Guidelines for Participation in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative

Nursing Policy and Innovation Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

May 2014

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Copies of this report can be obtained from
INFOline: 1-866-532-3161
TTY 1-800-387-5559

Table of Contents

Program Overview 4

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee 4
Definition of a New Graduate Nurse 4
The Goals of the Initiative 4
How It Works 5

Eligibility and Matching Process 6

Eligibility for Participation for New Graduate Nurses 6
Eligibility for Employers 6
Matching Process for New Graduate Nurses 6
Matching Process for Employers 7

Funding & Reporting Requirements 10

Amount of Funding 10
Ministry Funding 10
Employer Funding 10
Use of Funds 10
How Funds Will Be Provided 11
Reporting Requirements for Employers Receiving Funding 12
Need Help? 12

Appendix "A" 13

Minimum Requirements for Orientation 13

Appendix "B" 14

Eligible Re-investment Options for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative 14

Program Overview

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee

The Nursing Graduate Guarantee (NGG) Initiative is designed to support Canadian New Graduate Nurses (i.e. graduates of Registered Nurse and Registered Practical Nurse programs) by providing them with a full-time job opportunity (Bridging Position). Such opportunities will be made available to New Graduate Nurses for the period of time that the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the Ministry) continues to administer the NGG.

Definition of a New Graduate Nurse

"New Graduate Nurse" means a person who has, within six months prior to matching to a Bridging Position, graduated from a Canadian RN or RPN program.

The Goals of the Initiative

This initiative seeks to:

- Provide New Graduate Nurses with the opportunity to obtain experience in nursing in Ontario through temporary full-time positions;
- Promote the availability of permanent full-time positions for New Graduate Nurses;
- Facilitate "matching" between New Graduate Nurses and Employers;
- Create Bridging Positions for New Graduate Nurses;
- Support New Graduate Nurses in Ontario as they transition to practice;
- Improve integration of New Graduate Nurses into the workforce;
- Facilitate recruitment to all sectors;
- Encourage Employers to maximize availability of full-time nursing positions;
- Increase the total supply of nurses by providing opportunity for temporary full-time employment to nurses who choose to make Ontario their home.

How It Works

The **HealthForceOntario Nurses Career Start Gateway** (Online Gateway) will be used to link New Graduate Nurses with Employers (https://www.nursescareerstart.health.gov.on.ca).

The Ministry will provide funding for temporary full-time, supernumerary (above normal staffing complement) positions up to 26 weeks for New Graduate Nurses who are matched with Employers with the expectation that these Bridging Positions will lead to permanent full-time employment for participating New Graduate Nurses.

After a minimum period of 12 weeks, but within 26 weeks from the start date of the Bridging Position, the Ministry expects that the ***Employer will make best efforts to hire the New Graduate Nurse into a permanent full-time position*** unless the Employer considers the New Graduate Nurse to be unsuitable for employment (taking into consideration any applicable collective agreement requirements). If the Employer chooses to either terminate the employment agreement with the New Graduate Nurse, or to transition the NGG Nurse into permanent part-time or casual employment, prior to the end of their obligations, the Employer must return the balance of Funds to the Ministry.

In addition, Employers must commit to funding an additional six-week, full-time, above staffing complement position for the New Graduate Nurse where the New Graduate Nurse is not bridged into permanent full-time employment within 26 weeks.

The Bridging Position will provide the New Graduate Nurses with an extended orientation that meets minimum requirements, as set out in Appendix “A”, and valuable job experience. New Graduate Nurses will be paid sector-appropriate wages, based on the rates negotiated between the Employer and the applicable bargaining unit, and based on the starting salary for a New Graduate Nurse at the Employer’s organization, as applicable, including up to 24% benefits.

Employers are expected to commit to best efforts to bridge the New Graduate Nurse to permanent full-time employment. Employers must provide information about how they expect to bridge the New Graduate Nurse.

Where the New Graduate Nurse is hired into a permanent, full-time position during the 26 week Bridging Position (but after the initial 12 weeks), the Employer may use the balance of the Funds for other nursing initiatives. Appendix “B”, attached, lists eligible nursing re-investment options.

Eligibility and Matching Process

Eligibility for Participation for New Graduate Nurses

Participation in the NGG is open to all New Graduate Nurses who have graduated from a Canadian nursing program provided that they match with a participating Employer on the Online Gateway within six months of course completion (date after which final grades have been received).

