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The male of the species: a profile of men in nursing

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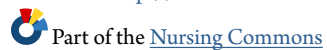
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Box 1: Study Objectives

The research project objectives were to:

1. Produce a profile of men in nursing in Western Australia;
2. Describe male and female nurse/midwives' perceptions of men in nursing and compare the differences between their perceptions;
3. Gather and analyse data related to the respondents' prior experience of being a male nurse/midwife or dealing with men in the nursing/midwifery profession;
4. Analyse the respondents' perceptions of how best to promote the concept of men in nursing;
5. Analyse the respondents' perceptions of society's attitudes towards men in nursing;
6. Gather data that can be used to develop information to successful recruitment strategies/interventions for male nurses/midwives;
7. Develop greater insights into the motivating forces that drive men to become nurses or midwives or stay in the nursing and midwifery profession.

Figure 1: Study Outline / Process:

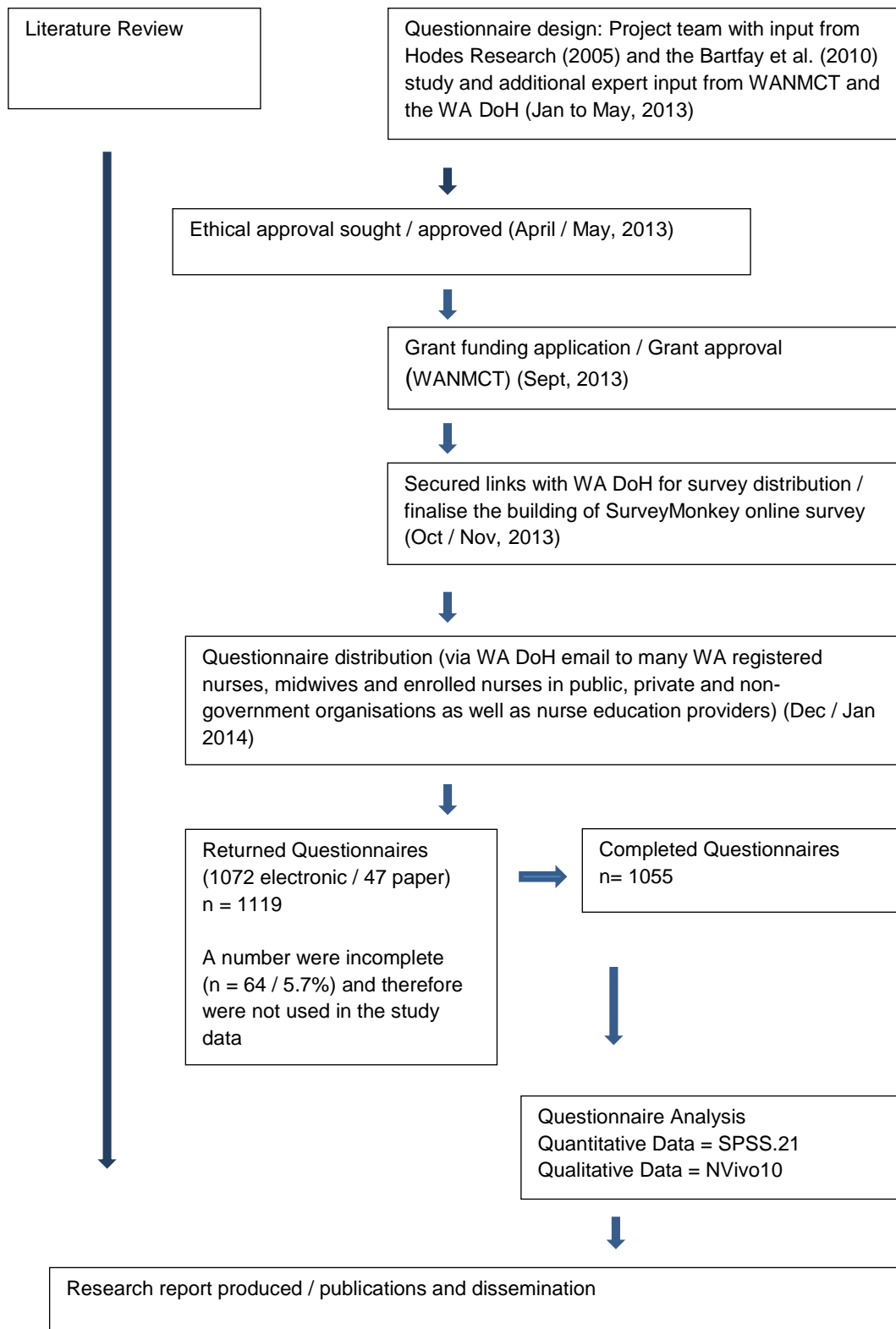


Table 1: Background Information - Demographic Profile

Variable	Male		Female		All Respondents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender M/F/Combined	247	(23.4)	808	(76.6)	1055	(100.00)
Registration Category						
Midwife	0	(0.0)	44	(5.4)	44	(4.1)
RN	219	(88.6)	590	(73.1)	809	(76.6)
EN	7	(2.8)	40	(4.9)	47	(4.4)
NP	11	(4.4)	16	(1.9)	27	(2.5)
RN/ Mid	10	(4.0)	118	(14.6)	128	(12.1)
Aboriginal/TSI						
No	245	(99.2)	802	(99.2)	1047	(99.2)
Yes	2	(0.8)	6	(0.8)	8	(0.8)
National Origin						
Australia	134	(54.2)	458	(56.6)	592	(56.1)
Overseas	113	(45.7)	350	(43.3)	464	(43.9)
Age						
Less than 20	0	(0.0)	1	(0.12)	1	(0.1)
21 – 30	32	(13.2)	109	(13.6)	141	(13.5)
31 – 40	48	(19.8)	133	(16.6)	181	(17.4)
41 – 50	77	(31.8)	245	(30.7)	322	(30.9)
51 – 60	73	(30.1)	248	(31.0)	321	(30.8)
