

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE GRANTS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2025

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all to a very windy Government House.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their deep connection to land, sea and waters, and their ongoing commitment to community.

As Patron, it is always my great pleasure to host the announcement of the Florence Nightingale Grants and Award recipients. Holding the ceremony here at Government House is a fitting reflection of the esteem in which our nurses are held in our community and reflects the significant contributions that you all make.

Since the 1950s, the grants have provided our Tasmanian registered nurses with the financial opportunity to undertake post-graduate studies.¹ Their primary funding source is the St John's Hospital Association, as well as donations from Tasmanian nurses and the general public.

Applications for the grants and awards open annually on 12 May, International Nurses Day and, fittingly, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, in 1820.

This year, three applicants will be awarded grants.

First, the **Leonie Sidebottom Study Grant**.

Leonie Sidebottom was the first Registrar of Nurses in Tasmania, holding the position from 1951 to 1963, when she retired. Previously, she was Supervisory Nurse, the forerunner of the Registrar's position.

¹ www.nursesgrantsandawards.com/about-us

Leonie also helped establish the *Nurses Registration Act* in 1952, which set up the Nurses Registration System in Tasmania.

Second, we are presenting the **Returned Sisters Memorial Grant**.

This annual grant is offered by the Returned Sisters Association of Tasmania Memorial Trust to those nurses and midwives registered and practising in Tasmania for at least five years to undertake a leadership program or project within Tasmania, interstate or overseas.²

I understand that this year we have two recipients of this grant.

May I congratulate all recipients for your commitment to nursing and for furthering your contributions to the profession. Now, we shall proceed with the awards.

[Acting Official Secretary invites Associate Professor Francine Douce, Chief Nurse and Midwife, Department of Health to the window lectern to announce awardees.]

² www.nursesgrantsandawards.com/our-grants-awards/