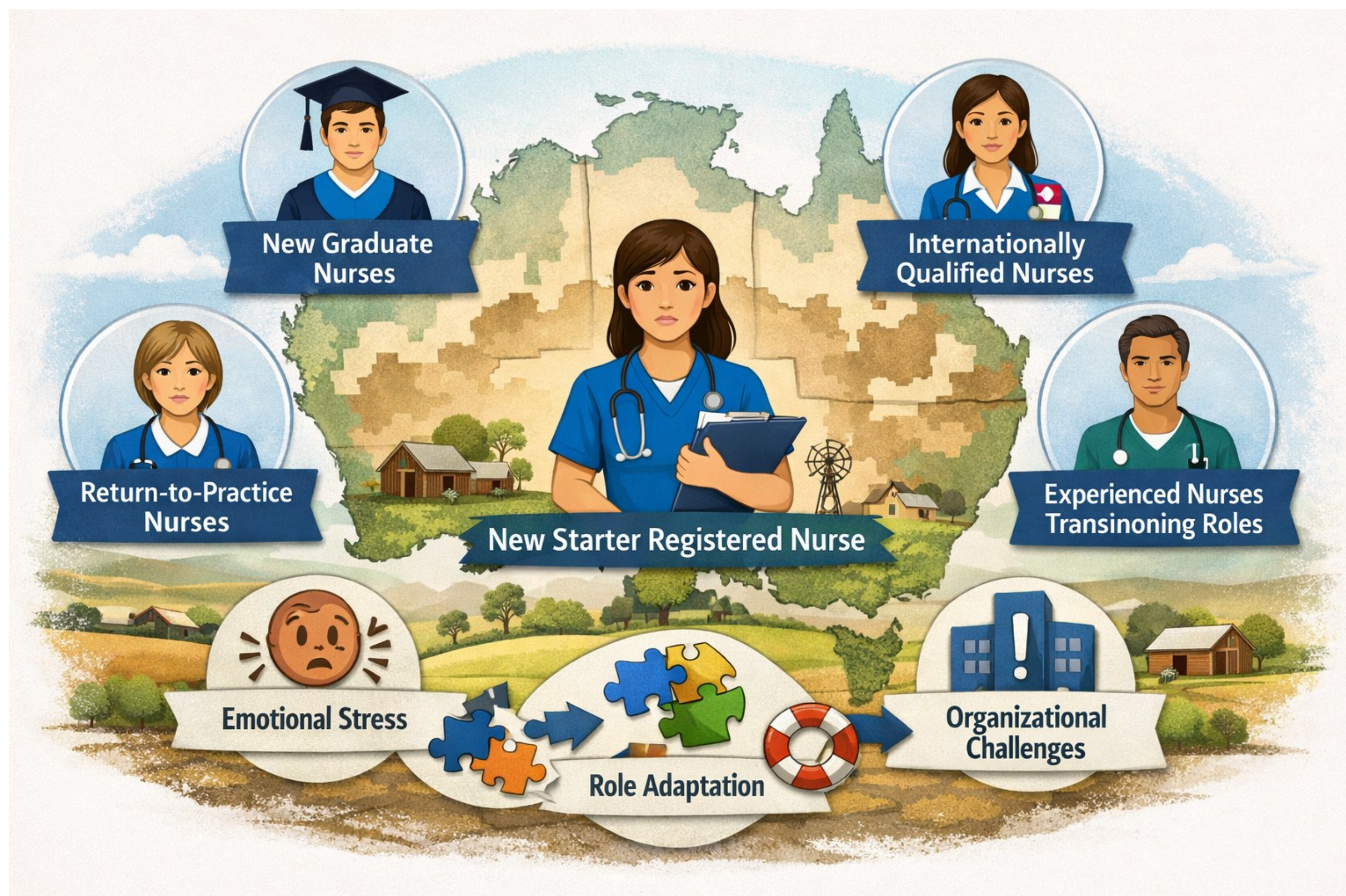


Transition experience of new starter registered nurses in regional and rural Australia: A mixed-methods study

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Significance

This research addresses a **critical gap** in workforce research by focusing on all NSRN cohorts—not only new graduates.

Findings will:

- Inform development of an **evidence-informed transition framework**.
- Improve **onboarding and support systems**.
- Enhance **retention and workforce sustainability**.
- Strengthen **rural and regional healthcare delivery**.

Introduction / Background

Regional and rural areas in Australia experience significantly greater nursing workforce shortages compared with metropolitan areas.

New Starter Registered Nurses (NSRNs) are registered nurses within their **first 12 months in a new organisation**, regardless of prior experience. For example, NSRNs include:

- New graduate nurses
- Experienced nurses transitioning roles
- Internationally qualified nurses
- Return-to-practice nurses

NSRNs frequently encounter:

- Emotional and professional stress
- Role adaptation challenges
- Organisational and cultural adjustment barriers
- Limited structured support

These challenges are amplified in **MM2–MM5 settings**, contributing to **attrition, reduced job satisfaction, and workforce instability**.