Eligibility for Employers

The NGG is open to health care Employers from all sectors, including Hospital, Long-Term Care, Community Care, Home Care, Mental Health, Public Health, and Primary Care, provided they register on the Online Gateway.

An **Employer** must:

- be a health care organization that employs nurses and is funded by the government of Ontario for the provision of nursing services; and,
- have the infrastructure to support successful implementation of the initiative. This may include physical infrastructure, nursing education or professional development initiatives and management supports.

Matching Process for New Graduate Nurses

To be eligible to participate in the NGG, the New Graduate Nurse must use the Online Gateway (accessible at https://www.nursescareerstart.health.gov.on.ca) and follow the matching process outlined below:

Step 1: Registration
The New Graduate Nurse must register on the Online Gateway by accessing https://www.nursescareerstart.health.gov.on.ca and selecting “Register Now!” in the “Nursing Users” section.

Step 2: Online Gateway Matching
The New Graduate Nurse must use the Online Gateway to find an Employer "match" by:

1. Consulting the Online Gateway job registry regularly;
2. Applying to positions offered on the Online Gateway by Employers within 6 months of the New Graduate Nurse's course completion date (date after which final grades have been received);
3. Completing the Employer's interview process, where the Employer selects the New Graduate Nurse candidate for an interview;
4. Accepting a Bridging Position through the Online Gateway, where the New Graduate Nurse is offered a Bridging Position. Please Note: New Graduate Nurses have 72 hours to cancel acceptance of the job offer. Once the 72 hour cancellation period has passed and there has been no notice of cancellation from the New Graduate Nurse, it will be assumed that both the Employer and the New Graduate Nurse have agreed to the match and that a match has been made; and,
5. Updating contact information (including email address) if it changes.

Step 3: Obtain Temporary Registration
The New Graduate Nurse must obtain Temporary Registration with the College of Nurses of Ontario before commencing employment. For more information on the requirements for Temporary Registration visit the CNO website at http://www.cno.org.

Matching Process for Employers

To be eligible for Funding, the Employer must follow the process outlined below. Please note that Employers may post a position on the Online Gateway to be filled by New Graduate Nurses, as well as any candidates participating in the Nursing Career OrIENtation Initiative.

Step 1: Matching Process
The Employer must:

1. Register on the Online Gateway by accessing the website through https://www.nursescareerstart.health.gov.on.ca;
2. Post Bridging Positions by completing the job posting on the Online Gateway;
3. Follow the Employer's regular interview process with any New Graduate Nurse(s) who the Employer wishes to consider for a Bridging Position;

4. Provide any selected New Graduate Nurse with an offer for a temporary full-time, supernumerary (above staffing complement) Bridging Position (that abides by any applicable collective agreement requirements) using the Online Gateway. **The Ministry encourages early consultation with collective agreement representatives to ensure requirements are met**.

   Please Note: The New Graduate Nurse has 72 hours to cancel an accepted employment offer. Employers should not assume that the acceptance of the position is final and a match has been made until the 72 hour cancellation period has passed.

5. Employers must match with a New Graduate Nurse on the Online Gateway within six months of his/her course completion (date after which final grades have been received).

Step 2: Confirmation and Agreement

Once the New Graduate Nurse accepts a Bridging Position, the Online Gateway will generate a form and the Employer must:

1. Submit a Budget Request to the Ministry confirming the details of the offer;
2. Enter into a funding agreement with the Ministry outlining the Employer's obligations under the NGG; and,
3. The New Graduate Nurse must apply to the College of Nurses of Ontario for Temporary Registration and cannot begin work until this has been confirmed.

