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SUTHERLAND DIVISION OF GENERAL PRACTICE

# PRACTICE NURSES KIT



ShireGPs

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# 1. Introduction

This kit was developed as part of the Sutherland Division of General Practice Support and Development program with the aim of assisting practices that are considering working with Practice Nurses or employing a Practice Nurse.

Included in this kit is the financial viability of the Practice Nurse, the duties that a nurse could perform awards wages, legal responsibility and requirements.

The financial models attempt to quantify the value of a Practice Nurse. However, caution should be exercised when interpreting the output from the financial models as they are based on certain assumptions which are inherently non exhaustive.

Permission was obtained from other divisions such as the Hunter Urban, Western Sydney and North West Slopes Divisions of General Practice to use their resources from previously developed nurse recruitment kits, some of which has been incorporated into this document. Information was resourced from The Royal College of Nursing and Australian Nursing Federation.

Thank you.

Dawn McBlain  
General Practice Support Programs Officer

## Disclaimer

The information in this manual is not a substitute for independent professional advice and expert or legal advice should be sought from competent professional persons as appropriate. Sutherland Division of General Practice does not accept liability for any injury or loss or damage incurred by the use of or reliance on the information in this kit.

# ASSESSING THE NEED

## 2. Why Employ a Practice Nurse

The role of the nurse in General Practice is a complementary role to that of a General Practitioner. Nurses working in general practice have the potential to allow a practice to provide an increased variety of services. <sup>1</sup>Studies have found that GPs and nurses establish efficient working relationships that enhance the quality of patient care. The potential for general practice to provide more effective health care outcomes is enhanced where nurses work in practice, and can be further enhanced when registered nurses work at an advanced level and their role is targeted to health priority areas.

It is important to note the differences between a Registered Nurse and Enrolled Nurse. Registered nurses complete an extensive education course of not less than three years. Courses undertaken by enrolled nurses are shorter, usually one year with an emphasis on practical skills. Enrolled nurses work in association with the registered nurse with their role being complementary to the registered nurses. Therefore enrolled nurses must be supervised by a registered nurse. This is a national nursing professional standard and is spelt out in the <sup>2</sup>Competency Standards for enrolled nurses

**In this present litigious climate in which we live, one of the first things to do when thinking about hiring a practice nurse is to check that you have sufficient Professional Indemnity insurance to cover yourself and the practice nurse. Nurses legally are bound by a Code of Conduct, which makes them accountable and responsible for their own actions within nursing practice. These codes can be viewed at the ANCI and ANF website [www.anci.org.au](http://www.anci.org.au) and [www.anf.org.au](http://www.anf.org.au)**

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<sup>1</sup> Nurses in General Practice, RACGP Fact Sheet No. 1

<sup>2</sup> Australian Nursing Council, Inc (ANCI) 1990 National Competency Standards for the Enrolled Nurse ANCI Canberra

# DIVISIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

# 3. Divisional Support Services

## Initial Recruitment of the Practice Nurse

### 1. Practice Nurse Orientation

The Division can offer orientation for the newly employed practice nurse, with ongoing education and up-skilling training sessions, mentoring and provision of advice and support through regular meetings of the **Practice Nurse Network**. The orientation outlined would consist of half a day at the Division offices and half a day with an experienced practice nurse observing her roles & duties. There would be ongoing mentoring via a weekly telephone contact with one of the experienced practice nurses (at a time convenient to the experienced nurse) for a period of 3-6 months or until such times as the practice nurse is comfortable with her duties. If at such times the nurse requires an urgent response she may contact one of the nurse at any time.

### 2. Half day at the Division office, provided by Divisional staff:

- Overview of Medical Director training, familiarisation with program, immunisation, recalls & reminder system and diabetes register.
- Introduction to enhanced primary care items, (health assessments and care plans, patient education resources)
- Training in relation to immunisation (reporting, & cold chain monitoring)
- Information and resources on PIP and SIP payments for diabetes, asthma, mental health and cervical screening

### 3. Mentoring Program - What is the mentoring program?

*<sup>3</sup>It is a relationship in which a more experienced person acts as a guide or role model for a less experienced colleague*

The Division will provide an opportunity to develop a mentoring framework for a newly appointed practice nurse with one of the three experienced Practice Nurses on the advisory committee. It is proposed that the newly recruited nurse will spend half a day in the practice observing duties & roles performed by the experienced nurse, the duties of which should be structured, varied and worthwhile. This would follow with distance mentoring via weekly telephone contact with an experienced nurse over a period over a period of 3 - 6 months and will provide support, confidence and guidance for the new practice nurse which would help diminish the professional isolation that is experienced by some in general practice.

Consultation with the principle Practice General Practitioner and or Practice Manager would be sought prior to the program commencing and reimbursement of practice time may be provided. It should be noted and taken into consideration that

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<sup>3</sup> McKenzie, B 1995. Friends in High places: How to achieve your ambitions goals and potential with the help of a mentor, Business & Professional Publishing Australia

during the mentoring program an allowance of the mentoring nurses' workload and time constraints should be taken into account.

### **Suggestions of Practical Experiences should be included where possible:**

- ◆ Immunisations, ACIR, Cold chain monitoring
- ◆ Medications, stock ordering of medications & vaccines
- ◆ Sterilisation techniques, tracking & cleaning
- ◆ Recalls & Reminders, immunisations, pathology, PAP smears, asthma, diabetes
- ◆ Health Assessments & Care Plans
- ◆ Triaging
- ◆ ECG's
- ◆ Wound management

#### **4. Responsibilities**

The three experienced nurses will share the duties of mentoring so that the responsibility of mentoring is not placed on one practice.

The nurses suggested that the mentoring process is not allocated during the busy months of March, April & May due to flu vaccines during these months. It was also pointed out that Mondays & Fridays were particularly busy times of the week and should be avoided.

#### **5. Reporting & Evaluation**

Reporting and Evaluation of the mentoring program would be discussed at the Practice Nurse Network Meeting and with the Practice Nurse Advisory Committee members. On going assessment evaluation and support should occur during the 6 month orientation program.

#### **6. Continual Professional Development**

The Division will provide up-skilling sessions and workshops for Practice Nurses on current practice issues and topics through the Practice Nurse Network meetings and Divisional run workshops with a focus on initiatives in chronic disease management such as asthma, diabetes, mental health and cervical screening. The Division will supply information of alternative training and educational workshops from third parties and other sources.

#### **7. Practice Nurse Network**

Practice Nurse Network Meetings meet on a regular basis three times a year to provide practice information, up-skilling sessions and discuss practice issues. This forum will give the practice nurses opportunities to discuss, training requirements, health issues and practice policies with peers. There will also be opportunities for clinical education and training.

#### **8. Practice Staff Network Meetings**

Currently the Division holds bi-monthly Practice Staff Network meetings hold which are available to all Practice Staff, Managers and Nurses. These meetings consist of an up-skilling session on current practice issues and provide an opportunity for practice staff and nurses to network and discuss current practice management issues.

### **For more information Contact**

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Email: [dmcblain.sdgp@shiregps.org.au](mailto:dmcblain.sdgp@shiregps.org.au)

# PRACTICE NURSE TASK LIST

## 4. Practice Nurse Task List

The following is a list of tasks that may be performed by a Practice Nurse within their knowledge and capabilities, depending on the needs of each individual practice.

