

## Site Research Nurse to Off-Site Research Nurse

Interview with Tina Thorpe, Australia Based Research  
Nurse at Illingworth Research Group

### When did you decide nursing was for you?

My mother told me that when asked what I wanted to be when I grew up I always said either Nurse or Princess. However being a practical child, by the time I was 4 I had decided on Nurse. I practiced my skills playing 'Emergency Hospital Surgery'. My favourite person to play this with was my younger brother. He seemed to require quite a lot of 'injections' which he was not entirely happy about but I insisted was obviously essential to fixing him! Thus began my calling to be a nurse.

I have always felt that nursing is a calling, it certainly was for me. My career has been long and varied. While studying my Bachelor of Nursing at University I worked in a nursing home as an Assistant in Nursing over my christmas holidays. I loved being part of the patient care team and it consolidated my belief that Nursing was the job for me.



### How did you get into Research Nursing?

Since my graduation I have worked in both the UK and Australia in many areas such as a general medical, Rural nursing, Cardiothoracic intensive care unit (ICU), trauma ICU, paediatric ICU, and now Research Nursing. I dabbled in Genetic Counselling after returning home from London, then I got a job on a research study. Being a very organised person I found my home in Research Nursing.

I have been a Research Nurse for over 10 years now. During that time I have seen advances in the way trials are run. Introduction of online Clinical research files and databases, online instant randomisation, eConsent, video information for patients. Only recently did I learn that mobile research nursing existed. It has been around for quite some time and I was surprised I had never come across it before. What a resource for patients and nurses and I didn't know it was out there.



## Site Research Nurse to Off-Site Research Nurse

### What drew you to Off-site Research Nursing?

You can get almost anything you want delivered to your home these days. Just this week I have had my groceries, clothes, dinner and gifts delivered, you can get your dog washed at home why not add a Research Nurse visit to the list?

Visits are conducted in the patients home or other convenient location. Equipment is provided to complete all required tasks for the visit. I call my patients the day before the visit to explain what we need to do and when. It's a pleasant change from the busy, noisy hospital clinic setting, where it is almost impossible to get a room or space somewhere to chat to my patient. You might even get offered a cup of tea and a biscuit and that would never happen in a hospital setting!

### Do you feel this is best for patients?

In all seriousness, I am able to fully assess my patient, there are no disruptions. I can build rapport with my patient in comfortable surroundings and they are more relaxed. I get to visit the same patients for each follow up visit which assists in building the relationship.

There are not many trials at the moment offer patients the ability to choose where their clinical visits take place. Scheduling of patient follow up visits and retention is an ongoing issue in clinical research. Studies have found minimising trips to hospitals, while maintaining a high level of involvement, can be a crucial element to patient recruitment and retention levels, which could ultimately save pharmaceutical and biotech companies millions.

### Why Illingworth Research?

Being employed by an internationally reputable company such as Illingworth Research Group, that provides mobile research nursing means that all nurses are insured and experienced in clinical trials and in completing study visits within patients' homes, at school or in the workplace. Illingworth have been offering this option for patient home visits for almost 20 years.

I not only get the relevant generalised clinical research training from Illingworth, I get study specific training and complete support at every step of the way. This helps me to feel secure and well prepared for patient visits and any questions or issues that may crop up.

### Finally, what do you think the future holds?

Wouldn't it be great if more patients were able to make the choice to have their visit at a convenient location for them outside of the hospital environment? Nurses traditionally have tended to move away from the "Medical Model" of care towards a more patient led model. I feel that mobile research nursing is a step in the right direction to put the patient back at the heart of the clinical trial.

