Think of those nurses who influenced your practice, those you admired and wanted to be like. Were they managers? Some may have been, but probably many were not.

The leadership issue presents two challenges for mental health nursing. The first is to distinguish between leadership and management and raise the profile of clinical leaders. We need to empower nurses who are clinical leaders to recognise their role. Secondly, there needs to be an understanding of how clinical leaders are developed and how this might influence mental health nursing education and professional development to promote effective clinical leadership.

This is the focus of Gary Ennis’ higher degree studies at CQUniversity. He will interview clinical leaders with the aim of exploring and articulating their specific characteristics. The clinical leaders will be identified by the nurses who work with them to make sure we capture the ‘grass roots’ view of leadership.

GARY ENNIS IS A HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENT.
BRENDA HAPPELL IS THE DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND PROFESSOR OF CONTEMPORARY NURSING, SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY.
MARC BROADBENT IS A LECTURER, SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY.
ALL ARE AT CQUNIVERSITY.