

**FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE GRANTS AND AWARDS
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020**

Good morning all. Dick and I warmly welcome you to Government House.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

May I acknowledge among you:

- Associate Professor Francine Douce, Chief Nurse and Midwife, and Committee Chair;
- Kathrine Morgan-Wicks, Secretary Department of Health;
- Professor Anthony Lawler, Deputy Secretary and Chief Medical Officer Department of Health;
- David and Anne Laughher representing Nell Espie's family;
- Executive Directors of Nursing and Midwifery of the Tasmanian Health Service.

This year's Covid-19 pandemic has had an effect on the way we do things here at Government House, restricting numbers, and making our standard social functions with mingling and vertical imbibing impossible.

You have heard from David how we have been obliged to implement other arrangements. But they are creative in their own way, and the fact that we are able to gather at all is perhaps a reminder that we are more fortunate than many other countries in combating this pernicious disease.

We're also very thankful that our health professionals and all of the other officials contributing to the Government response to the Coronavirus disease continue to do exceptional work on our behalf.

I am once again very pleased as your Patron to be hosting the announcement of this year's Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards recipients.

The Florence Nightingale Grants Committee was established in the 1950s, providing Tasmanian registered nurses with study grants to financially assist with post graduate studies¹.

The main source of funding for the grants was through the St John's Hospital Association and donations from Tasmanian nurses and the general public.

The Committee promotes the grants with applications opening annually on International Nurses Day on May 12, this is also the date of the birth of Florence Nightingale in 1820.

This year has provided an exceptional opportunity to showcase the work of nurses and midwives with the declaration of 2020 as the 'Year of the Nurse and Midwife' by the World Health Organisation in honour of the 200th anniversary year of Florence Nightingale's birth.

A global pandemic was not the celebration that was planned; however, without doubt the global crisis has raised the profile of nurses and has demonstrated the vital role they play in supporting the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The Florence Nightingale Grants and Awards recognise the achievement and contribution of nurses and midwives undertaking post graduate study, and their commitment to professional excellence.

Despite the demands placed on the healthcare system during the pandemic there was considerable interest in this year's grant round.

Five scholarships were available and the following were awarded:

¹ <http://www.nursesgrantsandawards.com/about.html>

The Returned Sisters Memorial Grant²

This grant supports a registered nurse or midwife who has practised in Tasmania for at least five years to undertake a leadership project or program in Tasmania, interstate or overseas. The 2020 grant award is valued at \$3,000.

The Nell Espie Study Grant³

Colonel Nell Espie, AM, RRC, FRCNA was a driving force behind the Florence Nightingale Trust and had a distinguished career as a military nurse. Nell trained in general, midwifery and child health nursing, as well as undertaking nursing administration and community health nursing. The 2020 study grant award is valued at \$3,000.

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² <http://www.nursesgrantsandawards.com/returned-sisters-memorial-grant.html>

³ <http://www.nursesgrantsandawards.com/nell-espie-grant.html>