

# Nova Scotia Department of Health

---

**Subject: Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy/French Language Health Services**  
*French Language Nursing Bursary Program for RNs*

---

**Effective date:** July 31, 2006

**Approved by:** Original signed by Donna Denney

**Review date:** March 2009

Nursing Policy Advisor

---

## I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Nova Scotia Department of Health is committed to addressing the health human resource requirements for a quality health care system. The Nova Scotia Department of Health supports *Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy, April 2001*, and is committed to the implementation of initiatives identified in that document.

Through the creation of the French Language Services Act and Regulations (January 2007), the Nova Scotia Department of Health is committed to increasing services in French via the provision of a French language bursary for RNs to respond to the health needs of the Acadians and francophones of Nova Scotia.

To support efforts in recruiting French speaking Nova Scotia residents who are new graduates from a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program or Bachelor in Nursing (BN) program to gain employment in Nova Scotia following graduation, and to increase the number of French speaking nurses that are recruited and retained in Nova Scotia, the Department will support the French Language Nursing Bursary Program for eligible French speaking new graduates.

## II. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Bursary: A monetary grant awarded to an eligible new graduate selected from among those completing the application process.

## III. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 3.1 support eligible employers across the province in recruiting new Nursing graduates who are French speaking to their organization
- 3.2 increase the number of nurses that provide health care services in French and build awareness among employers and nurses that French is an asset in the health field
- 3.3 build partnerships between Department of Health, Réseau Santé, District Health Authorities, IWK Health Centre, and unions in the delivery of French Language Health Services.

#### IV. APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

##### 4.1 Eligible new graduates:

- 4.1.1 in their final term of a BScN, BN or accelerated BScN program including:
  - Nursing students at Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University, and Cape Breton University
  - Nova Scotia residents in their final term of a BScN or BN program offered in French in another province and who intend to return to Nova Scotia upon graduation
- 4.1.2 who are French speaking
- 4.1.3 hired to work immediately after graduation in an area\* of Nova Scotia where French language services may be needed

##### 4.2 Eligible Employers:

- 4.2.1 including District Health Authorities (DHAs)\*, IWK Health Centre, Department of Health Home Care Nova Scotia, as well as Long Term Care facilities funded by the Department of Health
- 4.2.2 able to provide French speaking nursing graduates with work in entry-level positions where they will have access to and be able to work with experienced nurses in similar positions.

#### V. POLICY DIRECTIVES

##### 5.1 Employer Responsibilities for French Language Nursing Bursaries

- 5.1.1 The employer will be responsible for selecting potential candidates based on the eligibility criteria as per policy application 4.1 and forwarding candidate information to the Department of Health for final selection by the Nursing Policy Advisor – Refer to Appendix I, *French Language Nursing Bursary Program: Registered Nurses and Licensed Practice Nurses –Application Form*.
- 5.1.2 Employers will be responsible for informing successful nursing graduates in writing once the employer has been notified by the Department of Health of the final selection.
- 5.1.3 Employers will be responsible for developing and managing the return-in-service agreement following licensure. The agreement must include a:
  - Twelve-month return-in-service period commencing with the attainment of an active practicing class license.
  - Requirement to repay all funds for new graduates who fail to meet the requirements of a BScN or BN program, withdraw from that program or fail to pass the licensure exam.
  - Requirement to repay funds on a pro-rated basis for new graduates who fail to complete the required return-in-service period.
- 5.1.4 Employers will be responsible for the signing of the return-in service agreement and the transfer of funds to the new graduate upon their acceptance of the bursary.

---

\* In Nova Scotia, the following areas (represented as District Health Authorities) are considered to have the highest concentrations of Acadians and francophones in the province: South West Nova, Annapolis Valley, Guysborough Antigonish Strait, Cape Breton and Capital District Health Authority – including IWK Health Centre.

