees/postgraduate