### Immunisation

- Administer vaccines according to NH&MRC schedule
- Maintain patients immunisation records
- Complete ACIR recording requirements
- Check monthly ACIR statements to follow-up incomplete payments
- Follow-up ACIR 020A report quarterly
- Order vaccines
- Maintain vaccine fridge according to NH&MRC recommendations
- Complete daily vaccine fridge monitoring
- Maintain vaccine recall scheme for children under 7 yrs of age
- Maintain vaccine Hep B recall system for all 10 year olds
- Maintain vaccine 15 yr old recall system
- Maintain 50 yrs old Tetanus recall system
- Maintain 65 yr old flu and pneumococcal vaccine recall system
- Complete annual flu acquittal form
- Maintain practice immunisation rate above 90%

### Health Assessments

- Maintain over 75 years recall system
- Undertake functional assessment component of health assessments weekly (depending on number of eligible patients).
- Undertake information collection component of health assessment
- Arrange GP appointment with patient
- Ensure Medicare Health Assessment item number claimed

### GP Management Plans and Team Care Arrangements

- Identify appropriate patient/s
- Maintain a recall system for reviews
- Assessing patients and documenting results, identifying needs
- Preparing GPMP/TCA
- Provide self-management information and other patient education
- Assists in referring patients to allied health services where appropriate
- On going assistance with reviews and re-assessment of patient
- Ensure Medicare item numbers claimed

## Diabetes Annual Cycle of Care

- Compile database of all known diabetics
- Ensure each diabetic patient record has annual cycle of care documentation
- Maintain diabetic recall system
- Undertake diabetic education as deemed appropriate
- Undertake diabetic foot assessments where appropriate
- Undertake a full eye examination at least every 2 years for appropriate patients
- Undertake blood pressure, height, weight and calculate BMI

## Asthma Cycle of Care (2 step)

- Perform Spirometry
- Provide patient education regarding asthma and asthma related devices when necessary
- Maintain databases with register and recalls systems

## 45-49 Year Old Health Checks (once only)

- Search databases for eligible patients who have an identifiable risk factor for chronic diseases including family history
- Send recall letter
- Assist GP assessing patients and documenting results, identifying needs
- Provide self-management information and other patient education if necessary
- Assists GP preparing a GPMP/TCA if appropriate
- Assists in referring patients to allied health services if appropriate

## Antenatal Clinic

- Maintain antenatal register
- Maintain birth register
- Investigate and order resources
- Undertake urinalysis, weight, BP foetal hearts, foetal lie and presentation as deemed appropriate
- Provide antenatal education

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ARE COVERED UNDER YOUR INSURANCE TO UNDERTAKE THESE TASKS.**

**APPROPRIATE QUALIFICATIONS ARE NECESSARY TO PERFORM THESE TASKS.**

**REFER TO REGISTERED NURSE AND ENROLLED NURSE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AS DISCUSSED ON PAGE 6.**

## Accreditation

- Develop protocols and procedures relevant to nursing duties to meet accreditation requirements
- Attend practice clinical meetings
- Responsible for infection control within the practice
- Maintain appropriate waste disposal and waste collection requirements
- Maintain appropriate sharps disposal and sharps collection requirements
- Provide education to staff re infection control and cleaning requirements

## Sterilisation

- Ensure that all used instruments are cleaned according to the RACGP guidelines
- Ensure that the practice has a designated “dirty” basin
- Develop and maintain sterilisation protocol for the practice
- Record all batches of sterilised instruments in a designated “Sterilisation Book” according to RACGP guidelines
- Ensure that the steriliser meets all of the AS41487 requirements
- Ensure that batch numbers are recorded in patient records
- Arrange annually for the steriliser to be calibrated and validated
- Ensure that all sterilised stock is rotated and stored appropriately
- Order and replace protective equipment as required
- Maintain spills kit

## General Duties

- Triage patients on arrival to practice
- Maintain and restocks Drs bag on a monthly basis or more often if used frequently
- Maintain and rotate medication supplies on a fortnightly basis
- Maintain practice S8 drug register/s
- Give injections as requested by the GP
- Undertake ECGs as requested by the GP
- Undertake urinalysis as requested by the GP
- Prepare consulting room/s for minor procedures clinic
- Administer local anaesthetic for minor procedure
- Remove sutures and dress wounds as deemed appropriate

CONTRACT GUIDES  
and  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPTIONS

## 5. Employment Contracts Guide for Nurses in General Practice

All practice nurses should have an employment contract that sets out the terms on which they will be employed or provide nursing services to the General Practices. Guides to these are outlined below and are **MINIMUM TERMS AND CONDITIONS**.

**POSITION TITLE:** This depends on the qualification and may include:

- ◆ Practice Nurse (Enrolled Nurse)
- ◆ Practice Nurse (Registered Nurse)
- ◆ Practice Nurse (Clinical Nurse Specialist)
- ◆ Practice Nurse (Clinical Nurse Consultant)
- ◆ Practice Nurse Manager

**TERM OF EMPLOYMENT PERIOD:** If a set period of time is not specified in the contract then the nurse is employed on a week to week basis. This means that either party can sever an employment contract, providing a relevant period of notice is given, e.g. 1 week for periods less than a year and up to four weeks for periods of service five years and over.

The basis of the employment should be specified, e.g. Full-time, part-time, and casual.

Full time – equivalent to 38 hours per week or 76 hours per fortnight or 152 hours per month.

Part-time – varying periods normally up to 20 hours per week

Casual – those employed for short intermittent periods and normally for not less than two hours for each period of work. Casual employees receive an additional loading of between 10 -15 % to compensate for the casual nature of their employment.

**REMUNERATION:** includes salary, allowances, loadings and other like items specified in the employment contract. Employers should contact the Australian Nursing Federation Branches in their State for relevant State Department of Labour and Industry for current nursing pay rates, or the Division.

**SUPERANNUATION:** Currently, employers are required to pay a minimum of 9% of the nurses' ordinary time earnings into a superannuation fund. Ordinary earnings are the wages, allowances and loadings that a nurse would normally receive on a week to week basis.

**HOURS OF WORK:** The contract should outline this and include:

- ◆ The days on which the practice nurse is to attend work
- ◆ The hours to be worked
- ◆ Whether the nurse is to work a 19 day month and get an accrued day off
- ◆ Rostering arrangements

**ANNUAL LEAVE:** Minimum of 4 weeks A/L per 12 full months of employment with a loading of 17.5% of ordinary pay.

**SICK LEAVE:** Varies between State awards, but usually between 15 to 20 days per year and is accrued if not taken in the year. Certificate required if absent from work for a period of three consecutive days or longer.

**LONG SERVICE LEAVE:** Paid leave at the completion of a period of employment and can vary between States, and is based on ordinary time earnings.

**DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE:** The disputing parties should try and resolve disputes through discussions and negotiations at the workplace level. If not resolved, further discussions should take place involving employer and employee representatives. If then there is still no resolution, the matter should be referred to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission for conciliation or arbitration.

**WORKERS COMPENSATION:** Determined by State legislation. This can be complicated and the employer may need to contact the Australian Nursing Federation for advice.

