Serco offer unique opportunity for Queensland nursing students

Serco Australia’s Health Services team at Southern Queensland Correctional Centre (SQCC) is leading the way with an innovation helping nursing students gain valuable experience.

In partnership with the University of Southern Queensland, Serco is offering nursing students the opportunity to participate in a four-week professional placement experience - a first for corrections in Southern Queensland.

SQCC Health Services Manager Brie Brown said the first six students had completed their placements on a mental health rotation since the program commenced in November 2019.

"There is a high prevalence of mental disorders for individuals in custodial settings, so these placements offer students a unique opportunity to gain an increased understanding of mental health," Ms Brown said.

"Being a correctional facility, the students benefit from an accelerated learning experience. So much can happen in a short time and no day is the same."

The students work alongside an experienced mental health nurse at all times and engage in a variety of activities during the placement, including performing medical and mental health assessments, attending medical emergencies, self-harm risk assessments and interventions, medication rounds, as well as participating in a variety of meetings.

University of Southern Queensland School of Nursing and Midwifery Associate Lecturer in Mental Health Rhonda Dawson said students really enjoyed the experience and had gained unique clinical knowledge. The students are given a client list and are required to choose a case study for their clinical placement assignment.

"The opportunities Serco has provided to our students have extended their mental health knowledge in a different setting to where they would normally have been placed," Ms Dawson said.

"The placements have equipped our students with valuable skills and practical experiences and Serco has been a great support to them."

This month we welcomed our second group of nursing students, with five students set to complete their 120-hour clinical rotation by the end of October.

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Media contact: Tim Evans, +61 409 389 358
General media enquiries: Serco media line +61 (0) 2 9409 8700 or media@serco-ap.com

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