

Nurse Practitioner Bursary Program Policy

Revision Date: May 12, 2017

Program Description:

The purpose of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) Bursary is to provide financial assistance to nurses who are enrolled in a NP education program and agree to accept employment in a difficult-to-fill position and fulfill a service commitment as described in this policy.

Please contact RHAs to determine the availability of NP Bursaries.

Scope:

This bursary is available to:

- Individuals enrolled in an approved NP program in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador and who are enrolled in an approved NP program in another Canadian jurisdiction.

RHAs apply for bursary funding annually; applications approved for funding expire at the end of the fiscal year in which they are approved.

Applications for NP bursaries must be for difficult-to-fill NP positions within RHAs or for targeted areas agreed to by the HR Planning Sub-Committee.

Bursary recipients must agree to fulfill a service obligation in an NP position which has been identified as difficult-to-fill. Not all positions will be eligible for a bursary; availability of bursaries varies annually by location and is subject to availability of funds.

RHA employees who are actively enrolled in an approved NP program are eligible to apply for financial assistance under this program. Appropriate taxes and deductions will apply.

Amounts and Conditions:

1. A \$5,000 bursary is available per year (1950 hours) of service commitment, to a maximum of two years (3900 hours), or \$10,000.
2. A signed service agreement is required for each recipient receiving a bursary. Service agreements signed with a RHA are legally binding contracts.
3. Bursaries must be paid to the recipient prior to program completion. Program completion is defined as the last day of exams as per the program calendar. It is not the date of graduation.
4. Bursaries may be subject to income taxation. The bursary will be recorded on the appropriate T4A/T4 that is issued to a recipients for funds disbursed in each calendar year.
5. Recipients must meet all conditions of employment with the RHA offering employment.

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6. Positions can be permanent full-time, permanent part-time, temporary full-time, or temporary part-time. Bursary recipients who accept part-time employment will have a maximum of two years to complete each 1950 hour service commitment (i.e. four years for a 3900 hour commitment).
7. Recipients of more than one incentive under the *Bursaries and Incentives Program* of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with a service obligation to the same RHA to be employed in the same position will complete their service obligations concurrently.
8. The service agreement may be extended for parental leave or other matters approved by the RHA.
9. If the terms and conditions of the service agreement are not fulfilled, the recipient will be required to repay the prorated portion of the bursary to the RHA. The RHA will forward repaid funds to the Department of Health and Community Services on a quarterly basis.
10. RHAs must inform the Department of Health and Community Services in writing once a default occurs.
11. Interest on the amount to be repaid by the recipient will be calculated in accordance with the *Bursaries and Incentives Program Collections Policy – RHA Receivables*
12. RHAs may only accept a bursary transfer to/from another RHA where the equivalent bursary may have been made available. In situations where no bursary or a bursary of lesser value would have been available in the other RHA, the recipient would then be responsible to pay the difference to the original RHA with interest. The recipient must obtain the original RHA's permission to transfer the bursary as well as sign a revised service agreement (Template 8.0) with the other RHA.
13. The Director of Health Workforce Planning may approve exceptions to this policy in extenuating circumstances, and on a case-by-case basis.

Enhanced Bursary Option:

If an RHA has been unsuccessful in offering an approved bursary and can provide evidence that all avenues to attract a recipient currently enrolled in a NP program have been exhausted, RHAs may apply for an enhanced bursary for the position.

If a position is approved for an enhanced bursary, the maximum value may be doubled to \$20,000. The service obligation will also be doubled to four years.

Regional Health Authority Responsibilities:

The RHAs responsibilities include the following:

1. Submitting applications for bursary funding to the Health Workforce Planning Division at the beginning of each fiscal year for consideration by the Human Resources Planning Sub-Committee, which includes providing a completed Application for Bursary Funding (Form 6.0) and other supporting documentation, as necessary.
2. Recruiting a recipient for the bursary.
3. Appropriately screening of students before offering a bursary to ensure suitability for employment including, but not limited to, criminal record checks, academic standing in the program, references from program instructors and previous employers, and interview with student.

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4. Securing a position for the recipient and establishing a written service agreement for the bursary.
5. Submitting documentation to the Health Workforce Planning Division when the bursary has been awarded to the successful incumbent, which includes a completed bursary application form, verification of enrollment and signed service agreement.
6. Issuing payment to recipients with appropriate deductions, if required.
7. Offering employment to the recipient within 30 days of program completion. If an employment offer is not made within this timeframe the signed agreement will be null and void and repayment will not be expected. The RHA also reserves the right to release a recipient from an agreement, if deemed necessary.
8. Requesting reimbursement of funds from the Health Workforce Planning Division with supporting documentation on a quarterly basis.
9. Tracking the fulfillment of service agreements of bursary recipients.
10. Notifying the Health Workforce Planning Division if a recipient has defaulted.
11. Enforcing collection of defaulted amounts for recipients as per the *Bursaries and Incentives Program Collection Policy – RHA Receivables*.
12. Notifying the Health Workforce Planning Division of collected amounts of defaulted bursaries on a quarterly basis.
13. Preparing the appropriate T4A/T4 for recipients annually.
14. Providing evidence when applying for the enhanced bursary program as deemed appropriate.

Recipient Responsibilities:

The recipient's responsibilities include the following:

1. Reviewing and complying with the terms and conditions of the incentive and service agreement.
2. Accepting an offer of employment within 30 days of program completion.
3. Notifying the RHA in writing if he/she is unable to fulfill the service agreement at least three (3) months prior to the termination date of the service agreement and arrange for repayment of the defaulted bursary amount in accordance with the service agreement and the *Bursaries and Incentives Program Collection Policy – RHA Receivables*.
4. Notifying the RHA of any change in contact information such as name, permanent or temporary address, and phone number provided at the time of signing the service agreement.

Procedure:

1. The RHA submits an Application for Bursary Funding and other supporting documentation, as necessary, to the Human Resource Planning Sub-Committee for approval at the beginning of each fiscal year. Approved bursaries expire at the end of each fiscal year.

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2. The Human Resource Planning Sub-Committee notifies all RHAs of approved bursaries for each fiscal year.
3. Recipients contact an RHA to determine if a bursary is available for a position, or the RHA recruits a recipient for the bursary.
 - a. If an RHA has been unsuccessful in offering an approved bursary and can provide evidence that all avenues to attract a recipient currently enrolled in a NP program have been exhausted, RHAs may apply for an enhanced bursary for the position.
 - b. Requests for enhanced bursary funding will be submitted to the Director of Health Workforce Planning and approved by the Department of Health and Community Services. Requests are subject to available funding.
4. The RHA facilitates the signing of a service agreement with the incumbent and submits the signed agreement, completed bursary application form and verification of enrollment to the Health Workforce Planning Division for approval.
5. Upon approval from the Department of Health and Community Services, the recipient will receive payment of the bursary from the RHA. Reimbursement will be provided to the RHA from the Department of Health and Community Services on a quarterly basis and upon receipt of invoice from the RHA.
6. Payments must be made to the recipient prior to program completion. Payments made within three months of the program completion date must be subject to income taxation.
7. The RHA offers employment to the recipient within 30 days of program completion in accordance with the service agreement.
8. The student accepts an offer of employment within 30 days of program completion in accordance with the service agreement.