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY:** Employers must provide a safe working environment without risk to health. Legislation also states that enterprise bargaining agreements can address OH & S issues in more detail and establish specific communication

and consultative arrangements and implement particular programs designed to complement legislative requirements.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** The employer should provide details of the relevant legislation on this area and how it is implemented within their organisation. All nurses must abide by their codes of professional conduct and by specific State and Federal legislation regarding confidentiality and privacy.

**REDUNDANCY AND MAJOR CHANGES:** Redundancy occurs when an employer makes the decision that they no longer wish the job the employee is doing to be done by anyone. Employers considering redundancy should contact the Australian Nursing Federation for more specific advice. Under most awards, the employer is required to consult with employees that will be affected by the changes. Information should be provided in writing.

**TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT:** Length of notice to be given to the employee is set out below:

<b>Period of Continuous Service</b>	<b>Period of Notice</b>
1 year or less	1 week
1 year and up to 3 years	2 weeks
3 years and up to 5 years	3 weeks
5 years and over	4 weeks

If an employee is over 45 yrs with not less than 2 years continuous service, an additional week's notice is required. Payment in lieu of notice, notice of termination by the employee, time off during notice period and statement of employment should be included in the contract.

**PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:** Nurses are generally entitled to 10-13 public holidays per year depending on the State. If a nurse is required to work on a public holiday, penalty rates apply from 100% to 150% on an hourly rate. Otherwise the entitlement relates to a day off without loss of pay.

**STUDY LEAVE:** Recognises that a nurse is required to undertake professional development activities in order to keep up to date with advances in nursing practice. This varies across awards ranging from 3-5 days per annum to a specific number of hours per week.

**TRADE UNION TRAINING LEAVE:** up to 5 days paid leave per year, non-cumulative to attend courses conducted by accredited training providers for trade union training or similar.

**COMPASSIONATE LEAVE:** Between 2-4 days without loss of pay in relation to the death or serious illness of a member of the employee's immediate family or household.

**PARENTAL LEAVE:** Maternity, Paternity or adoption leave and part-time work in connection with the birth or adoption of a child. Usually 52 weeks of unpaid leave however can contain a paid component of between 2 -12 weeks for maternity leave and 1-2 weeks for paternity leave.

**FOR ASSISTANCE WITH ALL AREAS OF THE AWARDS  
PLEASE CONTACT  
THE AUSTRALIAN NURSING FEDERATION ON  
9550-3244**

# 6. Employment Options

## Option 1: Independent Contractor

In this option the practice nurse is either an independent contractor or is contracted by a company to provide services to the GP.

### Advantages

- ◆ The contractor (and not the GP) has an obligation to comply with relevant industrial relations regulations (involving provision of various allowances and reimbursement of expenses). This potentially reduces the GP's administrative costs.
- ◆ The GP is freed of the following staff on-costs:
  - PAYG or payroll tax
  - Superannuation contribution
  - Insurance costs – professional indemnity and workers compensation
- ◆ Arrangement can be easily terminated

### Disadvantages

- ◆ The Practice Nurse may not work as a team member.
- ◆ Other practice staff may resent the different working arrangement with the nurse (for example, the nurse being paid on an hourly rate).

## Option 2: Casual Employee

### Advantages

- ◆ More flexible arrangement for the GP – nurse is employed only when needed.
- ◆ Access to a larger pool of nurses – majority of nurses prefer to work as casuals.

## Disadvantages

- ◆ The GP/practice has an obligation to comply with relevant industrial relations regulations (involving provision of various allowances and reimbursement of expenses). This potentially increases the GP's administrative costs.
- ◆ The GP is responsible for the following staff costs:
  - PAYG or payroll tax
  - Superannuation contribution
  - Insurance costs – professional indemnity and workers compensation.

## Option 3: Permanent Part or Full Time Employee

### Advantages

- ◆ Generally the nurse will work better as part of the practice staff team.

### Disadvantages

- ◆ The GP/practice has an obligation to comply with relevant industrial relations regulations (involving provision of various allowances and reimbursement of expenses). This potentially increases the GP's administrative costs.
- ◆ The GP is responsible for the following staff costs:
  - PAYG or payroll tax
  - Superannuation contribution
  - Insurance costs – professional indemnity and workers compensation.

# NURSES PAY AWARD and JOB DESCRIPTION

## 7. Nurses, Other Than in Hospitals, & (State) Award

<b>Nurses, Other Than In Hospitals (State) Award State Wage Case 2006</b>						
Effective from the first pay period to commence on or after 17 July 2006						
Classifications						
	Full Time (\$ per week)	Part Time (\$ per hour)	Casual (\$ per hour)	Saturday (\$ per hour)	Sunday (\$ per hour)	Casual Holiday Pay (\$ per hour)
Assistant in Nursing 1st year	527.20	13.88	15.27	17.35	20.82	1.28
2nd year	538.30	14.17	15.59	17.71	21.25	1.30
3rd year	549.50	14.47	15.91	18.08	21.70	1.33
4th year	561.00	14.77	16.24	18.46	22.15	1.36
Enrolled nurse 1st year	569.00	14.98	16.48	18.72	22.47	1.38
2nd year	583.00	15.35	16.88	19.18	23.02	1.41
3rd year	604.40	15.91	17.50	19.89	23.86	1.46
4th year	622.10	16.38	18.01	20.47	24.56	1.51
Thereafter	634.40	16.70	18.37	20.87	25.05	1.54
Registered Nurses 1st year	648.70	17.08	18.78	21.34	25.61	1.57
2nd year	663.40	17.46	19.21	21.83	26.19	1.61
3rd year	689.90	18.16	19.98	22.70	27.24	1.67
4th year	716.20	18.85	20.74	23.56	28.28	1.73
5th year	744.40	19.59	21.55	24.49	29.39	1.80
6th year	772.40	20.33	22.36	25.41	30.49	1.87
7th year	800.40	21.07	23.17	26.33	31.60	1.94
8th year	830.50	21.86	24.05	27.32	32.79	2.01
UGI Qualification	855.30	22.51	24.76	28.14	33.77	2.07
Supervisory Nurse	868.90	22.87	25.16	28.59	34.30	2.10

U.G.1. Qualification
Provided that the commencing rate of salary payable to a registered nurse who has obtained an appropriate degree in Nursing or Applied Science (Nursing) or Health Studies (Nursing) (referred to for the purposes of this award as "U.G.1. Qualification") shall be paid at the rate prescribed for the second year of service; and provided further that a registered nurse who has obtained the said qualification shall, on completion of the incremental scale denoted above, be entitled to proceed in the next year of service to the rate prescribed for such qualification in this award.

Casual Employees	
Please note that the Saturday and Sunday hourly rates for casual employees may differ from those listed above. These rates will not apply if a casual employee is employed as a day worker or as a shift worker, where the applicable Saturday and Sunday rate will be that which applies to the majority of the employees in the establishment in which they are employed. Please refer to clause 8 of the Award to ascertain the casual hourly rate in such cases.	
Penalties, Allowances and Loadings	
	Amount
Vehicle Allowance - Standing charge up to 2 litres	\$150.97 per week
Vehicle Allowance - Running charge up to 2 litres	\$0.2863 per kilometre
Vehicle Allowance - Standing charge over 2 litres and less than 3.5 litres	\$166.19 per week
Vehicle Allowance - Running charge over 2 litres and less than 3.5 litres	\$0.3201 per kilometre
Vehicle Allowance - Standing charge over 3.5 litres	\$170.79 per week
Vehicle Allowance - Running charge over 3.5 litres	\$0.3313 per kilometre
Vehicle Allowance Casual usage	\$0.6394 per kilometre
Uniform	\$6.84 per week
Stockings	\$3.38 per week
Uniform Laundry Allowance	\$5.23 per week
Meal on overtime	\$7.48 per meal

# 8. Generic Practice Nurse Job Description

**Position Title:** PRACTICE NURSE

**Incumbent's Name:**

**Reports To:**

**Prepared By:**

**Prepared Date:**

**Approved by Principal GP/Practice Manager:**

**Approved Date:**

## General Purpose of Position

The major purpose of this position is to enhance the quality and delivery of health care by providing nursing services in the context of General Practice.

