In 2021, we made an intentional shift towards providing online short courses to enable us to reach more nurses working with children in clinical services. Our experiences in 2022 validated that move, confirming significant demand for accessible, relevant and highly focused training for nurses working with children across Africa. Translating our fifteen-year legacy of face-to-face teaching has involved careful thought and intentional design. Supported by global experts in educational design, we have built new skillsets and made sure that our online education retains the human qualities that African nurse learners tell us they value. In this first year of offering our short courses, 79 nurses successfully completed our programmes. We look forward to welcoming an anticipated 115 nurses working with newborns, babies and children in Africa on a further three Essentials of Nursing short courses in 2023 (two of which will be run twice).

It has been very rewarding to be able to travel again and to host students and visitors from across Africa in person at our Cape Town campus. Members of our team visited colleagues training children’s nurses in Malawi, Zambia and Kenya, and the 2022 Masters students travelled to Tanzania to support the development of Paediatric ICU (PICU) clinical services and education.

In November, we helped organise the Burdett RISE symposium on global nursing leadership as part of the Global Health Network Conference, which welcomed nurses from outside of Africa to Cape Town.

We were also able to expand our clinical nursing internship programme, welcoming 6 nurses from Nigeria, Ghana and Zambia, facilitating structured learning and clinical placements in paediatric oncology in partnership with the Children’s Hospital Trust, World Child Cancer and St Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.

At the end of 2022 our team met to reflect on the following statement: ‘We are proud when people say that our work…’

- helps them improve the care they give to children
- benefits nurses’ personal and professional development
- is right for the time and the place
- reaches nurses in new ways
- empowers nurses to teach and share.

Thank you for making it possible for us to keep moving forwards with building children’s nursing in Africa, for Africa.
Pillar 1: Teaching and Training for Children’s Nurses

Objective: To teach and train nurses working with children to provide contextually appropriate high-quality care.

Master of Nursing in Child Nursing (MNCN) Programme

The three Master of Nursing in Child Nursing students, who started their studies in 2021, continued to excel in their clinical placements and each developed a new evidence-based practice guideline for use in local settings. A two-week practice development placement at Muhimbili National Hospital, Tanzania, provided a valuable contribution to clinical service development. Their visit was greatly appreciated by the PICU teams, including Dr Mkopi, a recent APFP Fellow. All three students successfully completed their second year and will graduate in March 2023. Two will graduate cum laude - an exceptional achievement. Lucy Dapaah will return to work as the nurse in charge of the PICU at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Ghana. Chisomo Kasitomu returns as clinical nursing lead to the Mercy James Paediatric Surgery Centre in Blantyre, Malawi. Beatrice Shikongo, who resigned from her private hospital employment to undertake the masters programme, is interviewing for roles that will make good use of her advanced clinical skills. We have accepted five new students to start the next master’s programme in February 2023.

Post Graduate Diplomas (PGDips) in Child Nursing and Critical Care Child Nursing

The old style PGDips have been discontinued by the South African Nursing Council (SANC) and no nurses were in-training to become paediatric nurses in South Africa in 2022. After a long wait, we heard in December 2022 that the SANC had approved the curricula for the new Postgraduate Diploma in Child Nursing and the Postgraduate Diploma in Critical Care Child Nursing (originally submitted to SANC in September 2020). These programmes must now complete additional approval processes externally, through the national Centre for Higher Education Development, and internally via the University of Cape Town. We are hopeful that Postgraduate Diploma students will be welcomed back to Cape Town in January 2024.

Online Short Course

Meanwhile, our team have been working intensively to develop a suite of UCT registered short course offerings to fill a significant nursing service gap and meet the urgent need for upskilling. We launched our new ‘Essentials of Nursing Sick Children’ online short course in February with 14 nurses participants and welcomed a second intake of 23 in August. Across these two intakes, we reached nurses working in 10 African countries - South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Somalia, and Zambia. This course is aimed at nurses working in paediatric nursing settings or adult settings where children and their families are cared for alongside adults. It serves as an introduction to help nurses increase their knowledge and confidence and improve outcomes for hospitalised children. It will continue to run twice a year with two intakes already scheduled for 2023.

