ACCCN
Australian College of Critical Care Nurses

# Australian College of Critical Care Nurses Strategy

## 2026 - 2031

1800 357 968 | admin@acccn.com.au | www.acccn.com.au

## Acknowledgement

We proudly acknowledge the dedication, expertise, and ongoing contributions of our members', volunteers, and all critical care nurses. Your commitment to excellence, compassion, and leadership continues to shape the future of critical care and improve outcomes for patients and communities across Australia.

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# Executive Summary



**Critical care nurses are highly skilled professionals who deliver expert care to critically ill patients across the country. They use advanced skills to support patients and their families during some of the most critical moments in hospital.**

ACCCN was established as a college in 1999, with seven separate nursing entities joined into one national organisation, creating a stable, transparent and well-recognised structure and brand to lead, support and represent critical care nurses. ACCCN is a not-for-profit membership-based organisation representing nurses across the critical care spectrum, covering areas of clinical, education, management, and research.

The operating environment for critical care nurses in Australia is demanding and complex, shaped by high patient acuity, advanced technology and emotional and physical pressures. Nurses work in fast-paced, equipment-intensive settings, one that is shaped by multiple interacting factors, physical psychological, organisational and system-level. Australian critical care nurses face a range of challenges that impact their ability to deliver safe, high-quality care, including staff shortages, high workloads and resource limitations. Critical care nurses often navigate patient care, whilst supporting distressed families, managing complex communication with multi-disciplinary teams and maintaining strict adherence to clinical protocols. There is a strong need for ongoing training and professional development to maintain advanced clinical skills that are essential in critical care settings. These combined factors create a high-risk, high-responsibility environment that demands resilience, advanced clinical expertise, strong inter-personal skills, and robust professional support.

ACCCN provides resources, guidelines and continuing education opportunities to enhance the quality of care delivered in intensive and critical care settings, while also advocating for the professional interests and recognition of critical care nurses at a national level.

Through our committees, advisory panels and working groups, who provide expert advice and information, we foster development of knowledge, collaboration and networks across a diverse range of portfolios including education, end-of-life, global health, ICU Nurse Practitioners, paediatric, quality & safety, research, resuscitation and workforce.

Over the next 5 years we aim to lead, represent, develop and support Australian Critical Care Nurses. To achieve this, we will enhance opportunities available and drive support for critical care nurses and optimise membership experience to increase engagement and growth.

Collaboration is integral to all that we do. We are committed to building our partnerships and networks with stakeholders including our members', critical care nurses, allied health and medical colleagues, all governments, healthcare providers and professional organisations both nationally and internationally.

The Australian College of Critical Care Nurses (ACCCN) Strategy 2026-2031 was developed outlining the College's goals and objectives for the next 5 years. The Strategy outlines the business of ACCCN, its mission, purpose, goals, objectives and core values of the organisation.

## Purpose

To lead, represent, develop and support Australian Critical Care Nurses

## Vision

A strong, connected community of critical care nurses delivering high-quality care to critically ill patients across Australia

## Mission

To promote excellence in critical care nursing by providing leadership, advocacy, education, and support for our members'

## Values and behaviours

| | |
|---|---|
| **C** aring | Our approach towards patients, their families, colleagues, members and the broader community |
| **R** espect | We value all people and the diverse knowledge, skills, experiences and perspectives they contribute to critical care |
| **I** nclusive | We foster a culture that values every voice |
| **T** rusted | We operate with care, respect, integrity and reliability |
| **I** nnovative | Recognition of the need to create new ways of thinking and solving challenges critical care nurses are facing |
| **C** ollaborative | We work together with others in the health ecosystem to achieve shared goals |
| **A** spiring | We will always strive to scale newer heights of performance and achieve excellence |
| **L** eading | Our ability to steer the community of critical care nurses towards securing a fair place in the broader community and advocating for their continual progress |

# Goals & Objectives



Objectives of the College are aligned with those specified in the Constitution.

## Enhance Opportunities

Delivery of high-quality education, and support of development, research and innovation for the advancement of critical care nursing

## Drive Support

Strengthen advocacy and facilitate change to elevate the profession's reputation

## Optimise Membership

Enhance membership engagement and growth by elevating value for members', fostering professionalism and identity of the College within the critical care community



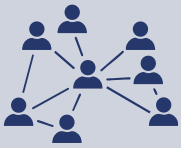
**Strengthen Capability**



**Increase Advocacy**



**Elevate Members' Experience**



**Build Connection**



**Drive Collaboration**



**Identify & Increase Membership**



**Promote Innovation**



**Advance Stewardship**



**Increase Awareness**

# Enhance Opportunities



***Delivery of high-quality education, and support of development, research and innovation for the advancement of critical care nursing***

Enhancing opportunities through the delivery of high-quality education, supporting professional development, research and innovation is essential to the advancement of critical care nursing. In a constantly evolving environment, critical care nurses must stay at the forefront of clinical knowledge and practice. This objective enables critical care nurses to be equipped, recognised, and supported in their vital roles- now and into the future.



