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A rewarding nursing career with significant impact

Leading an inspirational career in nursing, RMIT alum Rasa Kabaila shares her experience, the stories of others and insightful advice to succeed in this rewarding profession.

Rasa has enjoyed a dynamic nursing career; realising her dream as a mental health nurse practitioner, establishing her own practice and launching her first book.

As deeply empathetic and passionate as she is ambitious, Rasa has actively sought development and mentorship opportunities throughout her career, diversifying her skillset and driving her career forward.

With a wealth of knowledge and experience, we sat down with Rasa to dive into her journey and gather her insights and key tips to ensuring longevity in a demanding profession.



Rasa's path to her "dream career" as a nurse practitioner

Starting off as a personal carer at age 16, Rasa pursued a Bachelor of Nursing when she finished school. As a new, graduate nurse, she began her career working in the public sector, and realised quickly that it was her dream to become a nurse practitioner.

It wasn't long before Rasa investigated postgraduate study, and after gaining the industry experience required, she went on to enrol in a [Graduate Diploma in Mental Health Nursing \(/study-with-us/levels-of-study/postgraduate-study/graduate-diplomas/graduate-diploma-in-mental-health-nursing-gd158\)](#) at RMIT, which she managed part-time whilst working.

Her RMIT experience was ultimately the catalyst for her career in mental health. Her postgrad study enabled her to work independently as a credentialed mental health nurse with the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses, and served as a requisite for her further studies to become a nurse practitioner.

"Studying at RMIT changed my clinical practice as a nurse, for the better," Rasa said.

"After studying at RMIT, I would always ask 'the why'. Why am I taking this approach? Why am I seeing this kind of clinical presentation? The course allowed me to be able to understand and apply evidence-based practice to my nursing.

"The program and content itself was very manageable. I learned so much and felt very encouraged and supported throughout the process."

Pivoting from the public sector to private practice

After reaching 10 years in the public sector, and with numerous qualifications equipping her with the skills and knowledge to take the next step in her career, Rasa decided it was time to make a change. This led her to pursuing independent practice and establishing her own business [Broadleaf \(https://broadleafnpservices.com/about/\)](https://broadleafnpservices.com/about/): Holistic Nurse Practitioner Services in 2022.

With an innovative, holistic, individualised, and evidence-based approach, Rasa's practice is recovery-focused, where she leverages her diverse skillset, knowledge and experience to specialise in a range of treatments and therapies for her clients.

"After gaining experience as a nurse practitioner, I decided it was time to make a change," Rasa said.

"I thought, I want to be doing this, but I want to be able to do this more on my terms, and in the kind of environment that I want.

"Setting up my own practice has been the pinnacle. However, being able to work in so many different nursing fields, teaching me so many different skills is something I really value. I'm also grateful for all the amazing nurses and health staff who I have learned so much from."

Nurturing aspiring nurses: Rasa's tips for longevity in a demanding profession

One year into running her own business, Rasa launched her book, '[Put Some Concrete in Your Breakfast: Tales from Contemporary Nursing \(https://www.amazon.com.au/Put-some-Concrete-your-Breakfast/dp/3031243927\)](https://www.amazon.com.au/Put-some-Concrete-your-Breakfast/dp/3031243927)'.

The book captures the challenges and rewarding aspects of the profession by sharing real-life, raw stories, which Rasa hopes will go a long way in supporting aspiring nurses as they embark on their careers.

While Rasa doesn't shy away from admitting a career in nursing can be demanding, she says the reward of her impact and being able to help people makes it all worthwhile.

Emphasising the importance of being honest about the profession's challenges, Rasa highlights the significance of self-care, positive lifestyle habits, and having a strong support network.

She encourages anyone studying or practising nursing to seek mentorship, which she believes is crucial for success.

"The big points of the book [touch on] being really honest about the beautiful and the wonderful things, the heartwarming things and the heartbreaking things, as well as the difficulties you face in the profession. But regardless, it's a profession that's worthwhile doing," she said.

"In terms of advice, I would say make sure you have all the ways to look after yourself. Good lifestyle habits and having a good support network around you is key, which I've had all the way through my profession.

"I also do a lot of mentorship with people, and I think that's extremely important. I think that can be the difference between finishing a course or entering and staying in a profession."

Story: Jacqueline Guldon

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