## Qualifications, Education and/or Experience

### Essential Criteria:

- ◆ Registered Nurse (NSW) with current nursing registration
- ◆ Minimum 3 years postgraduate experience
- ◆ NSW Driver's Licence

### Desirable Criteria:

- ◆ Understanding of the General Practice work environment
- ◆ NSW Immunisation Certificate
- ◆ Knowledge of Care Planning and Case conferencing
- ◆ Ability to use e-mail, word processing and database applications
- ◆ Experience with one or more of the following - Diabetes, Asthma, Cervical Screening, Antenatal Shared Care, Spirometry, Venepuncture, ECGs
- ◆ Ability to work within a team

## Key Responsibilities

1. Provide clinical nursing services in the General Practice context through:

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- ◆ Triage
- ◆ Assessment
- ◆ Therapeutic Care and treatment
- ◆ Diagnostic Management; and
- ◆ Clinical Data Management

**2. Assisting the General Practice to meet relevant standards and legislative requirements in:**

- ◆ Management of clinical records
- ◆ Occupational Health and Safety
- ◆ Infection Control
- ◆ Cold Chain Monitoring; and
- ◆ Practice Accreditation

**3. Improving Patient Health Outcomes through:**

- ◆ Immunisation
- ◆ Acute and Chronic Disease management
- ◆ Patient Education
- ◆ Health Screening; and
- ◆ Patient recalls and follow-up

**4. Co-ordinating Patient Services through:**

- ◆ Planning and management of care
- ◆ Optimising communication between GPs, patients and services
- ◆ Patient Advocacy; and
- ◆ Networking with other services

**Physical Requirements**

The employee will regularly be required to sit, stand, walk and drive a vehicle. Vision abilities, including close vision and distance vision will also be required. Occasionally the employee will need to lift and/or move up to 5 kilograms.

The position requires the incumbent to be capable of sufficient mobility to enable regular attendance at meetings and consultations.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable participants with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**Salary Rating**

The position is [insert number of hours here] [permanent part-time/full time/ casual] with the salary rating of [\$ per hr] depending upon experience and qualifications.

The incumbent will undertake a three month probationary period, at the end of which a review will be held with the employer. A salary review will be based upon an annual performance appraisal.

**Professional Development**

This practice is committed to relevant Professional Development activities for all its employees and encourages them to attend educational activities. Attendance at activities that are during working hours must be negotiated with the employer, with reasonable notification.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Principal General Practitioner:** .....

**Date:** .....

This position is to be reviewed in three months:

Date of Review: .....

# RECRUITMENT GUIDES

## 9. Advertising for a Practice Nurse

### Overview

**All information regarding recruitment for a Practice Nurse is based on a Registered Nurse qualifications and experiences. For more information on Enrolled Nurse qualifications and experiences contact The Royal College of Nursing and the Nurses Registration Board. [See useful websites appendix]**

This is an overview of practice nurse recruitment and offers tips on how to construct an advertisement that will attract quality applicants. It also contains a sample “letter of response” from the practice to “interested applicants” and “unsuccessful candidates”.

The information that is contained in your advertisement may impact on the number and quality of applicants you have responding to the position. Providing specific details of the position can result in fewer responses but those showing interest are likely to be more suited to the position.

General Practice offers nurses the opportunity to work in a dynamic, flexible environment. Offering an alternative to the hospital system is likely to appeal to such nurses. In doing so, it is important to “showcase” the range of skills and duties associated with the position to dispel the myth, in some quarters, that practice nursing is little more than a part-time receptionist and phlebotomist and not a true nursing profession.

The following advertisement reflects a style commonly used by Practice Managers.

<p><b>“Practice Nurse required for busy family practice” Please contact Practice Manager on...</b></p>
--

The advertisement is bland and lack lustre.

Spending a few extra dollars to include more details about the position and the practice will be money well spent.

As well as presenting key information, a good advertisement will also be eye-catching and inviting. Here are two examples:

### Example 1

**Full/Part-time position for enthusiastic, innovative Practice Nurse**

who can work independently or as part of a team?

The position requires the provision of primary health care through general practice as well as opportunities for health promotion, chronic disease management and practice management.

Previous experience is desirable but not essential.

Clinical Skills required are venipuncture etc.....

We offer flexible, friendly work conditions, structured professional support and incremental skill-related pay.

Contact ..... for information and Position Description.

**Alternatively you may want to provide a more detailed advertisement.**

### Example 2

**Wanted - Registered Nurse to work in General Practice**

The [*insert practice name*] General Practice is looking for an enthusiastic Registered Nurse to work within our General Practice at [*insert location*]. The Practice Nurse position offers flexible working hours with an average of 20 hours per week, with the potential for the hours to increase. Initially the positions will be casual. Salary rates will be based on [*insert appropriate award*]

**Essential Criteria**

Current Nursing Registration

A minimum of three (3) years nursing experience

Excellent Communication skills

Ability to work in a team

Professional autonomy

Drivers License

**Desirable Criteria**

Previous experience working in a General Practice

NSW Immunisation Certificate

An extensive knowledge of the Enhanced Primary Care items

Experience in one or more of the following: Diabetes, Asthma, Cervical Screening, Antenatal Care, Spirometry, Venepuncture, ECGs.

**Applicant's**

Interested applicants should address the selection criteria associated with the position as well as providing their resume. A copy of the position statement and selection criteria can be obtained by contacting [*select appropriate contact name and phone number*] Applications for the position close at ..... [*insert date*]

## **Include Key information in the Advertisement**

In addition to clearly conveying your requirements, the advertisement should convey what the position and you as an employer can offer. Advertisements should contain key information such as:

- ◆ Position title,
- ◆ Practice locality,
- ◆ Employment hours,
- ◆ Suitability of position to job sharing,
- ◆ Duties performed,
- ◆ Essential selection criteria,
- ◆ Contact information, and
- ◆ Closing date for applications

## **Responding to Applications**

Discuss the position over the phone with applicants and if the applicants wish to continue with the application forward the following:

- ◆ Letter to confirm interest in application
- ◆ Registered Nurses Application form
- ◆ A job description

Encourage applicants to submit a written application and include a closing date. Record the name and contact details of each applicant who has expressed an interest in the position for your reference. This also provides a means of gauging the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. To demonstrate that your practice is professional and efficient send the follow-up letter, with a copy of the position description, in a timely manner.

As a courtesy, all unsuccessful applicants should be notified by letter.

## Sample Letter to Confirm Interest in Application

[Practice Letterhead]

<DATE>

<Candidates Name>

<Candidates address>

Dear <Candidates Name>,

Thank you for you phone call and expression of interest in the advertised Practice Nurse position.