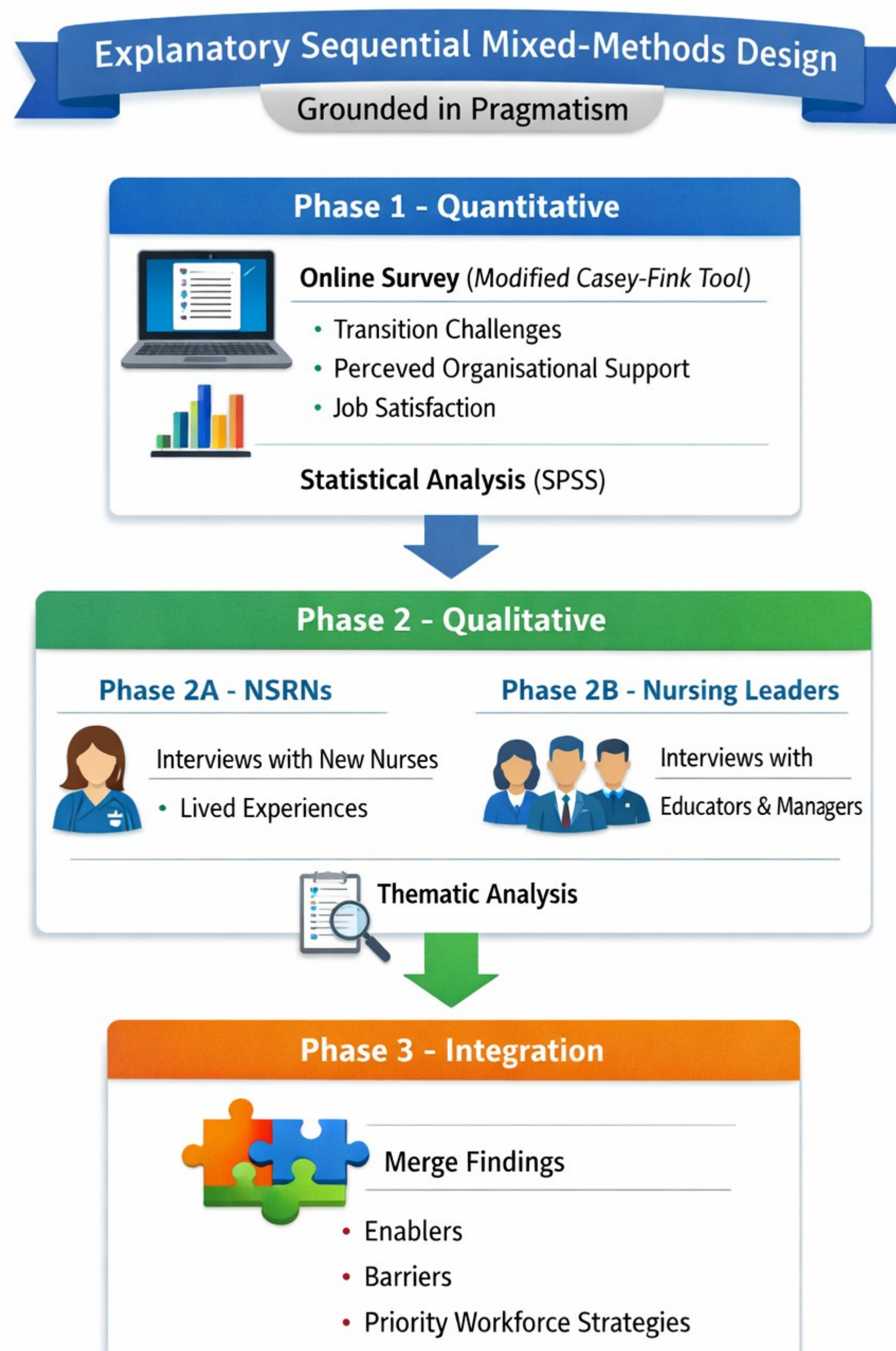
While structured transition programs exist for new graduates, **support for broader NSRN cohorts remains inconsistent and underdeveloped**, particularly in rural and regional settings.

Research Aim

To examine the **transition experiences of New Starter Registered Nurses (NSRNs)** in regional and rural Australia (MM2–MM5).

Research Questions

- How can NSRNs be best supported to achieve effective transition in rural and regional settings?
- What **enablers and barriers** influence successful transition?
- How do NSRN experiences compare with nursing leadership perspectives?



Expected Impact

- Improved **NSRN integration into workforce**.
- Reduced **early-career attrition**.
- Enhanced **professional identity formation**.

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Ethical Clearance

CQU HREC, Application Number: 26196 (Pending).

Keywords

Attrition • Mixed methods • New Starter Registered Nurses • Rural nursing • Workforce integration • Transition • Recruitment • Retention • Preceptorship • Nursing leadership

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