

**Name:**

Kylie Cowley

**Current role:**

Midwife at Epworth Freemasons and student MCHN

**How long have you been a nurse/midwife?**

Nurse 5 years, Midwife 2 Years

**Why did you want to you want to become a nurse/midwife?**

I wanted to help people, To make a difference in their lives, To be able to care for someone at their most vulnerable time, it is a honour and privilege. I want to be able to help improve the health and quality of life of our community. For me, health promotion is a large part of that and is something I am passionate about.

**What were the enablers and barriers for you to complete your degree? Pathway into nursing/midwifery – how did you get to where you are today?**

At a young age, I wanted to become an obstetrician, but later decided that nursing and midwifery was what I was passionate about. I am very fortunate that I married an amazing man who has always encouraged me to pursue my dreams! I started my family at a young age. I began my studies in Perth in 2000, due to family circumstances, I stopped and later decided I'd give it ago again. This time, I made it! Without the support of my husband, daughters and team at Yulendj's Aboriginal Engagement unit at Monash University, I don't think I could've achieved my dream. Becoming a midwife was re-inspired after assisting in the delivery of my granddaughter who was a FDIU. A such, accepting a position in the postgraduate diploma in midwifery was both a blessing and a curse; my daughter announced she was pregnant again; I would need to complete my degree and placement as well as be the full-time career of this child (he is THE light of our lives!!!). Without the amazing support of the education team at Mercy Hospital for Women, my AMAZING husband and beautiful tutor Teagen, I could not have made it. My career goals further evolved, and I am now studying to be an Aboriginal Maternal Child Health Nurse.

**Do you believe our nurses and midwives are role models for our communities, if yes do you think it is a priority that we increase our workforce and why?**

Increasing the Aboriginal Nursing, Midwifery and MCHN work force is paramount. Studies have conclusively found that Aboriginal people (particularly during pregnancy and the neonatal/infancy) have better health outcomes. This is multifaceted; continuity of care, rapport building, cultural and community connection. So, yes, from my perspective, it is negligible not to encourage, support and grow the Aboriginal RN/RM/MCHN/Allied health workforce.