61 or older	12	(4.9)	62	(7.7)	74	(7.1)
Highest Qualification Held						
PhD / Doctorate	3	(1.2)	5	(0.6)	8	(0.7)
Masters	30	(12.2)	81	(10.0)	111	(10.5)
Bachelor	118	(47.9)	352	(43.5)	470	(44.6)
PG Cert / Dip	81	(32.9)	306	(37.8)	387	(36.7)
Other	14	(5.6)	64	(7.9)	78	((7.4)
Residence						
Metropolitan	206	(83.7)	639	(79.5)	845	(80.5)
Rural	22	(8.9)	91	(11.3)	113	(10.7)
Regional	16	(6.5)	63	(7.8)	79	(7.5)
Remote	2	(0.8)	10	(1.2)	12	(1.1)

Table 2: Background Information – Further Demographic Profile

Variable	Male		Female		All Respondents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Years in the Profession						
< 1 year	4	(1.6)	24	(2.9)	28	(2.6)
1 to 5 years	27	(10.9)	68	(8.4)	95	(9.0)
6 – 10 years	39	(15.7)	114	(14.1)	153	(14.5)
11 to 15 years	39	(15.7)	70	(8.6)	109	(10.3)
16 to 20 years	26	(10.5)	79	(9.7)	105	(9.9)
21 years and over	112	(45.3)	452	(56.0)	564	(53.5)
Primary Work Setting						
Aged care	2	(0.8)	19	(2.3)	21	(2.0)
Community	16	(6.4)	66	(8.1)	82	(7.7)
Critical care/ED	54	(21.8)	100	(12.3)	154	(14.5)
Education	15	(6.9)	70	(8.6)	85	(8.0)
Family/Child	1	(0.4)	25	(3.0)	26	(2.4)
General Practice	1	(0.4)	6	(0.7)	7	(0.6)
Management	28	(11.3)	85	(10.5)	113	(10.7)
Medical	14	(5.6)	59	(7.3)	73	(6.9)
Mental Health	69	(27.9)	64	(7.9)	133	(12.6)
Midwifery	2	(0.8)	85	(10.5)	87	(8.2)
Med/Surg	9	(3.6)	50	(6.1)	59	(5.5)
Not employed	1	(0.4)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)
Paediatrics	8	(3.2)	29	(3.6)	37	(3.5)
Perioperative	9	(3.6)	37	(4.6)	46	(4.3)
Rehab	4	(1.6)	23	(2.8)	27	(2.5)
Research	2	(0.8)	16	(2.0)	18	(1.7)
Surgical	11	(4.4)	71	(9.7)	82	(7.7)
Other	1	(0.4)	3	(0.4)	4	(0.4)
Time in Current Setting						
< 1 year	19	(7.6)	97	(12.0)	116	(10.9)
1 to 5 years	86	(34.8)	293	(36.2)	379	(35.9)
6 to 10 years	55	(22.2)	192	(23.7)	247	(23.4)
11 to 15 years	35	(14.1)	89	(11.0)	124	(11.7)
16 to 20 years	18	(7.2)	46	(5.6)	64	(6.0)
21 to 25 years	14	(5.6)	30	(3.7)	44	(4.1)
26 years +	19	(7.6)	61	(7.5)	80	(7.5)
Not currently employed	1	(0.4)	0	(0.0)	1	(0.1)

