



DATE: 09/05/2020

## **CENNZ-NZNO POSITION STATEMENT**

### **NEW NURSING GRADUATES IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS**

#### **SUMMARY**

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand – NZNO advocates a focused development programme to support new graduate nurses with education, supervision and mentorship throughout their first year of practice.

#### **CENNZ POSITION: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses - NZNO that:

- Nurses entering emergency nursing require support to transition to specialty nursing practice
- Nursing graduates require additional mentorship and preceptorship during their first year of practice
- Nursing graduates should be guided and nurtured through a professional development process
- Employers should collaborate with programmes such as the Nurse Entry to Practice (NetP) or similar, to offer new graduate placements for emergency nurses
- Sufficient funding and resources are required to establish and maintain the required preceptorship and mentorship process
- Nursing graduates can be integral members of the emergency nursing team.
- Support networks of education, mentorship and/or clinical supervision are required to continue nursing practice development and the retention of a skilled emergency nursing workforce
- Active recruitment and retention strategies are necessary to provide a skilled emergency nursing workforce that reflects and meets the needs of our communities.

## **BACKGROUND:**

A nursing graduate is a qualified nurse in their first year of nursing practice. Transition to practice involves many changes and challenges during the integration of learning with new practice experiences (Sandler, 2018; Murray, Sundin, & Cope, 2019).

Emergency nurses utilise knowledge, skills, and clinical judgment to recognise patients who are currently or potentially at risk of becoming significantly unwell (CENNZ-NZNO, 2016). Clarification and prioritisation of clinical urgency and the need for time critical intervention with multiple patients is a key emergency nursing skill.

During early emergency nursing experience, the ability to integrate multiple aspects of care in response to crisis situations, and activate timely responses is still developing, therefore nurses in their first year of nursing practice require targeted support to care for those within the undifferentiated phase of a healthcare presentation that is central to emergency nursing (CENNZ-NZNO, 2016; Murray, et al., 2019).

The desired outcome is the retention of our most vital resource, the future nursing workforce. This is in the form of competent emergency nurses, achieved following their first year of supported professional practice (Baumann, Crea-Arsenio, Hunsberger, Fleming-Carroll, & Keatings, 2019; Baumann, Hunsberger, Crea-Arsenio, & Akhtar-Danesh, 2018).

The Nurse Entry to Practice (NETP) programme in New Zealand provides an established mentorship and education process to facilitate nursing graduates to transition to practice (McKillop, Doughty, Atherfold, Shaw, 2016). While emergency nursing has been identified as a popular choice amongst nursing graduates when indicating preferred choice of employment, there are still relatively few placements able to be supported (Technical Advisory Services Limited, 2019). For new graduates to be mentored into confident and competent clinical practitioners, CENNZ-NZNO believes that the provision of a safe workplace is essential; this requires sufficient staffing to allow for mentoring, funding to support continuing nursing education, and a culture of respect and recognition for the varied skills and attributes each individual clinician brings.

Ongoing support networks of education, mentorship and/or clinical supervision should be in place to meet the needs of all new nurse graduate's professional development (Jones, 2017). For emergency nursing, it is essential that the demands of the specialty are acknowledged, and sufficient support and resources are put in place to ensure the development of a skilled emergency nursing workforce (Baumann, et al., 2019; Morphet, Plummer, Kent, & Considine, 2017). Meeting emergency nursing staffing needs continues to be a difficult target to achieve, both in terms of numbers but also skill mix (National Nursing Organisation, 2014; Baumann, et al., 2018). It is inevitable that the emergency sector will need to 'grow its own' and develop a diverse, responsive and representative workforce.

Historically CENNZ-NZNO has considered the unpredictable and changeable workload in the Emergency Department environment was not conducive to support a new nursing graduate. This position was reviewed at the direction of CENNZ membership in 2007 following reports of successful graduate training programmes in New Zealand Emergency Departments and a growing evidence base internationally (Berezuik, 2010; Casse, 2019; Jones, 2017; Morphet et al., 2017). A position statement was initially published in 2011 supporting a structured first year practice programme of orientation, education, and supervision.

## RATIONALE FOR CENNZ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Emergency nursing practice requires specialty knowledge that includes assessment and management of a wide range of undifferentiated presentations, time critical aspects of care, management of a variable workload
- The unpredictable and acute nature of Emergency Department workloads can be stressful
- Experienced nurses can find the transition to emergency nursing challenging and benefit from preceptorship and mentoring to develop strategies to manage the challenges and practice stressors
- The nursing graduate is beginning consolidation of learning and application theory to practice, socialisation into team, and has limited experience of managing emergency practice stressors
- A structured transition to practice programme promotes safe practice transition, staff retention, and safe care
- New graduates are interested in the specialty of emergency nursing, and represent a valuable resource
- Appropriate orientation programmes and preceptorship establishes good practice development skills that will assist practice development and increase work force capacity, engagement, and quality care

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**POSITION STATEMENT DUE FOR REVIEW: 09/05/2023**