Enclosed is a position description of “<Duties and Responsibilities>” and “<Key Selection Criteria>” for the advertised vacancy.

The “Key Selection Criteria” will be used to select candidates for interviewing; these areas should be addressed and included in your letter of application with your curriculum vitae.

Applicants to be interviewed will be contacted by phone by <.....> [add date]  
If your application is unsuccessful you will be notified by mail.

If you would like to clarify any issues, obtain more information or arrange a visit to the practice please call on < practice contact No> between Monday to Friday <hours of>

Regards

<Practice Managers Name>

# Registered Nurse Application Form

## APPLICANT'S PERSONAL DETAILS

Applicant's Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone No: ..... (home)

..... (mobile)

..... (work)

Email address:.....

Current Nursing Registration Number: .....

No. of Hours Preferred: ..... Days Preferred: .....

Drivers License Number: .....

Access to vehicle: .....

## QUALIFICATIONS:

(Please indicate name of institution, type of award and date conferred)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND SPECIALTIES** (attach a resume if you prefer):

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Experience in the following**

ECG's	
Venipuncture	
Spirometry	
Pap Smears Women's Health	
Immunisation & /or Immunisation Cert.	
Health Assessments	
Care Plans	
Wound Care	
Midwifery & Antenatal	
Surgical Nursing &/or Minor Procedures	
Asthma Care / Qualifications	
Diabetes Care / Qualifications	
Mental Health	

**Membership of Professional Bodies**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**APPLICANT'S CLAIM AGAINST SELECTION CRITERIA:**

### **Essential Criteria**

Current Nursing Registration

A minimum of three (3) years nursing experience

Excellent Communication skills

Ability to work in a team

Professional autonomy

Drivers License

### **Desirable**

Previous experience working in a General Practice

NSW Immunisation Certificate

An extensive knowledge of the Enhanced Primary Care items

Experience in one or more of the following: - Diabetes, Asthma, Cervical Screening, Antenatal Care, Spirometry, Venipuncture, and ECGs.

# Registration with NSW Nurses Registration Board

## Use This Form To Maintain Your Practice Records

- a) Please attach a photocopy of your current certificate as evidence of current registration
- b) Have you ever been refused registration or had conditions placed on your registration?

Yes  No

- c) Have you ever appeared before the Nurses Registration Board of NSW?

Yes  No

- d) Are you scheduled to appear before the Nurses Registration Board of NSW?

Yes  No

If you answered yes to b), c) or d) above, please supply brief details.

.....  
.....  
.....

## Police Record

Have you ever been charged or convicted of any criminal offence?

Yes  No

If yes, please supply brief details.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Note: The practice to which you are allocated will undertake a criminal record check as part of assessing your application.

## Referees

Please supply the names of two professional colleagues who are familiar with your work over the last three years and who are prepared to attest to your ability as a registered nurse and your suitability to work in a General Practice

### Referee 1

Name: .....

Position: .....

Phone No: .....

### Referee 2

Name: .....

Position: .....

Phone No: .....

### OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

To the best of your knowledge, information or belief, are there any other facts or circumstances not mentioned above which <the Practice> could reasonably consider as relevant to your ability or suitability to work as a Registered Nurse in General Practice?

Yes  No

If yes, please supply brief details.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## Privacy Disclosure

The information provided by the Applicant when completing this Application form, and any other information gathered by <the Practice> concerning the Applicant and relevant to this Application, is to be retained and used only by <the Practice> and its authorised officers and staff as part of the assessment of the Applicant's suitability to be employed as an [Registered Nurse] providing services to General Practice. This information is and will remain confidential and the Practice will not without the Applicant's prior written consent, use or disclose or allow the use or disclosure of this information for any purpose not previously disclosed to the Applicant.

## Applicant's Application and Authority

I the Applicant named below hereby consent to the following:

1. I authorise the <practice name> and the <practice manager's name> to seek further information from my nominated referees, appropriate persons associated with previous places of employment, registration authorities, the NSW Health Care Complaints Commission, the NSW Department of Health, or from professional colleges or organisations from which my qualifications are awarded as to my past experience, performance and current fitness to practice as a [Registered Nurse] and I understand that such information is required to assess my professional capabilities and my suitability to work within <practice name>;
2. I acknowledge I have read and understood the above Privacy Disclosure and I consent to the use of the information gathered by the <practice name> as referred to in that Disclosure;
3. I understand that as part of assessing my suitability to work in within <practice name>, the appointed practice will undertake a criminal record check; and
4. I declare the information provided by me in this Application is true and correct and I undertake to advise <practice name> of any material changes to the information supplied.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to  
<Practice Manager  
Include practice contact details>

# Unsuccessful Applicant Letter

## Practice Letterhead

<DATE>

<Candidates Name>  
<Candidates address>

Dear <Candidates Name>,

Thank you for application for the position of Practice Nurse, as advertised in the <name> newspaper on the <date of advertisement>.

The quality of applications was very high, and on this occasion, we regret to inform you that your application was unsuccessful.

We *encourage you to apply for future positions with our organisation*, and wish you all the best with future endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Omit if not applicable

# INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

# 10. The Interview

## Overview

This section gives advice and tips on the interview process. It provides sample interview and referee questions that will help choose the best applicant.

The two most important factors in interviewing are **being prepared** and **allowing sufficient time**. The investment of time in reviewing Curriculum Vitae (CV), interviewing and post-interview reviews will be worth it, as it will improve your chances of finding the right employee.

## Reviewing Applications

Read all CVs thoroughly. Look for things like:

- ◆ Whether the CV is accompanied by a well-written cover letter.
- ◆ The layout and presentation of the CV.
- ◆ Gaps in experience.
- ◆ Evidence of achievement both personnel and professional
- ◆ Memberships

Have the position description to hand and your Selection Criteria Checklist [See example 3]. Use the checklist to grade the relative relevant experience of applicants in the right hand column on the appropriate line. In this way, you can systematically and objectively eliminate applicants whose skills and experience do not match those that are mandatory for the position.

## Creating a Shortlist of Candidates or Culling

To create a shortlist return to the CVs of the applicants who have survived the first round, examine their employment history and continuity of experience. You are trying to establish the average length of time in employment. Note if there has been many job positions and no reasons given for leaving.

It is usual to shortlist four or five candidates for interviewing. However, send no rejection letters to unsuccessful candidates until the chosen candidate has accepted the job in writing. You may need to consider the “next best” candidate or even arrange to interview additional applicants.

Arrange appointment times for those applicants that you have decided to interview.

## Preparing For the Interview

### Who will attend the interview?

This is a good opportunity for the practice team to work together and select a candidate who meets everyone's needs. The number of interviewers is up to you, although it often helps to have others assist you in the interviews e.g. another GP in the practice or another practice nurse. Having a practice nurse on the panel can really help target questions to the practice nurse role. The practice nurse would need to be briefed in a timely fashion and it is recommended that the panel meet beforehand to discuss roles, the candidate's CV, and strategies.

A panel of two people would be adequate although three is the norm. Remember panels can be very intimidating for the candidate, so make every effort to make it informal. It is a good idea to incorporate a "tour" of the practice informally interviewing whilst showing around. Remember, the recruitment process is a two way street – both employer and employee should be out to impress.