Table 3: Path to Nursing - Summary of Findings

Variable	Male		Female		All Respondents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Previous Activities						
Another career	125	(51.2)	230	(28.7)	355	(34.0)
A tertiary course	25	(10.5)	63	(7.8)	88	(8.4)
Caring for children	1	(0.4)	34	(4.2)	35	(3.3)
Caring work	21	(8.6)	56	(7.0)	77	(7.3)
High school	46	(18.8)	394	(49.2)	440	(42.1)
Military	15	(6.1)	5	(0.6)	20	(1.9)
Unemployment	8	(3.2)	6	(0.7)	14	(1.3)
Voluntary activities	2	(0.8)	6	(0.7)	8	(0.8)
Other	1	(0.4)	6	(0.7)	7	(0.7)
Age First Considered Nursing						
Less than 10 years	3	(1.2)	94	(11.8)	97	(9.3)
10 – 20 years	118	(46.6)	568	(71.0)	686	(65.7)
21 – 30 years	93	(36.6)	110	(13.8)	203	(19.4)
31 – 40 years	23	(9.0)	22	(2.8)	45	(4.3)
41 years and above	6	(2.4)	6	(0.8)	12	(1.5)
Age Started Nursing Studies						
Less than 20 years	92	(37.7)	569	(71.3)	661	(63.4)
21 – 25 years	81	(33.1)	130	(16.2)	211	(20.2)
26 – 30 years	32	(13.1)	41	(5.1)	73	(7.0)
31 – 40 years	32	(13.1)	45	(5.6)	77	(7.3)
41 years and above	7	(2.8)	13	(1.6)	20	(1.9)
Reasons for Choosing a nursing career						
Always wanted to nurse	22	(8.9)	278	(34.4)	300	(28.4)
Desire for stable career	98	(39.6)	206	(25.5)	304	(28.8)
Desire to help people	126	(50.0)	359	(44.4)	485	(45.9)
Family member a nurse	63	(25.5)	195	(24.1)	258	(24.4)
Flexible working hours	37	(14.9)	109	(13.4)	146	(13.8)
Geographical mobility	53	(21.4)	135	(16.7)	188	(17.8)
High salary	6	(2.4)	14	(1.7)	20	(1.9)
Parental influence	15	(6.0)	83	(10.2)	98	(9.2)
Exposed to health care	28	(11.3)	62	(7.6)	90	(8.5)
Variety of career paths	57	(23.0)	153	(18.9)	210	(19.9)
Other	41	(16.5)	102	(12.6)	143	(13.5)

