

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Subject: Nova Scotia's Nursing Strategy
New Graduate Transition Allowance

Effective date: April 2010 **Approved by:** *Original signed by Janis Brown*
Review date: March 2012 **A/Nursing Policy Advisor**

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Nova Scotia Department of Health is committed to supporting initiatives addressing the health human resource requirements for a quality health care system. To support efforts in recruiting new Nova Scotia graduates from a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program or Bachelor in Nursing (BN) program to remain in Nova Scotia following graduation, and retention efforts through enhanced opportunities to develop competencies and confidence immediately following graduation, the Department will support the New Graduate Transition Allowance for eligible new graduates.

II. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 New Graduate Transition Allowance: 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 and retaining new nursing graduates to their organization
- 3.2 support new employees during their transition period in the workplace

IV. APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- 4.1 Eligible new graduates:
- 4.1.1 students in their final term of a BScN or BN program or in their final term of an 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 in another province and who intend to return to Nova Scotia upon graduation
- 4.1.2 hired to work in an entry-level position within Nova Scotia immediately following graduation
- 4.2 Eligible Employers:
- 4.2.1 including District Health Authorities (DHAs), IWK Health Centre, and Long Term Care facilities funded by the Department of Health
- 4.2.2 able to provide beginning nurses 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

- 5.1.1 Once notified by the Department of Health of the approved number of allowances for their organization, eligible employers will be responsible for developing and managing the application and selection process of new graduates.
- 5.1.2 Eligible employers will be responsible for informing successful new graduates in writing.
- 5.1.3 Eligible employers will be responsible for developing and managing the return-in-service agreement. The agreement must include a:
 - Twelve-month return-in-service period commencing with the attainment of an active practicing class licence (RN).
 - Requirement to repay all funds for new graduates who fail to meet the requirements of the 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 Eligible employers will be responsible for the transfer of funds to the new graduate upon acceptance of the allowance and signing of the return-in service agreement.
- 5.1.5 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 pro-rated amount charged the employee - refer to Appendix I, *New Graduate Transition Allowance–Employer Annual Report*.
- 5.1.6 The employer will be responsible to notify the Nursing Policy Advisor of new graduates who are accepting employment in the facility with a New Graduate Transition Allowance.
- 5.1.7 The employer will be responsible for the submission of an Annual Report to the Department of Health in request for reimbursement of New Graduate Transition Allowance funds provided to new graduates (Appendix I). Reports in request for funding will be due March 31st. Reports will include:
 - Name of facility
 - Name of employee
 - Dates of return-in-service agreement period
 - Amount of funds returned by new graduates not completing requirements of return-in-service agreement for previous year, including reason (did not graduate, failed to pass licensure exam, did not begin employment, left employment prior to completion of term)

5.2 University Responsibilities

- 5.2.1 Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University and Cape Breton University Schools of Nursing faculty are responsible for informing students about the New Graduate Transition Allowance, employer application processes, and for providing students with a list and contact information of eligible employers.

5.3 Nursing Policy Advisor Responsibilities

- 5.3.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for the determination of the amount of each allowance and number of allowances that will be made available to employers. The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for written communication to all employers and universities (Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University and Cape Breton University Schools of Nursing) on a yearly basis outlining this information.
- 5.3.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for informing successful employers in writing of the number of allowances available for their facility and the provision of a list of eligible employers province wide to Dalhousie University, St. Francis Xavier University and Cape Breton University Schools of Nursing.
- 5.3.3 The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for the collation of information provided by employers through the annual reporting process and for the development of an Annual Report based on that information.

VI. POLICY GUIDELINES

- 6.1 In determination of eligible employers, the Nursing Policy Advisor will ensure, to the extent possible, geographic distribution of allowances throughout the province.
- 6.2 The Nursing Policy Advisor will participate in the Department of Health Business Planning process and make recommendations that support recruitment and retention. Recommendations will be based on a yearly review of program results and provincial health human resource requirements.
- 6.3 The employer may, at their discretion, provide the new graduate with a leave of absence in the case that the new graduate has failed to pass the licensure exam and has been scheduled to rewrite the examination within a defined period of time.
- 6.4 New graduates will receive only one New Graduate Transition Allowance.

VII. ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 7.1 The Nursing Policy Advisor is responsible for ensuring the determination of the amount and number of allowances that will be made available to eligible employers on a yearly basis in accordance with up-to-date health human resource requirements and other relevant documentation.

VIII. MONITORING

- 8.1 Participating employers are responsible for monitoring new graduates' completion of the terms of the New Graduate Transition Allowance, 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 and retention.

IX. ENQUIRIES

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

Nursing Policy Advisor	Phone: 424-0122
Department of Health	Fax: 424-6690
P.O. Box 488	E-mail: NursingStrategy@gov.ns.ca
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8	

X. APPENDICES

Appendix I New Graduate Transition Allowance – Employer Annual Report