## Strengthen Capability

### Objective

Delivery of high-quality education that equips critical care nurses with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to deliver high-quality care in the complex and evolving clinical environment.

### Why it's important?

Access to high-quality education and development empowers nurses to deliver safe, evidence-based care, respond confidently to complex patient needs and adapt to new technologies and treatments.



## Build Connection

### Objective

Foster a strong, supportive and collaborative critical care nursing community through mentorship, encouraging professional networking and creating opportunities for leadership development.

### Why it's important?

Building connection through mentorship and networking is vital to the growth, resilience, and retention of critical care nurses. In strengthening these connections, we create a more engaged, supported, and empowered critical care nursing community. One that is best equipped to face challenges and drive excellence in care.



## Promote Innovation

### Objective

Encourage and support innovation and research that advances critical care nursing and fosters a culture of inquiry, creativity and continuous improvement.

### Why it's important?

Supporting research and innovation drives improvements in patient outcomes and empowers nurses to drive change, improve patient outcomes and shape the future of critical care.

# Drive Support



***Lead advocacy and build strategic partnerships to elevate critical care nursing and ensure its long-term sustainability.***

Driving support strengthens advocacy and facilitates meaningful change to elevate and influence the critical care nursing profession. By championing the voices of critical care nurses at local, national, and system levels, the profession can build greater visibility, respect, and impact within the broader healthcare landscape.



## Increase Advocacy

### Objective

To be the respected and trusted voice for critical care health professionals.

### Why it's important?

Amplifying the voices of critical care nurses, ensuring they are heard and valued, is essential in shaping the future of healthcare.
As frontline professionals managing the most complex and vulnerable patients, critical care nurses offer unique insights into patient care, system challenges, and opportunities for improvement.
By influencing policy and driving practice change, advocacy helps drive better working conditions, resourcing and recognition of critical care nurses.



## Drive Collaboration

### Objective

Build strong, purposeful, mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships.

### Why it's important?

By engaging with key stakeholders ensures critical care nurses are actively involved and represented at all levels of decision-making.
Through collaboration we seek to shape a healthcare system that supports safe, effective, and sustainable critical care nursing practice.
Strengthening the influence of critical care nursing, sharing knowledge and co-design solutions improve patient care and support the profession.



## Advance Stewardship

### Objective

Upholding the integrity, sustainability, and inclusivity of the critical care nursing profession.

### Why it's important?

Recognising and promoting the value of critical care nurses empowers nurses to lead innovation, guide ethical care, and continue to build a safe, ethical and sustainable critical care environment that supports the long-term wellbeing of the profession ensuring that critical care nurses can continue to deliver high-quality care now and into the future.

# Optimise Membership



***Enhance membership engagement and growth by fostering professionalism and identity of the College within the critical care community.***

Identifying opportunities to grow and diversify membership by reaching critical care nurses across all stages of their career and critical care environments. Fostering deeper connections and satisfaction among members, whilst increasing the awareness of the College's role and impact helps position it as a leading voice for critical care nursing in Australia.



## Elevate Members' Experience

### Objective

Enhancing members' journey by delivering meaningful and valuable experiences.

### Why it's important?

Enhancing members' experience fosters stronger engagement, satisfaction and loyalty, driving sustained growth and active participation within the community.
Clear and consistent communication enables members' to remain informed and engaged, strengthening their sense of belonging which will build a thriving membership community that supports the College's growth and ability to influence.



## Identify & Increase Membership

### Objective

Committed to growing a diverse membership base that values and actively participates with the College.

### Why it's important?

This is fundamental to the sustainability and influence of the College. A diverse and growing membership base ensures that the organisation truly represents the breadth of the profession, enabling it to advocate effectively for the needs and interests of critical care nurses in Australia.



## Increase Awareness

### Objective

Ensure the college is a visible brand with a positive reputation.

### Why it's important?

Increasing awareness is crucial in raising the College's profile among critical care nurses and stakeholders. This will support attraction of new members', build trust and credibility of the College as a leading authority and advocate for critical care nurses across Australia.