

## POLICY

## HWNZ FUNDING OF POSTGRADUATE NURSING STUDY

Overview	This policy describes the eligibility criteria and process for nurses employed by NMDHB (or Ministry of Health funded health services) to access Health Workforce New Zealand (HWNZ) funding for postgraduate nursing study. HWNZ funding is intended to cover course fees and backfill for the work area, and to <b>subsidise</b> travel and accommodation required to undertake postgraduate study.
Purpose	To allocate HWNZ funding to nurses undertaking postgraduate programmes of study which are consistent with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prioritised workforce needs identified by NMDHB</li> <li>• NMDHB Annual Plan and Strategic Plan objectives</li> <li>• Regional and local Future Workforce Strategies</li> <li>• government priorities and NZ national health policy.</li> </ul>
Scope	This policy applies to Registered Nurses employed by NMDHB and to nursing workforce employees of Ministry of Health-funded health services within the NMDHB geographic area.
Policy statement	The process for allocation of HWNZ funding will be transparent, equitable and regionally negotiated.
Eligibility to apply	To apply for funding the Registered Nurse must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be registered as a nurse under the HPCA Act (2003)</li> <li>• have a current Annual Practising Certificate</li> <li>• currently be employed for a minimum of 0.5 FTE by NMDHB or a Ministry of Health funded health service within the Nelson Marlborough geographical area</li> <li>• be a NZ citizen or permanent resident</li> <li>• have evidence of support by their current employer to meet the education requirements for postgraduate study</li> <li>• meet the entry criteria required by the education provider</li> <li>• for Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Level study, provide evidence of previous sound academic record and attendance</li> <li>• have a current portfolio: for DHB employees this must have been assessed through the NMDHB Professional Development and Recognition Programme (PDRP) framework</li> <li>• have a current career plan.</li> </ul>
Eligible courses of study	To be eligible for HWNZ funding the programme must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be at level 8 (Master's Level) on the NZQA framework and inform advanced nursing practice, as well as take the RN toward their career goals</li> <li>• integrate theory and clinical practice to develop knowledge and skills in the nurse's specialty area</li> <li>• acknowledge the cultural characteristics of contemporary NZ society</li> <li>• be approved or recognised by NCNZ as contributing to the development of Nurse Practitioners.</li> </ul>

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**Application** Applications must be made on or before the date stipulated on the application form in the year prior to commencement of the study.  
Application will be on the NMDHB HWNZ funding application e-form and will include:

- a current curriculum vitae
- a robust and agreed career plan (as discussed with CNM/Unit Manager or Nurse Consultant)
- expected outcome of the programme of study for the student and the service
- evidence of a current portfolio and performance appraisal document.

**Selection process & funding priorities**

The needs of the workplace will be considered. The course of study must be related to the current practice area of the nurse and their career plan.

In situations where funding needs to be prioritised NMDHB may choose to limit funding to one paper per applicant as a method of equitably distributing funds across the nursing workforce.

Within the following criteria nurses who have been employed for 12 months or more will be given priority.

Funding will be allocated in the following order:

- nurses for whom completion of a particular qualification is a requirement of their employment contract for their role
- nurses in designated senior positions or nurses assessed at Level 3 or 4 on the PDRP who have not previously studied at Postgraduate Certificate level
- nurses working in specialty practice areas that have been identified as national or regional health priorities
- nurses with CNM/employer support who have identified postgraduate study as a goal for professional / performance or role development at performance review (key part of career plan)
- nurses studying toward a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's qualifications who demonstrate evidence of PDRP advancement with clear career goals
- nurses undertaking a postgraduate diploma who have been working in their practice areas for three or more years
- nurses with CNM/employer and SM support to undertake study towards a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's qualification who **have not** previously been allocated HWNZ or other funding
- nurses with CNM/employer and SM support to undertake study towards a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's qualification who **have** previously been allocated HWNZ or other funding
- nurses who have a history of completing a planned course of study.

