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UCT's child nursing initiative wins prestigious Global Health Impact award

The University of Cape Town's (UCT) Child Nurse Practice Development Initiative (CNPDI) Critical Care education team has won the 2018 Burdett Nursing Award: *Global Health Impact*. This award recognises the team's outstanding contribution to the development of paediatric nursing across the continent. CNPDI is a partnership between UCT and the Red Cross Children's Hospital – Africa's premier training centre.

Less than 2% of southern African nurses are trained in paediatrics, and this is even lower in other sub-Saharan countries. Equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to save the lives of acutely ill infants and children, the critical care practitioners trained and led by nurse practitioner Clare Davis, are a vital resource that is in desperately short supply.

Since 2009, the team has trained 121 critical care children's nurses from six sub-Saharan countries. The initiative boasts a 94% graduation rate and all its graduates have returned to practice in their home countries, with many going on to lead important developments in local and national paediatric health services.

In 2013 the team supported alumni in Kenya as they worked to set up a second training site for the continent. This new centre has become a hub for nurses in East Africa – with 67 graduates and another 33 enrolled. Together they are the future of critical care child nursing in Africa.

Davis came to South Africa from the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital in the United Kingdom (UK), joining Minette Coetzee – who is the CNPDI programme leader – in 2009. She was the first and only critical care child nursing lecturer in Africa. It was a steep learning curve, but she never looked back.

"One of the big things my experience of working in Africa has taught me is that it doesn't help to look at situations as being resource-poor. The philosophy of this team is that people, especially nurses, are resource-full. If you keep that in mind, you can usually find a way to get things done," she said.

The award recognises teams who have made an outstanding contribution to patient care outside of the UK. As the first award of its kind for this small South African team, it is a

testament to the passion, skill and determination of the CNPDI team and all its nurses who work on the frontline of critical care for children in Africa.

[Learn more about the CNPDI.](#)

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