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5. Nursing from an international perspective: a journey in the Philippines

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The School of Nursing and Midwifery at Deakin University, Victoria, Australia, has recently offered an elective unit: HNN216 International Nursing Study Tour. This unit gives students the opportunity to learn about the context of nursing from an international perspective through collaboration with healthcare providers, universities, volunteers and the community. Nursing and midwifery students enhance their understanding of cross-cultural health and nursing care in a pre-determined country.

In 2010 students had the opportunity to engage in communities in the Philippines and were directly involved in undertaking a variety of clinical and academic experiences in community settings. For example, students directly participated in health screening missions to promote health outcomes for children, their families and those experiencing chronic health conditions.

Two key intended Learning outcomes of the unit are to:

- Critically appraise the political, social, and geographical influences on healthcare and nursing in the host country;
- Reflect on the role, scope of practice, and professional Legal and ethical accountabilities of the registered nurse from an international perspective.

After one of the medical missions which was in collaboration with the Australian Returned Soldiers League (RSL), the student's reflections included: "..... family after family flooded in ..... we saw children and adults with worms, lice, cellulitis, rotten and decayed teeth (like I'd never seen before), coughs and colds ..... and many more other illnesses and diseases ....... "

"Today was a day I'll never forget .... a learning experience like no other ..... when there's no technology to assist you with your assessment you really realise the importance of those basic nursing skills, like observation and palpation ... "

The poster will present one student's reflections of her journey and how it impacted on her learning.