All applications will be assessed by two members of the HWNZ Advisory Committee and ranked according to the above prioritisation criteria.

A record of the prioritisation process and a list of the final ranking of all applications will be maintained by the Nurse Consultant – Education.

**Acceptance of funding**

Successful applicants will complete the *Acceptance of HWNZ Funding* form to indicate formal acceptance of the funding.

As specified by HWNZ reporting requirements, student information and study results will be reported to HWNZ.

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Waiting lists	<p>If an applicant is declined funding then they will be placed on a waiting list for consideration if further funding becomes available or if people withdraw. Applications that meet eligibility criteria received after the closing date will be added to the waiting list in the order they are received.</p> <p>If further funding is made available it will be offered to the person at the top of the ranked priority list who best meets the criteria of that funding – e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ring-fenced primary funding will be offered to the highest-ranked primary employed applicant</li> <li>• full-year funding will go to the highest-ranked applicant enrolled for a full-year course.</li> </ul>
Withdrawal and postponement	<p>Once the <i>Acceptance of HWNZ Funding</i> form has been signed, any changes to study plans will be considered a withdrawal from HWNZ funding. This includes postponing study from one semester to the next. History of withdrawal may affect future applications for funding.</p> <p>Nurses who have previously been enrolled but not completed a course of study will have new applications for funding considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>If a further application is accepted from the above withdrawal/postponement candidate, it will be prioritised according to the funding priorities listed above. In situations where two applicants are ranked at the same level the applicant with no history of withdrawal will take precedence.</p>
Fail Grades	<p>Nurses who have previously failed a HWNZ-funded course of study will have new applications for funding considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>The new application will be considered by 2 members of the HWNZ Advisory Committee. If the application is accepted it will be prioritised according to the funding priorities listed above. In situations where two applicants are ranked at the same level the applicant with the better academic history will take precedence.</p>
Fees Payment	<p>HWNZ funding covers the full cost of academic fees for funded students. NMDHB will pay fees directly to the education provider.</p>
Clinical Release	<p>Funding is available for clinical release time (maximum 8 hours per day) to attend compulsory course requirements. The funding covers up to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seven days per 40-point paper</li> <li>• six days per 30-point paper</li> <li>• five days per 20-point paper</li> <li>• four days per 15-point paper.</li> </ul> <p>Further release time must be negotiated with NMDHB Nurse Consultant - Education and employer prior to commencement of the course.</p> <p>To be eligible for payment of clinical release time study days must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporated into the roster as part of the employee's FTE</li> <li>• agreed by the employer prior to the commencement of the course.</li> </ul> <p>For NMDHB employees the Actor roster code CTPG must be used.</p>

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### Travel and Accommodation

Travel and accommodation costs are provided on a **partial subsidy** basis only. It is likely that some costs associated with travel and accommodation will need to be met by the applicant.

Travel and accommodation costs must adhere to the principles of the NMDHB [Staff Travel and Accommodation](#) policy. Spending on travel and accommodation must be cost-effective.

- All flights are to be travelled in economy class at the lowest possible airfare **and must be paid for by each individual**. Flights paid with airpoints are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement for accommodation is capped at \$100 + GST per night.
- Reimbursement is available up to a capped total amount.
- Accommodation costs must be paid by each individual student and individual receipts must be presented for reimbursement and audit processes. ***Sharing accommodation is discouraged.***

### Feedback of information

NMDHB encourages nurses who have completed postgraduate study to share information gained with other staff within the workplace and to participate in the Nursing Research Group.

### References

- NMDHB District Annual Plan
- NMDHB Strategic Plan
- Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (2003)
- National Professional Development and Recognition Framework (2003/2005)
- Competencies for the Registered Nurse Scope of Practice (NCNZ, 2005)
- Competencies for the Nurse Practitioner Scope of Practice (NCNZ, 2005)
- NMDHB [Staff Travel and Accommodation](#) policy
- [South Island Alliance](#) website & linked documents

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