Table 4: Advantages and Disadvantages of Nursing - Summary of Findings

Variable	Male		Female		All Respondents		P value *
	N	%	N	%	N	%	P
Advantages of being a nurse							
Ability to work in healthcare	124	(50.2)	386	(47.7)	510	(48.3)	.494
Able to make a difference	148	(59.9)	581	(71.9)	729	(69.0)	.001
Ability to work in a team	133	(53.8)	498	(61.6)	631	(59.8)	.039
Always kept busy	67	(27.1)	255	(31.5)	322	(30.5)	.191
Flexible working hours	113	(45.7)	441	(54.5)	554	(52.5)	.018
Geographical mobility	106	(42.9)	363	(44.9)	469	(44.4)	.579
Good morale	37	(14.9)	126	(15.5)	163	(15.4)	.816
Reasonable salary	133	(53.8)	370	(45.7)	503	(47.6)	.028
Stable career	146	(59.1)	400	(49.5)	546	(51.7)	.011
Upward career mobility	53	(21.4)	174	(21.5)	227	(21.5)	.979
Variety and challenge of work	147	(59.5)	569	(70.4)	716	(67.8)	.002
Variety of career paths	109	(44.1)	427	(52.8)	536	(50.8)	.018
None	7	(2.8)	5	(0.6)	12	(1.1)	.004
Other	5	(2.0)	15	(1.8)	20	(1.8)	.937
Disadvantages of being a nurse							
Emotional burden							
Feeling undervalued	99	(40.0)	339	(41.9)	438	(41.5)	.631
Frustration at sometimes	157	(63.5)	492	(60.8)	649	(61.5)	.504
being powerless to change things	163	(65.9)	548	(67.8)	711	(67.3)	.605
Shift work	109	(44.1)	356	(44.0)	465	(44.0)	.932
Difficulty switching jobs	23	(9.3)	75	(9.2)	98	(9.2)	.989
Poor salary	75	(30.3)	245	(30.3)	320	(30.3)	.972
Uncertain job permanency	24	(9.7)	92	(11.3)	116	(10.9)	.496
Inability to work independently	53	(21.4)	85	(10.5)	138	(13.0)	.001
Lack of promotion	63	(25.5)	150	(18.5)	213	(20.1)	.018
Lack of career opportunities	52	(21.0)	95	(11.7)	147	(13.9)	.001
Tedious mundane work	22	(8.9)	42	(5.1)	64	(6.0)	.033
Poor Morale	97	(39.2)	204	(25.2)	301	(28.5)	.001
Workload pressure	150	(60.7)	558	(69.0)	708	(67.0)	.014
None	6	(2.4)	24	(2.9)	30	(2.8)	.654
Other	15	(6.0)	31	(3.8)	46	(4.3)	.048

* A **chi-square test** for independence was used to determine the relationship between the response for these questions and gender. A significant p-value (< 0.05) indicates that the response is influenced by gender type.

Table 5: *Would You Recommend a Nursing Career to Males?*

	Male		Female		All Respondents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	173	(71.7)	613	(76.8)	786	(75.6)
No	68	(28.2)	185	(23.1)	253	(24.3)
Total	241		786		1039	