### Where and when will you schedule the interview?

The practice is a great environment in which to hold the interviews. It is a convenient location for the interviewers, and it will provide the candidates with a better understanding of the environment in which they may be employed. Most practices are busy during the day, however you might choose to put aside some time to conduct interviews during the lunch break. Be sure that you allow enough time to conduct the interview in a relaxed manner. Alternatively, interviews can be held in the evening when there are few patients, and interviewees are likely to have free time. Re-read the candidates' CVs prior to interview and note down areas that need further probing, issues you feel you should explore, questions you need to ask for clarification of obscure points. Be sure to write up a summary whilst still fresh in your mind.

### What questions is the candidate likely to ask me?

As stated above the recruitment process is a two way street, so you should expect and be prepared to be "interviewed" by the candidate. It is likely you will be questioned by them as to the possibilities of the practice being a place in which they would like to work. Be prepared to answer questions on conditions, pay structure and professional development. In regards to pay, Whilst the **Nurses, Other Than in Hospitals, &c. (State) Award** is minimum that can be paid, be prepared to negotiate higher as this award is substantially less than awards for public and private hospital work. So it is advised that if a strong candidate emerges, don't insult them with the minimum award. If the nurse you choose has less experience and skills then work out a mutually agreeable starting pay rate with increments for gained skills and experience. Remember, the more skilled and experienced your Practice Nurse, the more revenue they can bring in to the practice and this should be reflected in their pay scale.

Based on their comparatively low levels of pay, Nurses are generally not in the job for money. Good work conditions, however, such as flexible hours and assistance with professional development may go a long way to make up for relatively poor levels of pay. It is also worth noting that many nurses are working mothers and fathers and may be prepared to work at a lower pay level in return for flexible working hours.

It is important that as an employer you are able to offer some assistance and structure with professional development, such as assistance with the cost of training and allocated paid leave days. Encourage contact with the Division and membership to the Practice Nurse Network meetings, which provide clinical up-skilling sessions and information of availability of professional development workshops in the area.

It is also advised to offer a formal review or appraisal, usually at 3 months and then annually.

## The Interview

A well-structured interview will proceed as follows:

1. **Be prepared.** Have the interview questions ready. Provide water & glasses. Assemble the interview panel at least 1/2 hr prior to the start of the interviews to re-read CVs and confirm process.
2. **Welcome and Brief Applicants.** It is becoming more common for applicants to be given a copy of the questions to be asked prior to the interview. Applicants can be given a copy of the questions, so they may make notes, on their arrival. Allow 10 minutes to complete the process.
3. **Start the actual Interview** by becoming acquainted with the candidate, putting them at ease so their nerves do not affect their ability to answer questions. A good way of doing this is to give them information about the position and the practice. Introduce the members of the interview panel.
4. **Ask General Questions.** All applicants should be asked the same questions to meet requirements under E.E.O. Try to get a sense of the applicants personality, manner, likes & dislikes by asking general, open-ended questions like "Tell us a little about yourself".
5. **The Candidate.** Ask the candidate to tell you about themselves look for evidence of their work style, special strengths, problem-solving skills, ideas and compatibility with your practice. Use their CV as a guide for questions and give them a case scenario and ask how they would deal with it.
6. **Take Questions.** Finish by asking the candidate if they have any further question/queries or if time permits give them a tour of the practice allowing them to meet and talk to other members of the team.

## Interview Questions

Ask open-ended questions that demand more than a “yes” or “no” reply, so candidates are encouraged to talk about their experiences, knowledge and skills.

### Sample question to consider using in the interview:

#### Interest in Position

1. Why did you apply for the position?
2. What reservations do you have about it?
3. What appeals to you most – and least – about it?
4. What aspects of it are important to you?
5. What do you see as its most difficult aspects?
6. What do you think is likely to make the difference between success and failure in the job?

#### Personal attributes

1. What is your greatest strength/greatest weakness?
2. What type of people upset you most readily and what steps do you take to work with them harmoniously.
3. What kind of situations causes you to feel tense or nervous?
4. What are the things or situation that upsets you most?
5. How do you approach change?

#### Job Experience

1. What aspects of your last/current job do you like least?
2. How would your present manager describe you as an employee?
3. Are you comfortable with you skill level?
4. How have you updated you skills in the past?
5. What are your plans for further education?
6. What type of approach to problem solving works best for you?
7. What have you done that was innovative?
8. Do you enjoy challenges in your work?
9. Do you enjoy working independently or in a team?
10. How do you deal with non-compliant patients?
11. How would you describe your work style?
12. How would you define cooperation?
13. Describe an upsetting experience and what steps you took to resolve it?

#### Questions not to ask

- Do you have young children?
- How old are you?
- Are you married?
- Is your partner employed?
- Do you intend falling pregnant in the near future?
- What religion are you?
- Where do you live?

## During the Interview

It is important to actively listen - clarifying information with the candidate you don't understand, either by rephrasing what you think they meant and asking if this is correct or by questioning further on the subject.

Check yourself if you find that it is YOU who is doing most of the talking.

Take notes to prompt your memory, using a sample interview schedule, also be aware of yours and the candidates body language e.g. direct eye contact, arms crossed in a defensive manner. Try to encourage the candidate to be relaxed, open and honest by behaving in this manner yourself.

If the candidates have not provided the name and contact details of a referee on their resume, ask them to provide these details at the interview, or to ring the practice the next day with the details. Confirm you have permission from the applicant to contact the referees.

## After the Interview

Spend a few minutes with the other members of the panel (if any) revising notes and obtaining feedback on their thoughts. Once all candidates have been interviewed, spend time again with the panel reviewing candidates and making your selection.

Before a letter of offer is sent, references must be checked.

## Reference Checking

References must be checked before the position is offered to the chosen candidate.

You need to verify employment history and responsibilities. It is best to do this by phoning the referee, as it is the most reliable way of gaining accurate information.

Clearly identify yourself to the nominated referee and check if it is a good time to talk to them. If they are busy they will not have the time to answer your questions properly. Outline the position for which the candidate is being considered to the referee.

You can ask to speak to several referees and do not have to accept those provided in the resume or ask for additional referees if you have concerns. You must seek a candidate's approval before contacting any of their referees. **If you do not then this is a breach of the Privacy act.** It is a good idea to document all relevant information obtained from the referee and keep on file. Ask only questions that relate to your selection criteria and the candidates work performance and good conduct, their ability to perform the duties required, as well as special qualifications.

## Questions to ask the Referee

- ◆ Confirm dates of employment and title or job held
- ◆ What skills did the candidate possess and what were required of the position?
- ◆ How did the candidate work in a team/individual situation?
- ◆ Ask what the Candidates strengths and weaknesses were in the position and areas for improvement.
- ◆ Ask referees to use two or three single words, which best describe the candidate.
- ◆ Enquire as to any unsatisfactory aspects of performance, which are relevant to the position for which they have applied.
- ◆ Would you re-employ this person?
- ◆ Where referees use general statements like "highly motivated" you should probe the referee's definition.

