

Nursing Overseas

This leaflet is designed to help you with the process of getting an overseas nursing position. Working overseas can be extremely rewarding both professionally and personally.

There is a worldwide shortage of nurses and New Zealand has a reputation for providing nurses of high calibre. International agencies advertise through Kai Tiaki Nursing New Zealand, metropolitan newspapers and the internet. NZNO cannot guarantee the quality of an agency's service or endorse any one particular agency over another. If you are planning to work overseas there is a lot of work to do before you leave New Zealand. The following checklist will help you.

Before You Leave New Zealand: Things To Do

Do your homework. Find out as much as you can about the country you intend going to i.e. the type of nursing, the languages spoken in the practice setting, the facilities and life style offered outside the workplace

- > Apply for registration/enrolment directly to the registration authority of the country concerned. The registration authority will send you an application form to fill in. Do this as soon as possible because in some countries it can take up to six months or longer for this process to be completed.
- > The completed application form should be accompanied by photocopied certified copies of your:
 - Registration certificate
 - Hospital certificate of training
 - Transcript of your education programme showing details of the theoretical programme and clinical experience
 - Birth certificate
 - Marriage certificate (if applicable)
 - A copy of your current practising certificate in your present name
 - A statement of experience in particular nursing areas
 - Character and professional references written in the last 6 months
 - Your anticipated date of arrival and address in the overseas country.

NB: A Justice of the Peace or lawyer should be able to certify the copies of these documents for you.

- > Don't resign until you have written confirmation of your visa, passport, tickets and registration. Plans can change and you could be left without a job in either country.
- > Most countries ask for verification of your nursing registration in New Zealand and the Nursing Council of New Zealand (NCNZ) will provide this at your request. There will be a verification fee of NZ\$60 payable to the NCNZ for this service. (2009 costing)
- > When writing to the NCNZ state:
 - full name
 - registration date, and number
 - name of authority to whom you are applying
 - your return address.

- > It is most important that you contact NZNO Membership on 0800 28 38 48 or membership@nzno.org.nz to inform us that you:
 - wish to remain a member while overseas. (your subscription will be reduced by 50 percent and you will continue to receive Kai Tiaki Nursing New Zealand) or
 - you wish to resign your membership
- > Find out the name and contact number of the appropriate nursing organisation in your country of destination.
- > Have you got your:
 - passport
 - visa (if applicable)
 - international driving licence?

Note for new graduates: You cannot work overseas with provisional registration.

Questions To Be Answered

- > Does the country you intend working in require a written exam e.g. United States and in Canada each province requires a written exam) and/or an English language qualification, e.g. IELTS.
- > Does the country have particular standards in terms of number of hours in a particular nursing area and types of experience? e.g. United Kingdom.
- > Does the country have an orientation requirement? Some countries require foreign nurses to work for a period of time in an orientation programme. You need to check at what rate you will be paid during this time.
- > How much does registration in another country cost?
- > Are you using an agency?
- > Agency's vary and you need to check out whether there is any advantage in using one. Questions to ask include:
 - what will the agency charge you?
 - what services can you carry out more cheaply yourself?
 - will the agency pay your fare?
 - what sort of contract does the agency offer the employee/employer?
 - will you be required to repay your fare, if it is provided?
 - will the employer provide accommodation and at what cost?
 - is the accommodation furnished or unfurnished?
 - what happens if the agency/employer breaks its contract with you while you are in transit to your new country of work?

Once You Arrive at Your Destination

A Contract

For every job you should have a contract of employment signed by both parties. If you have arranged a job through an agency before you leave New Zealand you should have this signed before leaving. Take a copy of this contract with you.

Your contract should include:

- an offer and acceptance of the job
- specific details about the amount of money you will be paid, before and after tax
- what the job involves, type of nursing,
- the hours you agree to work, e.g. 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day etc

NZNO Practice guideline:

Nursing Overseas

New Zealand Nurses Organisation PO Box 2128, Wellington 6140. www.nzno.org.nz

- types of shifts - you don't want to arrive and find you have agreed to do only night shifts
- overtime rates
- provisions for leave, e.g. parental, sick, holidays
- duration of contract
- to whom will you be responsible and who will you supervise?

If it is indefinite:

- can you & the agency get out of the contract?
- Is there a let out clause for emergencies?

What Can You Do If You Need Help?

- contact the local New Zealand Consulate
- the embassies/consulates of the country

Professional Association/Union Membership

- The embassies/consulates of the country
- NZNO National Office, PO Box 2128, Wellington 6140, NZ. (Ph: 04 385 0847)
- Nursing Council of New Zealand, PO Box 9644, Wellington 6141, N.Z. (Ph: 04 385 9589)

Other Sources of Information

- The embassies/consulates of the country
- NZNO National Office, PO Box 2128, Wellington 6140, NZ. (Ph: 04 385 0847)
- Nursing Council of New Zealand, PO Box 9644, Wellington 6141, N.Z. (Ph: 04 385 9589)

When You Return To New Zealand

- Rejoin NZNO (or if still a member update your contact details and membership status)
- Let NZNO know of any difficulties you had. We can then warn other nurses.

Remember the experience of nursing and living in another country can be invaluable but New Zealand needs you to bring that knowledge and experience back to New Zealand.

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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