Table 6: Promoting Men in Nursing - Summary of Findings

Variable	Male		Female		All Respondents		P value *
	N	%	N	%	N	%	P
Misperceptions							
Nursing is not appropriate for a man	125	(50.6)	327	(40.4)	452	(42.8)	.006
Failed doctors	97	(39.2)	224	(27.7)	321	(30.4)	.002
Men are lazy	67	(27.1)	240	(29.7)	307	(29.0)	.650
Male nurses are "gay"	148	(59.9)	388	(48.0)	536	(50.9)	.001
Men are not caring enough	93	(37.6)	221	(27.3)	314	(29.7)	.002
More appropriate for a woman	139	(56.2)	396	(49.0)	535	(50.7)	.041
Poor pay for a man	86	(34.8)	206	(25.4)	292	(27.6)	.005
None	31	(12.5)	119	(14.7)	150	(14.2)	.308
Other	15	(6.0)	49	(6.0)	64	(6.0)	.907
Selling points							
Able to make a difference	139	(55.8)	522	(64.6)	661	(62.6)	.014
Able to work in a team	119	(48.1)	440	(54.4)	559	(52.9)	.093
Autonomy of work	65	(26.3)	252	(31.1)	317	(30.0)	.149
Challenging and responsible job	163	(65.9)	648	(80.1)	811	(76.8)	.001
Geographical mobility	106	(42.9)	414	(51.2)	520	(49.2)	.026
Hands on technical job	86	(34.8)	353	(43.6)	439	(41.6)	.017
Highly skilled profession	155	(62.7)	593	(73.3)	748	(70.9)	.003
Inclusive non-gender specific	93	(37.6)	407	(50.3)	499	(47.2)	.001
Interest in technology	70	(28.3)	328	(40.5)	398	(37.7)	.001
Opportunity to lead a team	115	(46.5)	452	(55.7)	567	(53.7)	.012
Stable employment	153	(61.9)	487	(60.2)	640	(60.6)	.653
Upward career mobility	83	(33.6)	383	(47.4)	466	(44.1)	.001
Diverse career opportunities	119	(48.1)	496	(61.3)	615	(58.2)	.001
Other	18	(7.2)	27	(3.3)	45	(4.2)	.002
Reasons men are not attracted							
Better pay in other careers	167	(67.6)	534	(66.0)	701	(66.5)	.683
Lack of awareness of nursing	136	(55.0)	453	(56.0)	589	(55.8)	.813
Lack of role models	139	(56.2)	512	(63.3)	651	(61.7)	.059
Nursing viewed as intrinsically feminine	160	(64.7)	592	(73.2)	752	(71.2)	.016
Perception of poor salary	117	(47.3)	377	(46.6)	494	(46.8)	.823
Perception of negative stereotypes	140	(56.6)	388	(48.0)	528	(50.0)	.028
Traditionally female occupation	165	(66.8)	585	(72.4)	750	(71.0)	.095
Viewed as inappropriate for a man	118	(44.7)	346	(42.8)	464	(43.9)	.196
Viewed as lacking upward mobility	58	(23.4)	194	(24.0)	252	(23.8)	.897
Other	5	(2.0)	12	(1.5)	17	(1.6)	.270
Best vehicle to attract more men							
Magazine advertisements	112	(45.3)	316	(39.1)	428	(40.5)	.087
Career guidance at school	170	(68.8)	666	(82.4)	836	(79.2)	.001
Billboards	26	(10.5)	108	(13.3)	134	(12.7)	.243
Cinema advertisements	44	(17.8)	156	(19.3)	200	(18.9)	.602
Internet advertisements	70	(28.3)	289	(35.7)	359	(34.0)	.034
Radio advertisements	50	(20.2)	137	(16.9)	187	(17.7)	.239
School visits	138	(55.8)	627	(77.5)	765	(72.5)	.001
TV advertisements	80	(32.3)	230	(28.4)	310	(29.3)	.242
TV shows with nurses in	118	(47.9)	455	(56.3)	573	(54.3)	.022
Work shadow programs	61	(24.6)	256	(31.6)	317	(30.0)	.027
Other	21	(8.5)	39	(4.8)	60	(5.6)	.019

* A **chi-square test** for independence was used to determine the relationship between the response for these questions and gender. A significant p-value (< 0.05) indicates that the response is influenced by gender type.

Table 7: Challenges Encountered by men in nursing - Summary of Findings

Variable	Male	
	N	%
Challenges encountered by men in nursing		
Men seen as 'muscle' by female colleagues	144	(58.2)
Care demands in a time poor environment	96	(38.8)
Seen as inappropriate in some parts of practice (e.g. mid)	91	(36.8)
Bullying by nursing colleagues	91	(36.8)
Difficult to be a minority gender	84	(34.0)
Being considered less of a professional by other professions	79	(31.9)
Reluctance of female patients to be cared for by males	79	(31.9)
Poor salary	76	(30.7)
Lack of male role models /mentors	71	(28.7)
Marginalised in a traditionally female profession	68	(27.5)
Tagged inappropriately to a negative stereotype	68	(27.5)
Viewed as an inappropriate profession for a man	57	(23.0)
Bullying by other health professionals	54	(21.8)
Being seen as a failed doctor	54	(21.8)
Being seen as inappropriate in some specialities (e.g. aged care)	50	(20.2)
Communication difficulties with women	49	(19.8)
Being seen as not caring	39	(15.7)
Not being taken seriously by other health professions	39	(15.7)
Struggled to secure upward mobility	34	(13.7)
Communication difficulties with other professionals	25	(10.1)
None	21	(06.5)