Strengthening Health Workforce Education (SHWE) Program in Papua New Guinea (PNG) – Stage 2

Brief 7: UPNG at UTS Partnership Development Workshop 1 held at the University of Technology Sydney
Monday 8th of December to Friday 12th of December 2025

Background:

The first Partnership Development Workshop held at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Workshop was delivered under the Strengthening Health Workforce Education (SHWE) Program in Papua New Guinea (PNG). This Program is funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and delivered by the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing, Midwifery & Health Development at the University of Technology Sydney (WHO CCNM UTS) in partnership with the National Department of Health (NDoH), and the University of PNG (UPNG). The SHWE initiative aims to build the capacity of PNG's nursing and Community Health Worker (CHW) educators to deliver high-quality, contemporary, and inclusive health professional education.

Educators from the UPNG Division of Nursing and Midwifery

Stage One of the SHWE Program resulted in the development and delivery of the revised Nursing and Community Health Worker (CHW) curriculums that were implemented in 2024. Stage Two continues to build capacity in health professional educators across PNG to enable them to effectively plan and deliver the new revised education programs.

The University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) has been identified as the national education provider to deliver health professional education to further improve educational standards across PNG and the second stage of the SHWE Program also provides support to sustainably build and strengthen post-graduate programs, research and teaching capacity in the Division of Nursing and Midwifery (DoNM) within the School of Medicine and Health Science (SMHS) at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG). The international partnership (Sister School model) between the SMHS at UPNG and the WHO CCNMH and Faculty of Health, UTS guides this collaborative work to improve the quality of education of health professionals across PNG.

This brief reports on the 1st workshop in a series of 4 workshops hosted at UTS for UPNG educators, aimed at further developing the partnership between the DoNM at UPNG, the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery in the Faculty of Health UTS and the WHO CCNMH, strengthening the Sister School relationship. This workshop was conducted with 6 female educators from the SMHS at UPNG.

UPNG educators during the visit to the UTS Simulation Labs.

Partnership Development Workshop 1

Workshop Goal: To strengthen collaboration and between the DoNM in the SMHS at UPNG, the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery in the Faculty of Health, UTS, and the WHO CCNMH UTS to support the professional development of participating staff.

Objectives:

- To further develop and formalise the partnership between the two Schools of Nursing & Midwifery and the WHO CCNMH.
- To provide visiting staff with exposure to the design, development, and implementation of simulation (SIM) laboratories for nursing and midwifery education.
- To enable staff to engage with experienced educators in postgraduate programs and gain insights into postgraduate-level teaching practices.
- To explore strategies and approaches for developing web-based learning resources.
- To work collaboratively with subject developers in the WHO CCNMH to design and refine subjects for the proposed Graduate Diploma in Health Professional Education (GDHPE), scheduled to be offered by the DoNM, UPNG in 2026.

Group work with UPNG Educators

Day 1:

The workshop commenced with a short orientation session with introduction to UTS and the WHO CCNMH. Activities included several interactive activities and discussions exploring the different expectations of post-graduate teaching and learning presented by WHO CCNMH curriculum advisers Dr Jan Forber, Dr Carolyn Hayes and Ms Christabel Miller. Participants were invited to 'bridge the gap' that distinguishes undergraduate from postgraduate-level learning and identify the necessary 'shifts' in terms of knowledge, skills and critical thinking for both student and educators. The varied influences for health professional education in the next 5-10 years were identified and discussed in relation to the professional development needs relating to postgraduate education programs.

An exploration of UTS Team's developmental process for the PG program followed, with the proposed structure based on a mix of intensive (on-site) weeks and off-site weeks. An introduction to the conceptualisation and development, so far, of the following subjects in the GDHPE was also provided:

- Using Health Data to Improve Healthcare Practices
- Politics, Policy and Leadership
- Teaching for Learning: Foundations of Practice + Work based learning 1
- Clinical Teaching and Learning + Work based learning 2

The day concluded with a detailed exploration of curriculum alignment and mapping of program learning outcomes, graduate abilities, subjects learning outcomes and subject content coherence across all the subjects. Active discussion and feedback was generated including consideration of the delivery of subjects across semesters.

