



Dr. Daniel O'Neill DNP, FNP-C, CEN, CCRN, FCENA, FACNP, FAANP is an outstanding acute care nurse practitioner and humanitarian. His education includes Doctor of Nursing Practice, Case Western Reserve University, Ohio, USA, 2019; Post Masters Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, Texas Woman's University, USA, 2021; Graduate Certificate in Management, Australian Institute of Business, Australia 2016; Masters of Nurse Practitioner, University of Queensland, Australia 2011; Masters of Advanced Practice, Griffith University, Australia 2008; Certificate IV in Training & Assessment, Victoria University, Australia 2007; Bachelor of Nursing, University of Huddersfield, 2000; and Bachelor of Science Microbiology & Biomedical Science (Hons) Kent University 1997. He was one of the first International Fellows of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. As a native Australian, he has set up many nurse practitioner (NP) services throughout Australia and the United Arab Emirates. A former Australian veteran of the Australian Defense Force, Dr. O'Neill has dedicated his life to improving access to healthcare around the world and providing humanitarian efforts. He is a content expert on trauma care and received a citation from the US Navy in 2010. He received the Australian Humanitarian Overseas Service in 2020 for his work as health liaison officer with the Australian Defense Force after Tropical Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu in 2015. He focused his efforts on moving patients and supplies with very little resources. He received his Doctor of Nursing Practice from Case Western University in 2019. Since 2019, he has been working as an acute care NP in an Advanced ICU in Houston, Texas. 2021 Dr. O'Neill became the first NP from Australia to be granted a U.S. national interest waiver for exceptional ability to become a permanent resident in the United States in 2021.

#### Interview Abstract:

An Australian native, Dr. O'Neill obtained his Bachelor of Science Microbiology and Biomedical Science from Kent University in 1997 and his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Huddersfield in 2000. He wanted to do more than being a staff nurse and was inspired by another NP to expand his role. He has been a pioneer in introducing the NP role in various hospitals, cities and countries. He was one of the first Emergency NPs in Queensland. He also had numerous opportunities for setting up NP practices in Australia and abroad through his service with the Australian Defense Force. He has played a role in the development, mentoring and training of emergency and acute care nurse practitioners, including developing policy and advancing the NP role in many rural and metropolitan areas across the world. He currently lives in Texas because "I came to Texas so much that eventually I ended up here." He is an internationally recognized trauma specialist and was granted a national interest waiver for exceptional ability to become a permanent US resident in 2021. He becomes frustrated at times

with the barriers for NP practice and hopes that Texas will become a full practice authority state in the near future. He enjoys spending time with his family and walking the dogs.

#### Biographical Sketch:

Dr. O'Neill is a leading Nurse Practitioner and a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Fellow of the College of Emergency Nursing Australasia, and Fellow of the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners. Dr. O'Neill has 20 years of experience in emergency, critical care, retrieval, and military medicine. This experience includes operational military experience in the Middle East and on humanitarian assistance in southeast Asia and the Pacific islands. During his career, he has worked in many remote, rural, and metropolitan emergency departments, including expeditionary health units and combat support hospitals. As a true nurse practitioner, Dr. O'Neill has had the opportunity to set up many NP services, including being the first NP in several emergency departments in Australia, United States, and the United Arab Emirates. Dr. O'Neill has many journal publications and has presented at advanced practice conferences nationally and internationally. These unique opportunities led him to help the development of mentoring and training of acute care NPs, including developing NP policy, scope of practice, peer review, and advancing the role in many rural and metropolitan areas. Dr. O'Neill was awarded the prestigious Meritus Award Citation for Services to Humanity in 2011 and a citation from the U.S. Navy as subject matter expert in trauma care in 2010. Dr. O'Neill was recently awarded the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal for his service with the military during hurricane Pam in the Pacific Island of Vanuatu. He was also awarded the Texas State District 9 Nurse Practitioner Award 2022. Dr. O'Neill served in one of the busiest emergency departments in the US; prior to this service he was the first lead Nurse Practitioner in Emergency Medicine at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi and the first NP at Gympie Hospital Emergency Department. He is an outstanding doctoral graduate from the prestigious Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University. His research focused on comparing prescriptive practices of NPs and physicians in the emergency department setting, the first study to directly compare the two providers within this specialty setting. In June 2021 Dr. O'Neill became the first NP from Australia to be granted a U.S. national interest waiver for exceptional ability to become a permanent resident in the United States. Dr. O'Neill was evaluated on key national interest requirements. His contributions, academic performance, and commitment to health care and the NP role proved to be exceptional and thus contributed to the granting of this waiver so he can continue his work in the United States.