- 5.1.5 The employer will be responsible to notify the Nursing Policy Advisor of new graduates who accept employment with a French language bursary- refer to Appendix II, *French Language Nursing Bursary – Employer Report Form*.
- 5.1.6 The employer will be responsible for the application of repayment procedures if the new graduate (or employee) does not meet the terms and conditions of the return-in-service agreement as described in 5.1.3. The employer will notify the Department of Health of each breach of contract and the pro-rated amount charged to the employee - refer to Appendix II, *French Language Nursing Bursary – Employer Report Form*.
- 5.1.7 The employer will be responsible for the submission of the *Employer Report Form* to the Department of Health in request for reimbursement of bursary funds provided to new graduates. Reports in request for funding will be due March 31<sup>st</sup>. Reports will include:
- Name of facility
  - Name of employee
  - Dates of return-in-service agreement
  - Amount of funds returned by new graduates not completing requirements of return-in-service agreement including reason (did not graduate, failure to pass licensure exam, did not begin employment, left employment prior to completion of term)
- 5.2 University Responsibilities
- 5.2.1 School of Nursing faculty at Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University, Cape Breton University and Universite de Moncton are responsible for informing students about the availability of the French Language Nursing Bursary program, application process and for providing students or new graduates with contact information of eligible employers.
- 5.3 Nursing Policy Advisor Responsibilities for French Language Nursing Bursaries
- 5.3.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible, with support from the French Language Health Services Coordinator, to confirm that the candidates are French speaking.
- 5.3.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor, in collaboration with the French Language Health Services Coordinator, will be responsible for the determination of the amount of each bursary and the final selection of eligible new graduates based on language competency and geographic distribution in the province.
- 5.3.3 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for written communication to all employers and universities (Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University, Cape Breton University and Universite de Moncton) Schools of Nursing outlining this information.
- 5.3.4 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for written communication to the francophone community informing them of the French Language Nursing Bursary program.
- 5.3.5 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for informing successful employers in writing of the number of bursaries available for their facility and the provision of a list of eligible employers province-wide to Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University, Cape Breton University Schools of Nursing and Universite de Moncton.
- 5.3.6 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for the collation of information provided by employers through the reporting process and for

the development of an Annual Report based on that information.

## **VI. POLICY GUIDELINES**

- 6.1 In determining eligible employers, the Nursing Policy Advisor will ensure, to the extent possible, geographic distribution of French Language nursing bursaries throughout the province as per policy application 4.1.3.
- 6.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor and the Coordinator of French Language Health Services will participate in the Department of Health Business Planning process and make recommendations that support recruitment and retention of new nursing graduates who are French speaking.
- 6.3 The Nursing Policy Advisor and the Coordinator of French Language Health Services will review the results of the French Language nursing bursaries and make recommendations for the continuation of the French Language Nursing Bursary program.
- 6.4 The employer may, at their discretion, provide the new graduate with an interruption in the return-in-service agreement in the case that the new graduate has failed to pass the licensure exam. The new graduate should be scheduled to rewrite the examination within a defined period of time.
- 6.5 Acceptance of funds from one strategy initiative precludes recipients from receiving funds from other strategy initiatives.

## **VII. ACCOUNTABILITIES**

- 7.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for determining the amount and number of bursaries that will be made available to eligible employers in accordance with up-to-date health human resource requirements, an identified need for French language services and other relevant documentation.

## **VIII. MONITORING**

- 8.1 Participating employers are responsible for monitoring new graduates' completion of the terms of the French Language Nursing Bursary award, including completion of the university program, attainment of a license to practice, and completion of the requirements outlined in the return-in-service agreement.
- 8.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for monitoring policy implementation.
- 8.3 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the program on recruitment, retention and French language services.

## **IX. ENQUIRIES**

All enquiries relating to the interpretation and application of this policy should be referred to:

Nursing Policy Advisor  
Department of Health  
P.O. Box 488  
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8

Phone: 424-0122  
Fax: 424-6690  
E-mail: [NursingStrategy@gov.ns.ca](mailto:NursingStrategy@gov.ns.ca)

## **X. APPENDICES**

- Appendix I *French Language Nursing Bursary –Application Form*  
Appendix II *Nursing Strategy – French Language Nursing Bursary Program – Employer Report Form*