**Concurrent Stream:** Rural Health Journeys – Design, Deliver, Experience

**Keywords:** Chronic Care, Acute and Emergency Care

**Abstract Title:** Supporting rural nurses to undertake medication reconciliation processes

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**Background:** Medication reconciliation is the process of ensuring that patients receive all intended medicines and that accurate, current and comprehensive medicines information follows them at all transfers of care. Standardised medication reconciliation processes have been recognised internationally as a strategy to improve patient safety and the continuity of medication management.

Medication reconciliation is intended to be a multidisciplinary process. Traditionally pharmacists have taken on the tasks associated with medication reconciliation, however in rural areas where there are no or very low numbers of pharmacists, and limited medical workforce, involvement of nursing staff is essential in reducing medication errors associated with poor communication of medicines information.

Training specifically for nurses has been identified as a need across NSW to progress nurses undertaking tasks associated with medication reconciliation.

**Approach:** A range of nursing stakeholders were engaged to determine the most appropriate training requirements. A Medication Reconciliation Education Package was developed in collaboration with these stakeholders. The Education Package includes a baseline and follow up audit, pre-workshop materials, three face-to-face workshops and a follow up discussion. To ensure it is fit for purpose, the Education Package was piloted across five rural health services in NSW.

**Outcomes / Results:** Evaluation of the Medication Reconciliation Education Package is in progress. Qualitative measures include pre- and post- workshop participant surveys. Preliminary results indicate a significant increase in nurse’s knowledge and confidence in undertaking medication reconciliation tasks after completing the workshops. Quantitative measures include an assessment of the uptake of medication reconciliation processes by nurses through a baseline and follow up audit after three months.

**Take Home Message:** The Medication Reconciliation Education Package fills a need in providing specific training for nurses in undertaking tasks associated with medication reconciliation. In rural health services this is of particular benefit as nurses are often best placed to be involved in these processes and contribute to improved continuity of medication management.