

**REMARKS AT THE 2012 PRESENTATION OF THE FLORENCE
NIGHTINGALE AWARDS
BY
THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE - MONDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2012**

It is again a pleasure for my wife and me to welcome you all to the annual presentation of the Florence Nightingale Awards. I think that this is the fourth time we have been privileged to play a part in the conferring of these awards.

These are important awards that promote research and education in the health care sector and this year there will be four recipients of awards in three categories. The value of the research that is conducted pursuant a Florence Nightingale Award is perhaps best measured by a retrospective glance at the work done by past awardees

For example, last year Brett Mitchell was the recipient of the Robyn Whitworth Grant, awarded to help him complete his PHD research into Mortality and prolongation of length of stay in hospital, caused by Clostridium Difficile infection. In result the Award has assisted him:

- To submit his PhD thesis for examination on the 15th October this year.

- To give two oral presentations and a poster presentation at the National Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control Conference held in Sydney last October for which he won an award for the best oral abstract - this is only offered once per conference and is awarded at the conference dinner. You will be pleased to note that at the dinner Brett publicly thanked and promoted the support given him by the Florence Nightingale Awards.
- In addition Brett gave two poster presentations at an international conference in the United Kingdom which he attended in mid- November.
- He has also presented findings from his research in other forums including the Royal College of Nursing Australia in Canberra and at other professional development events.
- Finally, to date Brett has had six publications related to his research accepted in peer review journals and I am told he has more in the pipe line.

When you consider that Brett's research was directed to the very important issue of mortality and prolongation of length of stay in hospital, caused by Clostridium Difficile infection, the most common cause of infectious diarrhea in hospital patients, and that the

completion of his research was made possible by his Award, the importance and significance of the work of the Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards Committee is immediately apparent.

Brett is just one of many recipients of a Florence Nightingale Award and I only single him out because he is a recent Awardee. But there are many awardees like Brett. Indeed, PhD researcher, Jenny Kerrison is another researcher whose work is supported by the Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards Committee. Last year she was the recipient of the Nell Espie Grant and as you will hear in a moment, the support of her work will continue into 2013 as she will be awarded another grant this year. Her field of research, "Understanding Pregnant Teenagers antenatal care needs in Southern Tasmania" is obviously quite different from that undertaken by Brett but of equal importance to the health care of our community.

So the breadth of the work of the Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards Committee is wide and, as I say, the importance of its work in promoting research and education in the health care sector cannot be overstated. So this morning my congratulations go not only to the recipients of an Award but also on behalf of the Tasmanian community, to the Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards Committee. In that context I would like to pay a special tribute to the contribution made by Marguerite Hickman who died recently. She was the inaugural President of the Florence Nightingale Grants and

Awards Committee and a long term committee member and through her work on the Committee made a substantial contribution to research and education in the health care sector during her life-time.