# Practice Nurse Applications - Culling Sheet

Change your essential and desirable criteria to correspond with those listed in the advertisement

Name of applicant	Date Received	Essential Criteria						Desirable Criteria				Experience							
		Current Registration	Years Nursing Experience	Communication Skills	Teamwork	Autonomy	Drivers License	GP Experience	NSW Immun Cert	EPC Items	Diabetes	Asthma	Cervical Screening	Antenatal Care	Spirometry	Venipuncture	EKG's	Other	TOTAL

# Sample Letter of Offer

[Practice Letterhead]

“DATE”

Dear,

I have pleasure in offering you the position of Practice Nurse with the “PRACTICE NAME” Practice Company.

If you accept this position your employment will take effect from “DATE” and will be subject to satisfactory performance during the 3 month probationary period.

Terms and conditions for your continuing employment are set out below.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The terms and conditions of your employment with the Company are those determined or varied by the Practice Principal and is to follow the **Nurses, Other Than In Hospitals (State) Award**.

### **Performance Appraisal**

A performance appraisal will be conducted 3 months after commencement and following this on an annual basis.

## **CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **Salary**

The salary for the position will be at the hourly rate of *[insert hrly rate, including superannuation]*. Salary will be paid fortnightly. This rate will be payable from the first pay period following the “DATE” and will be paid pending formal acceptance of this contract.

**Superannuation**

The Company will contribute an amount equal to the Superannuation Guarantee Charge of [insert % amount] of the salary earned by you to a superannuation fund nominated by you.

**Hours of Work**

This is a full-time position. "STATE DAYS ON WHICH THE PRACTICE NURSE IS TO ATTEND WORK" e.g.: Monday to Friday. Ordinary hours of work will be an average of 38 hours per week. "THE HOURS TO BE WORKED ARE e.g.: start and finishing times and meal breaks" also include whether the nurse is to work a nineteen day month and receive an accrued day off.

**Annual Leave**

You will receive a minimum of four weeks annual leave for each completed twelve months of employment and shall receive the usual pay plus a loading of [insert amount] as per award.

**Sick Leave**

Sick leave entitlements will be as per the award.

**Confidentiality**

You are required to treat all patient information and practice information in the strictest confidence. Failure to do so may result in termination of your employment.

**Termination**

If resigning from the Company [insert No. of weeks] notice will be required. Other conditions are as per the Award.

**ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER**

Please sign and date this document if the above terms and conditions of employment are acceptable.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Practice Principle: Date: .../.... /....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature: Date: .../.... /....

## Staff Data Employment Sheet

SURNAME: .....

FIRST NAME: .....

INITIAL: .....

DATE OF BIRTH: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

HOME CONTACT NO: ..... MOBILE: .....

### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Contact Name: ..... Relationship: .....

Phone:(work) ..... Home: .....

Doctors Name: ..... Phone: .....

### SUPER FUND

Name of Fund: .....

Address: .....

.....

Fund Account: .....

### ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER

Bank: .....

BSB No: .....

Account No: .....

Account Name: .....

<Practice letter Head >

## Employee Appraisal Form

Name:

Position:

Period:

Reviewed by:

AGREED KEY JOB GOALS	HOW GOALS ARE TO BE ACHIEVED	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	EXTERNAL IMPACTS ON PERFORMANCE	ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PERIOD

Comments:

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mgr/Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

LEGAL  
RESPONSIBILITIES  
  
and  
  
CONFIDENTIALITY  
AGREEMENT

# 11. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF NURSING

- ◆ In fulfilling their legal responsibilities and in demonstrating the Australian Nursing Federation, 'Competency Standards for Nurses in General Practice', for Registered and Enrolled Nurses. General practice nurses should measure their performance and competencies against their own professional framework developed by peak national bodies responsible for nursing regulation known as the Australian Nursing and Midwife Council . A copy of the Competency Standard for Nurses in General Practice can be downloaded from: <http://www.anf.org.au/nurses%5Fgp/>
- ◆ Practice nurses should also function in accordance with, and demonstrate a knowledge of, all legislation and common law affecting nursing.
- ◆ Fulfill their duty of care in the course of practice, for example, meet practice standards and be accountable for nursing actions
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of policies and procedural guidelines that have legal implications and practice only within the limits of their educational preparation and competence and
- ◆ Identify and respond to unsafe practice, for example, implement interventions to prevent unsafe practice and/ or contravention of law.

Registered and Enrolled Nurses are accountable and responsible for their own actions within nursing practice when working in General Practice. Inherent in this is that nurses need to be aware of their own scope of experience, education, knowledge and competency. In the event that their scope of experience, knowledge etc falls short in a situation, they will consult with the GP or other relevant health professional in the team. It also needs to be understood that a GP or other health professional does not expect a Registered or Enrolled Nurse to perform duties outside their scope of knowledge, experience etc.

Nurses have a professional obligation to participate in professional development, skills acquisition and undertaking continuing educational activities.

## The Code of Professional Conduct For Nurses

Requires each nurse to:

- ◆ Provide safe and competent nursing care
- ◆ Uphold the agreed standards of the profession
- ◆ Conduct personal behavior in a way that does not discredit the reputation of the nursing profession or have therapeutic repercussions
- ◆ Practice in accordance with laws relevant to the nurse's area of practice.
- ◆ Respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of individuals and significant others in the provision of nursing
- ◆ Promote and support the health, well-being and informed decision-making of individuals in the provision of nursing
- ◆ Promote and preserve the trust that is inherent in the privileged relationship between nurses and individuals with respect to both their person and their property
- ◆ Treat as confidential personal information obtained in a professional capacity
- ◆ Refrain from engaging in exploitation, misinformation and misrepresentation, in regard to health care products and nursing
- ◆ **ALL REGISTERED AND ENROLLED NURSES ARE EXPECTED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE CODES AND ABIDE BY THEM IN THEIR PRACTICE.**

# Employee Confidentiality Statement

*<Practice letter Head>*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have been advised by my employer, the \_\_\_\_\_ Practice, of the legal requirement to protect the privacy and confidentiality of practice information.

I understand that all patient records, and any conversations between patients and practice principals, or between patient and staff members, either viewed, received or heard by me during the course of my employment at the Practice, constitutes strictly confidential information.

None of the information which comes into my possession as a result of my employment will be discussed or released by me, unless such discussion or release is relative to said employment, and is properly authorised in accordance with practice policy.

I understand that unauthorised use of confidential information is grounds for dismissal. I also understand that this statement will form part of my permanent employee file.

Employee's Signature	Date
Principal's Signature	Date

BUSINESS  
and  
FINANCIAL MODELS

# 12. Practice Nurse Financial Models

## Assumptions: General

- ◆ A Practice Nurse (PN) performs a range of activities that will invariably save the GP's time and the GP's time can be substituted by the PN's time. (The GP increases his/her income by having more time to see other patients, which invariably translates into additional income for the GP.)
- ◆ The model also explores the possibility of paying the PN's wage from health assessments (HA.)
- ◆ It was also assumed that the GP has extra capacity to see other patients using time saved from working with a PN.
- ◆ Revenue is based on the Medicare rebates rather than the scheduled fee.
- ◆ In most cases, travel expenses and increase in practice consumables/overheads as a result of working with a PN was not accounted for.

## Assumptions: Revenue and Expense

- ◆ Standard consultation, where applicable lasts 15 minutes for the rebated amount of \$32.10.
- ◆ GP's hourly rate was calculated as being equivalent to four standard consultations, which is \$128.10
- ◆ Health assessment (HA) revenue (home) is \$236.85 (rebate @ 100%).
- ◆ Health assessment revenue (practice) is \$167.45 (rebate @100%)
- ◆ The Practice Nurse is provided by an agency or employed at an hourly rate of \$35 (which includes practice or agency on-costs).