Key words: international, trauma care, emergency, critical care, humanitarian

Daniel O'Neill

Interview

AANP Oral History Project

Dr. Daniel O'Neill DNP, FNP-C, CEN, CCRN, FCENA, FACNP, FAANP

Education:

Master of Advanced Practice: Griffith University Queensland Australia 2008

Master Nurse Practitioner: University of Queensland 2011

Doctor of Nursing Practice 2019 Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University

Post Masters ACNPC-AG 2021

Certifications: FNP-C, ACNPC-AG, CEN, CCRN

Brief Bio: Dr. O'Neill is a leading Nurse Practitioner and a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Fellow of the College of Emergency Nursing Australasia, and Fellow of the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners. Dr. O'Neill has 20 years of experience in emergency, critical care, retrieval, and military medicine. This experience includes operational military experience in the Middle East and on humanitarian assistance in southeast Asia and the Pacific islands. During his career he has worked in many remote, rural, and metropolitan emergency departments, including expeditionary health units and combat support hospitals. As a true nurse practitioner, Dr. O'Neill has had the opportunity to set up many NP services, including being the first NP in several emergency departments in Australia, United States, and the United Arab Emirates. Dr. O'Neill has many journal publications and has presented at advanced practice conferences nationally and internationally. These unique opportunities led him to help the development of mentoring and training of acute care NPs, including developing NP policy, scope of practice, peer review, and advancing the role in many rural and metropolitan areas. Dr. O'Neill was awarded the prestigious Meritus Award Citation for Services to Humanity in 2011 and a citation from the U.S. Navy as subject matter expert in trauma care in 2010. Dr. O'Neill was recently awarded the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal for his service with the military during hurricane Pam in the Pacific Island of Vanuatu. He was also awarded the Texas State District 9 Nurse Practitioner Award 2022. Dr. O'Neill served in one of the busiest emergency departments in the US; prior to this service he was the first lead Nurse Practitioner in Emergency Medicine at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi and the first NP at Gympie Hospital Emergency Department. He is an outstanding doctoral graduate from the prestigious Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University. His research focused on comparing prescriptive practices of NPs and physicians in the emergency department setting, the first study to directly compare the two providers within this specialty setting. In June 2021 Dr. O'Neill became the first NP from Australia to be granted a U.S. national interest waiver for exceptional ability to become a permanent resident in the United States. Dr. O'Neill was evaluated on key national interest requirements. His contributions, academic performance, and commitment to health care and the NP role proved to be exceptional and thus contributed to the granting of this waiver so he can continue his work in the United States.

**When did you become an NP? What was the motivation?**

The NP was new in Australia when I started, and I was reading about the great successes in the US and the great work that NPs across the nation were doing. Reading about Dr. Loretta Ford and her vision and challenges implementing the role inspired me to become a nurse practitioner. The role was evolving in Australia with only a few master's-level programs, and the regulation was on a state by state and territory basis. The educational and certification process in Australia differs from that in the US. I was funded by the Department of Health as I entered an advanced practice pathway. Master's programs are typically two to three years. Our post graduate experiences are in a specialty area, and we present a portfolio of experiences as part of the process. Bedside nurse consultants did not have prescribing privileges. My training in New South Wales was with an emergency room physician.

**What experiences did you bring into the role?**

I had experiences with my first degree in biomedical science, and my roles as CNS and charge in the emergency department, and as a military nurse. The Australian air force reserve pool did not initially have NPs until later when the role was formalized in the Navy.

**Did you experience any challenges? How were they resolved?**

I had lots of challenges in the early days in particular starting as the first nurse practitioner in a rural emergency department in Australia. I had no other NP to benchmark with or learn from, so I learned from the physicians and had to prove my position and knowledge to gain recognition and acceptance. The Australian Medical Society (AMA) as a group did not embrace the role so it was up to the individual to prove competence. One of the continuing issues was the length of the educational process which actually is similar to medical education in length.

**Are there any experiences that you would like to talk about?**

My experiences of having to prove myself and being treated by colleagues as novel and suboptimal really shaped me as an NP. I had lots of push back and comments made about how bad NPs were and we were dangerous. I learned early to embrace the negative comments and work alongside the physicians who had concerns about the role. I learned how to present data and metrics to support my role and positively engage the negativity and refocus that energy into supporting good patient care.

**What was most challenging in your career/ most important?**

Supporting and defining the role of the NP in the rural emergency department when not supported by physicians.

**Is there anything you would want to change?**

The control of health care to be evenly distributed to all providers and for NPs to be included and to sit on the major boards where policy decisions are made. Texas to become a full practice state.

**What do you see as pivotal moments in the past years?** Earning my doctoral degree and seeing many of the students graduate to become NPs. Receiving the Award for nursing excellence was a highlight.

### **Service with the military**

There has been significant growth in the number of nurse practitioners. The Australian College of Nurse Practitioners (ACNP) has developed expertise in developing and reviewing education specifically targeted at meeting the needs of the nursing profession.

### **What advice would you give to new nurse practitioners?**

Push every boundary, do not give up, always show metrics, and believe in yourself.

### **What do you see as the role of Nurse Practitioners in the next 25 years?**

I see increased growth and more patients and families choosing NPs to provide care.