UPNG educators during the visit to the UTS Simulation Labs.

Day 2:

The UTS facilitators led presentations and discussions on suggested structure for intensive teaching days (lecture, tutorial style interactive activities and preparatory and/or reflective work for students). This was followed by sharing several detailed samples of teaching and learning activities appropriate to the delivery of the PG subjects.

Participants were encouraged to provide feedback for moving forward on all aspects of the proposed PG program including learning objectives, content, assessment tasks and overall structure or duration.

The morning concluded with a tour of the Faculty of Health's Simulation Laboratories led by Ms Erica Calderone, Manager, Simulation and Laboratories, UTS. This provided participants with an opportunity to see and engage with a range of simulation equipment, and share ideas related to developing and using simulation equipment and spaces to enhance teaching and learning activities.
The afternoon focused on Design and Delivery of On-line Education Programs, facilitated by Ms Michelle Hrlec, the Executive Manager Education Partnerships and Product Strategy at UTS. Topics covered included the nature of online learning, the application of Moodle as a Learning Management System (LMS), using Zoom, features and benefits of an LMS, barriers and challenges, strategies for engagement and support at UPNG, and next steps.

Day 3:
Prof. Di Brown and A/Prof. Caroline Havery first led a course design workshop. This focused on discussions about the current BN program offered

by UPNG and how to develop the clinical specialisations currently taught in the program into post graduate level programs. The changes needed to revise the BN to become a generic program designed to help registered nurses improve clinical practice and gain the academic skills they need to be able to undertake post graduate study were also examined. The group developed a draft rationale and course justification document which they agreed to take back to their colleagues in the Division of Nursing, UPNG as a first step in revising the UPNG BN curriculum.

Later that day, preparation for teaching postgraduate programs and the role of simulation built on the discussions from the previous lab tour. Beginning with an introduction to the use of simulation as a teaching and learning strategy, participants then had the opportunity to participate in a Dementia/Sensory Deficit Simulation. This activity modelled effective teaching and learning using simulation, including pre-brief/debrief exercises, setting up a SIM space/lab and ways to enhance fidelity.

UPNG educators participating in a Dementia/Sensory Deficit Simulation Activity.

Day 4:
Following an introduction to some of the nursing and midwifery academics at the School of Nursing and Midwifery at UTS representing relevant areas of teaching, Prof. Jacqui Pich presented an outline of the 3-year BN program to provide UPNG colleagues with an overview of an option for a generic pre-registration program and post graduate program coordinators described current offerings in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at UTS.

UPNG staff then met with individual subject experts discussing program design, subject development and teaching & learning strategies as well as providing an opportunity for networking and future collaboration. The workshop concluded with reflective dialogue, evaluation activities, and a plan of action for 2026.

Workshop & Visit Outcomes:
Initial feedback from participants at the end of the workshop was very positive and it was generally agreed that workshop objectives had been met.

Next steps:
Following this workshop, Prof Di Brown and A/Prof. Caroline Havery will meet with the UPNG nursing educators and their colleagues in PNG early next year to continue this work and plan for 2026.
Further Partnership Development workshops are planned to be held at UTS for UPNG colleagues.
Collaborative work continues with WHO CCNMH UTS and UPNG SMHS DoNM, through the ongoing

international partnership to further improve the quality of education for nurses and CHWs across PNG. Once the Graduate Diploma of Health Professional Education is approved at UPNG, it is hoped that the knowledge and skills gained during these workshops will support the successful implementation of this new program.

Educators from the UPNG Division of Nursing and Midwifery with Nursing Academics from the UTS School of Nursing and Midwifery