## Assumptions: GP and Practice Nurse Times

- ◆ PN performs one HA in 60 minutes.
- ◆ GP summarises HA performed by PN in 15 minutes.

Please note that the financial models shown are only estimation and are based on general assumptions of GP time costs and Nurse costs and time. Each practice will vary on their overall costs.

## Model 1. Scenario Analysis of Health Assessment Income

Scenario A			
<b>HA in the surgery by GP</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>OUTPUT FOR PRACTICE</b>	
Income from HA (100%) schedule fee	\$167.45	No of Health Assessments (HA) per week	
Level C cons lost (\$) (if ~30 mins used for HA)	60.95	<i>Income from:</i>	
Net increase in revenue/HA	\$106.50	Scenario A HA by GP in the surgery	\$20,448.00
No of HA / Wk	4	Scenario B HA by Practice Nurse (PN) (surgery) + GP summarises HA	\$19,267.20
No of HA / Yr	192	Scenario C HA by Practice Nurse (PN) (home) + GP summarises HA	\$24,910.00
<b>Net increase in revenue/Wk</b>	<b>\$426.00</b>		
<b>Net increase in revenue/annum</b>	<b>\$20,448.00</b>		
Scenario B		Scenario C	
<b>HA in surgery by PN + GP summarises</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>HA at home by PN + GP summarises</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
Income from HA (100%) schedule fee	\$167.45	Income from HA (100%) schedule fee	\$230.00
Level B cons lost (\$) (if ~15 mins, for summary)	\$32.10	Level B cons lost (\$) (if ~15 mins, for summary)	\$30.00
Practice Nurse performs HA	\$35.00	Practice Nurse performs HA in home (incl travel)	\$70.00
Net increase in revenue/HA	\$100.35	Net increase in revenue/HA	\$120.00
No of HA / Wk	4	No of HA / Wk	4
No of HA / Yr	192	No of HA / Yr	192
<b>Net increase in revenue/Wk</b>	<b>\$401.40</b>	<b>Net increase in revenue/Wk</b>	<b>\$510.00</b>
<b>Net increase in revenue/annum</b>	<b>\$19,267.20</b>	<b>Net increase in revenue/annum</b>	<b>\$24,910.00</b>

The above model presents the economic advantages of three health assessment scenarios: Scenario A: HA by GP in the surgery without a PN; Scenario B: HA by PN in the surgery where the GP summarises the HA; and Scenario C: HA by PN in the patient's home where the GP summarises the HA.

## Model 2: Practice Nurse's Wage from Health Assessment

- ◆ This model estimates the number of health assessments per week that can offset the weekly wage of the PNs working with the GP.
- ◆ It allows for 30 minutes travel time per health assessment performed in a patient's home.
- ◆ This model shows the PN's time that is left for other activities in the practice.

**Note: Practice Nurse hourly rate of \$35 includes on costs**

Practice Nurse Details	Hours per week	Amount
Employ Practice Nurse (\$35/hour includes oncosts)	24	\$840.00
Health Assessments		
▪ In practice – 7 x HA/week x \$167.45	7	\$1,172.15
▪ In home – 4 x HA/week x \$236.85	6	\$947.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$2119.55</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$1279.55</b>

# RESOURCES

# 13. APPENDIX

## Useful Nursing Web Sites

NAME OF ORGANISATION	WEBSITE/CONTACT DETAILS	DESCRIPTION
Australian Nursing Federation	<a href="http://www.anf.org.au/">http://www.anf.org.au/</a>	
NSW Nurses Association	<a href="http://www.nswnurses.asn.au/">http://www.nswnurses.asn.au/</a>	
Royal College of Nursing Australia	<a href="http://www.rcna.org.au/">http://www.rcna.org.au/</a>	
WageNet	<a href="http://www.wagenet.gov.au/">http://www.wagenet.gov.au/</a>	Provides access to wages and conditions of employment information.
Wageline	Tel: 1300 363 264	
Department of Industrial Relations	Postal Address: PO Box 847 Darlinghurst NSW 1300 Tel: 02 9243 8888 Fax: 02 92438771 Award Enquiry Service: 13 16 28 <a href="http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au">URL: http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au</a>	Clerical and Administrative Employees (State) Consolidated Award. (Award Code 135, Serial B5376)  Practice Managers: Not covered by the Clerical Award, contact Wageline or Wagenet for information on relevant employment legislation.
Nurses: Nurses Other than in Hospital (State) Award	<a href="http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au/awards/">http://www.dir.nsw.gov.au/awards/</a> or contact ANF (02)	
Australian Industrial Relations Commission	<a href="http://www.airc.gov.au/">http://www.airc.gov.au/</a> Australian Industrial Registry Level 8, Terrace Towers 80 William Street, East Sydney 2011 Tel: 02 83746666 Fax: 02 93806990 Out of hours emergency: 0419 318011	
Office of Employment Advocacy	7th Floor, Tower 477 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000 Tel: 02 9246 0513 Fax: 02 9246 0514	



## Practice Nurses Network

The general practice environment is unique and often challenging. The nurse works with in a primary health care setting that is also a private business where access to resources and other services is often difficult. These nurses are often isolated from peers and there is little opportunity to access appropriate professional development. The Sutherland Division of General Practice recognises the important role of practice nurses as part of the general practice team, and acknowledges that access to appropriate peer support and professional development is essential for maintaining the highest possible professional standards.

### Role of the Network

The key goal of the network is to become a local resource for practice nurses working in general practice in the Sutherland area. The network will provide an important forum for networking, peer support and opportunities for professional development.

The network will have the following roles:

- Support the Sutherland Division of General Practice through the ***General Practice Support & Development Program*** in enhancing and supporting the roles of general practice nurses
- Provide a forum for sharing and exchange of knowledge expertise and experience
- Assist in accessing and disseminating relevant resources for practice nurses
- Offer specialised expertise through a resource pool from network members as part of the mentoring program

The network will be an evolving and continually updated forum that will assist the Division in organising network meetings, development of education/ training opportunities and development of resources to support general practice nurses.

### Meetings

Network meetings will be held quarterly during weekday evening. *The agenda can consist of up-skilling session, followed by a discussion on current nursing issues.*

### Membership

Membership is free and open to practice nurses working in general practices in the Sutherland area.

### Division Contact

Contact: Dawn McBlain (General Practice Support & Development Program Officer)

Postal Address: PO Box 2226 TAREN POINT NSW 2229

Phone: 9525 4011 Fax: 9525 4411

Email: [dmcblain.sdgp@shiregps.org.au](mailto:dmcblain.sdgp@shiregps.org.au)



**JOINING THE SUTHERLAND DIVISION OF GENERAL PRACTICE  
PRACTICE NURSE NETWORK  
APPLICATION FORM**

If you wish to join this network please complete the form that follows and fax to the Sutherland Division of General Practice on 9525 4411.

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Job position: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Any special expertise related to the network goal that you wish to be recognised?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What network activity would you be willing to be involved in?**

Contributing to the newsletter &/or web site news

Planning program for network meetings

Developing training and education program

Being consulted in areas related to mentoring activities for practice nurses

Other? Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Faxback to the Division on 9525 4411**