Adding further to the ‘Essentials of Nursing’ suite, development of three more short courses is in progress – ‘Essentials of Nursing Sick Newborns’, ‘Essentials of Nursing Children with a Tracheostomy’ and ‘Essentials of Nursing the Critically Sick Child’. These courses will welcome their first nurse participants during 2023. For the newborn course we are also exploring the possibility of offering a blended learning option to local Cape Town facilities in urgent need of staff training for their units.

In September, we were privileged to have Professor Laurie Posey (George Washington University, USA), a globally renowned expert in digitally mediated learning, spend 3 weeks working with our team supported by a Fulbright Fellowship. Prof. Posey helped us appraise our process of educational learning design and delivery, highlighting numerous strengths in our approaches to teaching online and through blended learning. It is very motivating to know that our work is regarded by an expert as being of consistently high quality and report that we are seen as leading innovators in education design for an African context.
**Pillar 2: Supporting Educators and Institutions**

Objective: To capacitate children’s nursing educators and institutions to provide sustainable, contextually appropriate and high-quality training

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**Children’s Nursing Educators Forum Members**

15 participating educator teams across 9 African countries

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**Children’s Nursing Educators Forum**

The Children’s Nursing Educators Forum is a Community of Practice with the purpose of connecting, supporting and growing children’s nursing educators. Currently there are 17 members (14 institutional and 3 individual members) spanning across nine countries, participation is expected to increase as more institutions are identified as offering children’s nursing training. Development of objectives flowed from the first Forum of the year where the focus was on what one needs to create and establish a community of practice. The final Children’s Nursing Educator’s Forum of 2022 took place in November. Guest presenter, Prof Laurie Posey (Instructional Designer from George Washington University) joined Clare Davis (Lecturer and Instructional Design lead from the Harry Crossley Children’s Nursing Development Unit) to provide a very practical and informative overview of ways to maximize online teaching.

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**Children’s Nursing Workforce Observatory**

The annual graduate follow-up survey was completed. The 2022 survey went live in July 2022, collating information about training activity for 2021-22. We have been glad of the additional capacity of our new doctoral fellow, Beatrix Callard, who put significant time into identifying additional training providers that might have been missed.

This year an improved interactive directory shows information about 23 active children’s nursing training programmes at 12 institutions across 11 African countries – highlighting the successful identification of a further 4 training institutions. These institutions have been brought into the Children’s Nursing Educators Forum. Reports for each country show additional information about the type of programmes offered, trainee throughput, numbers of educators, and new programmes in development. This work was completed in 2022 and we formally launched the reports in Feb 2023.

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**Establishing children’s nursing education programmes at peer African institutions**

To date the number of teams supported by CNDU to establish new children’s nursing training programmes since 2011 stands at six. The total number of new training programmes developed is 11 (eight already running and three awaiting accreditation / final approval). Programmes awaiting final accreditation are those developed by the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe, Bamaale Lutheran School of Nursing in Botswana, and the College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Arthur Davison Hospital, Zambia. They are all hoping to commence recruitment of students onto their training programme shortly. None of the South African paediatric nursing programmes have recommenced following the South African Nursing Council’s re-accreditation process of all nursing postgraduate diploma programmes.