Step 3: Provide the Bridging Position

The Employer must provide the New Graduate Nurse with a Bridging Position that meets the following criteria:

- *Initial Twelve Weeks* - The New Graduate Nurse must be provided with an extended above normal staffing complement orientation for a minimum period of 12 weeks (during which the New Graduate Nurse cannot be bridged into a permanent, full-time position). Orientation must meet minimum requirements, as specified in the attached Appendix "A";

- *Subsequent Fourteen Weeks* - Following the initial 12 weeks of the Bridging Position, the New Graduate Nurse must continue to be provided with an extended orientation above staffing complement for an additional 14 weeks,

unless the New Graduate Nurse is bridged to a permanent, full-time position at an earlier date (but after the initial 12 weeks);

- *Additional Employer-Funded Six-Weeks* - Where the New Graduate Nurse is **not hired** into a permanent, full-time position within or immediately following the 26 week Bridging Position, **the Employer must fund and provide a full-time position to the New Graduate Nurse for an additional six weeks.** This requirement may be waived if the New Graduate Nurse voluntarily chooses to accept a permanent part-time position with the organization prior to the end of the 26 week period;

- *Suspension of Funding Following Failure of Examination* - Where the New Graduate Nurse does not successfully pass the applicable Canadian Registered Nurse Examination (CRNE) or Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination (CPNRE) on his/her first attempt, **the Ministry will suspend the New Graduate Nurse's funding under the NGG;**

- *Continuation of New Graduate Nurse Funding After Passes Subsequent CRNE or CPNRE Subject to Any Applicable Collective Agreement Requirements* - Where the Ministry suspended funding for the New Graduate Nurse's participation in the NGG because the New Graduate Nurse did not pass his or her first attempt of the CRNE or CPRNE, The Ministry may continue funding the New Graduate Nurse if he or she subsequently passes the second or third attempt at the CRNE or CPRNE and if the Employer has an available Supernumerary Position;

- *Termination of Funding Following Failure of Examination* – Where the New Graduate Nurse does not successfully pass the applicable CRNE or CPNRE on his/her third attempt, **Ministry funding for the New Graduate Nurse's participation in the NGG will be terminated.**

Step 4: Hire the New Graduate Nurse into a Permanent, Full-time Position
The Ministry expects the Employer to make best efforts to hire the New Graduate Nurse into a permanent, full-time position, during the period of the Bridging Position or during the Employer-funded additional six-week position, unless the Employer considers the New Graduate Nurse to be unsuitable for employment (taking into consideration any applicable collective agreement requirements).

Funding & Reporting Requirements

Amount of Funding

Ministry Funding

The Ministry will fund the 26 weeks of salary dollars for each New Graduate Nurse participating in the program. Should the New Graduate Nurse be bridged to a permanent, full-time position after 12 weeks but prior to 26 weeks, the Employer may use the remainder of the allocated Funds for certain other nursing initiatives, as further described in the attached Appendix “B”.

Employer Funding

Where the New Graduate Nurse is not bridged to a permanent, full-time position during the 26 week, Ministry-funded period, the Employer must fund a period of full-time employment which must continue until the earliest of: (i) the date the New Graduate Nurse is hired into a permanent, full-time position; or (ii) up to six weeks from the date the Ministry-funded Bridging Position ended.

Use of Funds

The Employer must use the Funds provided under the NGG as follows:

Funds for the Initial 12 Week Period
The Funds applicable to the initial 12 week period must be used to provide salary dollars and benefits for the New Graduate Nurse. These Funds may not be used for salary costs of nurse educators and/or coordinators or mentors, or for similar purposes.

Funds for the Period Following Initial 12 Weeks
Where the New Graduate Nurse **is not hired** into a permanent, full-time position **during the 26 week Bridging Position**, the allocated Funds must continue to be used for the purpose of providing salary dollars and benefits. These Funds may not be used for the salary costs of nurse educators and/or coordinators or mentors, or for similar purposes.

Where the New Graduate Nurse **is hired** into a permanent, **full-time** position during the 26 week Bridging Position (but after the initial 12 weeks), the Employer may use the balance of the Funds (equivalent to the salary dollars and benefits which would have funded the remaining period of the Bridging Position) for other nursing initiatives. Appendix "B", attached, lists eligible nursing re-investment options.

Where the NGG Nurse **is hired** into a permanent **part-time** position during the 26 week Bridging Position, the balance of the Funds must be returned to the Ministry (e.g. cannot be used for any other purpose and/or the nursing initiatives outlined in Appendix "B").

Please note that any applicable re-investment Funds for New Graduate Nurses who have been hired into permanent full-time positions must be spent by the end of the Funding Year(s) (March 31st) for which the Funds were allocated or these Funds will be subject to recovery by the Ministry.

