

**Nursing Recruiters' Attitudes  
toward Older Nurses:  
A Quantitative  
Cross-Institutional Investigation**

**Eyal Gringart  
Bronwyn Jones  
Leanne Monterosso  
Edith Cowan University  
Janis Janz  
Curtin University  
Edward Helmes  
James Cook University**

**Sponsors**

- **Edith Cowan University;**
- **Hall and Prior Aged Care Group**
- **Centre for Nursing Research,  
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital**

**Background and Context**

- **Hiring practices**  
(Gringart & Helmes, 2001)
- **Employers' attitudes**  
(Gringart, Helmes, & Speelman, 2005)
- **Attitude change intervention**  
(Gringart, Helmes, & Speelman, 2007)

**Attitudes Toward Older Workers**

- **The mere exposure effect**
- **The contact hypothesis**

**Attitudes Toward Older Nurses  
The current study**

- **163 WA nursing recruiters – rural & regional (23.3%) and Perth metropolitan (76.7%). 143 females 20 males (age range 25 – 67). More than 80% tertiary educated.**
- **Hospitals; aged care; nursing agencies**

**Attitudes Toward Older Nurses  
The current study**

- **Three dependent variables:**
  1. **The sum of the stereotype scale**
  2. **Age relevance**
  3. **Likelihood of hiring**

## Results

- Clear evidence of negative stereotypes of older nurses compared to younger ones
- Sum of scale = 114.87 (other employers 115.26; undergraduates 105.07)
- Age relevance 2.40 (other employers 3.32; undergraduates 3.33)
- Likelihood of hiring 4.73 (other employers 3.64; undergraduates 3.73)

## Older Inferior to Younger

|                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Adaptability       | Healthy          |
| Ambitious          | Promotion        |
| Interest in change | Memory function  |
| Physical strength  | Mental alertness |
| Trainability       | Motivated        |
| Energetic          |                  |

## Discussion

- The contact hypothesis is not supported by the findings of the current study.
- The mere exposure effect does not seem to be a determining factor in fostering positive attitudes toward older nurses (workers).

## Discussion

- It appears that industry-specific needs that see the recruitment of older workers do not lead to significant attitudinal changes in ageist attitudes among hiring decision makers.
- Older nurses clearly express concerns and dissatisfaction with negative attitudes toward them.
- The findings of the current study emphasise the need for attitude-change interventions to promote positive attitudes toward older workers.

Thank you  
for your interest and support