In 2022 we engaged with Makerere University, offering to assist with their mandate to establish children’s nursing training in Uganda. We have also been in conversation with the University of Rwanda who have requested assistance with their new masters’ programmes in paediatric nursing. We have held a series of meetings with their team and are exploring the possibility of providing clinical teaching placements at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital from early 2024.
The first two modules (‘An introduction to facilitating practice change’ and ‘Strengthening partnerships with mothers to care for children in hospital’) have been successfully completed. Participants gained experience of working with an Appreciative Inquiry approach to change leadership, carried out self-assessments of practice related to involving mothers and family caregivers, and designed and implemented their first change projects. Gathering and using data is a key focus of the project and teams have built and begun using their team dashboards with key information. We enrolled 10 teams on the programme, and sadly said goodbye to two of these teams at the end of Module 1 as it became apparent that they no longer had sufficient staffing resources to sustain the necessary time commitment. The remaining eight teams are making good progress.
Pillar 3: Developing Children’s Nursing Leaders and Services

Objective: To equip and support nurses to lead contextually appropriate high-quality care for children

Nurses Journal Club

The Hospital Journal Club project expanded through a second intake, with nurses at five new sites undertaking online facilitator training in February 2022 to join the 12 existing Africa-wide Journal Club sites running monthly journal clubs for their nurses, in a total of eight countries. Over 40 facilitators have been trained.

PhD Supervision

Three doctoral candidates continued from 2021 and one new candidate was enrolled. CNDU team member Natasha North successfully completed her doctoral studies and has obtained her PhD. Another, Gifty Berchie, a Ghanaian children’s nursing lecturer, submitted her final thesis and is awaiting results. The other candidates have made good progress. Two new candidates were accepted at the end of December and will commence their studies in January 2023. Minette and Natasha currently supervise four PhD students between them, as we continue to further build leadership and research capacity in Africa.

Evidence Based Practice Guidelines and other Publications

The second-year master’s students produced three new evidence based clinical practice guidelines in 2022. Their projects focused on improving safety and outcomes related to: newborns receiving oxygen; preventing pressure injury in a low-resourced PICU; and preventing injury from peripheral venous canulae. All three students were supported to write up their projects and in December, submitted papers for publication. To date 14 guidelines have been created, with two publications directly related and a further four in review.

In 2022 we achieved 2 peer reviewed publications:


A textbook co-authored by Minette Coetzee was also published:


This brings the total number of publications from 2019 - 2022 to 16. At the end of the year a further four papers were undergoing peer review and one of these has since been accepted for publication in 2023.
Future Focus

Key Lessons Learnt:
We are feeling increasingly confident in our ability to design and deliver high quality learning online, both synchronously and asynchronously. We have learned a lot about how to facilitate and upskill colleagues across Africa to optimise their connectivity and participation.

Feedback, gathered through monitoring and evaluation from both the Essentials of Nursing Short Courses and the Best Practice Project has been overwhelmingly positive.

Different participants on the Essentials of Nursing Sick Children course found it “Incredible… Mind blowing…. Loved it… learnt so much”. The unit manager from one hospital reported finding it “really an eye-opener”. Another said “I can’t overemphasise what this course has done ..because it makes a huge difference in the nursing care that you render”.

Best Practice Project participants were highly satisfied with the content (95% ‘very useful’) and the support on offer (85% ‘I felt well supported’). A comment from one participants: “The content was very good, well researched and very informative. The associated interactions with team members and facilitators on zoom and also in the picnic stops was very useful and well appreciated. The teaching strategies are wonderful.” Another said, “This module is an eye opener. It’s very practical. Your Educators were always available and ready when we call on them. I can’t express it all. Thank you so much.”

Looking Ahead- Work in 2023 includes:

- Launching three further UCT registered short courses – Essentials of Nursing Sick Newborns; Essentials of Nursing Children with a Tracheostomy; Essentials of Nursing Critically Sick Children – in addition to continued offering of the Essentials of Nursing Sick Children and PhD Preparedness Course.
- First year training of 5 further Paediatric Advanced Practice Nurses
- Supervision of 4 PhD students
- Continued expansion of our successful Journal Club
- Increased membership and participation in Children’s Nursing Educators Forum
- Gathering and compilation of the third Children’s Nursing Workforce Observatory Report
- Successful completion of the Best Practice Project by the current nurse-led teams at 8 hospitals in Africa
- Publication of 3 Evidence Based Practice Guidelines and 2 other journal publications

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