How Funds Will Be Provided

The Ministry will provide the applicable Funds as follows:

- For all approved Budget Requests, 100% of the applicable Funds will be provided to the eligible Employer by direct deposit following the receipt by the Ministry of the executed funding agreement;

- For accounting purposes, if the start date of the New Graduate Nurse is between April to early October, the eligible Employer will receive 100% of applicable Funds in a single payment. For all New Graduate Nurses with start dates after mid-October, the eligible Employer will receive two payments totaling 100% of applicable Funds in accordance with Schedule "C" of the funding agreement. The two amounts will account for salaries and benefits accrued by New Graduate Nurses employed in the NGG over two fiscal years; and,

- Failure to obtain verification from bargaining unit representatives will result in a recovery of up to 20% of the Funds if the Ministry does not receive a complete final report that is satisfactory to the Ministry.

Reporting Requirements for Employers Receiving Funding

Employers who receive Funding under the NGG will be required to demonstrate accountability for use of the Funds.

The funding agreement will outline the terms and conditions for the use of the approved Funds and will stipulate the reporting requirements of the Employer, including the completion of a final report.

Reports will require the verification of any applicable RN/RPN bargaining unit representative(s).

The Ministry strongly recommends early consultation with bargaining unit representatives and ongoing dialogue in order to ensure their ability to comply with this requirement.

Failure to obtain verification from bargaining unit representatives will result in a recovery of up to 20% of the Funds if the Ministry does not receive a complete final report that is satisfactory to the Ministry.

Need Help?

For further information regarding the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative, please visit **www.healthforceontario.ca** or contact the HealthForceOntario Info Line at **1-800-463-1270** (ext. 6) (TTY **1-800-387-5559**).

Appendix "A"

Minimum Requirements for Orientation

The minimum orientation requirements for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative (NGG) are as follows:

- Organizations must provide New Graduate Nurses with a minimum of 12 weeks orientation including a minimum of 3 to 6 days of general orientation to the organization.
- The organization must clearly define the roles of the New Graduate Nurse, mentor and orientation leader.
- A learning plan must be developed by the New Graduate Nurse and mentor, with input from the orientation leader, and should be used to monitor the New Graduate Nurse's progress and to guide evaluation.
- Orientation to meet goals of the learning plan should include a variety of teaching strategies and delivery methods to educate on competencies.

.

Appendix "B"

Eligible Re-investment Options for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative

I. Intraprofessional Mentorship and Preceptorship Programs

Funding may be used for intraprofessional (nurse to nurse) mentorship and/or preceptorship programs.

Definitions of Mentorship and Preceptorship for the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative

Mentorship is a formal supportive relationship between two, or more, health professionals that has the potential to result in professional growth and development for both mentors and mentees. Mentorship helps to maximize a person's professional practice. While it is often used to support the transition of new graduates, preparing them for the realities of the workplace, it may occur at any stage in a person's career. Outcomes of mentorship may include enhanced critical thinking and leadership capacity, improved self-esteem and confidence, career enrichment and improved job satisfaction. A mentorship program is an initiative that has formal structures in place, which promotes and supports the relationship between a mentor and mentees.

Preceptorship is a formal supportive relationship between health professionals and students. These relationships are established to support the preceptee in achieving specific learning objectives, usually tailored to the acquisition of knowledge and skills specific to their practice setting. Potential outcomes of a preceptorship include: skill and knowledge acquisition, anxiety reduction, and professional socialization. A preceptorship program is an initiative that has formal structures in place that supports the relationship between a preceptor and a student preceptee.

II. 80/20 For Staff Nurses

Funding may be used to back-fill staff nurses, allowing them to spend 20% of their time on professional development opportunities (e.g. work on nursing councils, patient teaching, research, education). The remaining 80% of their time would be spent in clinical practice.

III. Internships for Experienced Nurses in Specialty Areas

Funding may be used to allow more experienced nurses to spend time in a supernumerary internship in a specialty area to assist them in gaining the knowledge and skills required to fill present and potential vacancies.

IV. Initiatives to Support Experienced Internationally-Educated Nurses (IENs) who are Registrants in Ontario and Nurses Re-Entering the Workforce

Funding may be used to help experienced IENs (who are ineligible to participate in the Nursing Career OrIENtation Initiative) who are currently registered in Ontario to transition into the nursing workforce.

Funding may be used for extended orientation for nurses who are currently registered in Ontario and re-entering the nursing workforce.

May 2014 © Queen's Printer for Ontario