

FINAL 31 JULY 2019

Sector update re the Safe Staffing Accord

1. Representatives of the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO), district health boards (DHBs) and the Ministry of Health signed an Accord on 30 July 2018 committing the parties to there being sufficient nurses in our public hospitals to ensure both their own and their patients' safety.

Agreed Commitments

2. The accord commits the Parties to the following:
 - a. to explore options for providing employment and training for all New Zealand nursing graduates and report to the Minister of Health by the end of November 2018
 - b. to develop any accountability mechanisms that the Parties believe are necessary (over and above those already agreed) to ensure DHBs implement the additional staffing needs identified by CCDM within the agreed timeframe (June 2021) and report to the Minister of Health by the end of February 2019
 - c. to develop a strategy for the retention of the existing nursing workforce and the re-employment of those who have left the workforce, and report to the Minister of Health by the end of May 2019.

Progress to date

3. In accordance with the 2018 Nursing Workforce Accord, Budget 2019 includes funding for training of all new graduate registered and enrolled nurses which will support safe staffing, recruitment and retention, and employment of nurses. \$24.52 million of funding over four years has been specifically set aside for this initiative and after four years will go to DHB baseline funding.
4. The Accord Operations Group will be working with its respective organisations to implement the changes in time for the new graduates who sit their state examinations in November and begin entry to practice programmes in January 2020. The new funding will enable all new graduate registered nurses who apply through the Advance Choice of Employment (ACE) process into either Nurse Entry to Practice (NEtP) or Nurse Entry to Specialty Practice (NESP) programmes in their first year of practice. Evidence shows that new graduate registered nurses who have completed NEtP/NESP programmes have higher retention than those who do not participate in the programmes.
5. A centralised matching process is required to enable a national enrolled nurse support into practice programme. A national matching process creates a platform for a consistent approach to employment so that employers have knowledge of numbers of new graduate enrolled nurses who want to work in their DHB and their preferences for employment settings.
6. The Ministry will also be working with Central TAS to strengthen data analysis in order to measure success of employment within six months and placement setting of new graduates.
7. Next steps include talking with DHB Directors of Nursing about allocation and distribution of the increased volumes of new graduates, with Central TAS about the ACE matching process for ENs and updating contracts and service specifications for the programmes.
8. The Accord Operations Group has always been committed to taking a systems approach to the components of the Accord. The Accord Operations Group will be working with its organisations to develop ways of increasing placements in aged care and primary care.
9. A workshop to discuss ways of improving new graduates experience in aged care will be held at the end of August. The workshop aims to share learnings on what's working well,

explore how to build on current good practice, and the potential of a 'centres of excellence' approach.

10. Advice went to the Minister at the end of May on Part C of the Accord which focuses on workforce retention. The parties to the Accord will be meeting with the Minister next month to discuss the proposed retention strategy, which uses a 'bundles of intervention' approach. This takes into account the multiple factors influencing nurses' decisions to stay or leave their job, or to return to nursing after time away, and the organisational context.
11. Please also feel free to distribute this update widely and we will be posting this to our Safe Staffing Accord section on the Ministry's website.
12. We are keen to keep everyone informed on our progress and are always happy to receive contributions from people. If you do want to share your thinking, please feel free to email our office at chiefnurse@health.govt.nz.

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