

## **Graduate Nurse FAQs**

### **Frequently Asked Questions for Graduate Nurse positions with Nova Scotia Health Authority**

#### **Pre Selection and Hiring Process:**

##### **Do you hire Graduate Nurses every year and if so, how many?**

We hire Graduate Nurses most years. The number of positions and the nature of the assignments are dependent upon our current operational needs and future projections.

##### **When do you post for Graduate Nurses and for how long?**

The Graduate Nurse posting will be posted on the following websites for a minimum of ten (10) business days:

- <http://www.nshealth.ca/careers>
- <https://www.careerbeacon.com/corpprof/novascotiahealthauthority/index.html>

We will email Nursing Schools in Atlantic Canada to inform students and faculty representatives of the posting.

##### **How can Graduate Nurses apply to NSHA?**

Apply online at <http://www.nshealth.ca/careers> to the posting for Graduate Nurses. Be sure to apply as an internal if you're currently working for NSHA and external if you are not.

##### **What will happen if I miss this posting or if I haven't been hired?**

Some zones within NSHA accept Graduate Nurses applications to general postings outside of the Graduate Nurse specific posting. If you miss this posting or haven't been hired, you will need to be persistent and apply to other vacancies advertised online that match your education and experience.

##### **How many Graduate Nurses are you hiring within each unit/program/specialty?**

Every area will have different operational needs based on current operational needs and future projections. It's important to realize that areas can only hire and train a limited number of Graduate Nurses due to limited preceptor resources available.

##### **How many references do I need to submit?**

Two (2) references are required, one from a preceptor and the other from a supervisor/manager/professor you have worked with during your clinical or co-op hours. Prior to your interview, you will be provided a link to an online reference form which you can forward to your references to complete and submit.

##### **I have been applying for many of your postings but haven't received a call. What might be the issue?**

Some zones within NSHA accept Graduate Nurses applications to general postings outside of the

Graduate Nurse specific posting. As a unionized organization, we are obligated to consider members of the Nursing Bargaining Unit first. If positions cannot be filled by Nursing Bargaining Unit members, we then consider current employees in other bargaining units followed by applicants external to the organization. Our recommendation is to research the areas you are applying to, make sure you match the qualifications posted, ask questions if you are not sure where you want to go, and consider a job shadow opportunity if available. Also, be persistent and flexible, you might need to consider starting with part-time or casual relief positions before moving into a permanent, full-time position.

**Where can I find more information about the specific nursing units?**

You can find unit profiles for most of the nursing areas with Central (excluding the IWK) on our website at <http://www.nshealth.ca/nurse-recruitment>. We are currently in the process of creating unit profiles for nursing areas throughout all our zones.

**Post Selection:**

**Will I be placed within one of my preferred areas?**

You will be asked to list your preferred areas during the application process. Preferred applicants will be notified of the specific area in which he/she will be placed prior to beginning employment. Every effort will be made to appoint Graduate Nurses to one of their preferred areas.

**How long is the orientation period for the Graduate Nurses?**

This is dependent upon the hiring zone.

Central Graduate Nurses will attend general orientation their first day followed by four days of Graduate Nurse Transition Program (GNTP). Once Graduate Nurses start on the individual unit, there is an average preceptor period of ten (10) to twelve (12), twelve (12) hour shifts.

Northern provides an extensive orientation for Graduate Nurses including preceptor and classroom training. Graduate Nurses transition to regular complement upon successful demonstration of core competencies.

Eastern provides a combination of one (1) week/five (5) days of classroom orientation, three (3) to five (5) days of systems training, and unit orientation with a preceptor for a minimum of four (4) weeks for a general nursing area and a minimum of eight (8) weeks for a critical care area.

Western provides Graduate Nurses with at minimum sixteen (16) twelve (12) hour preceptored shifts with regular follow-up to determine if more time is required. The orientation may vary slightly dependent on the unit hired.

**I am interested in ICU, ER, OR, or PACU. Can I join these units?**

Some zones within NSHA hire Graduate Nurses directly into critical care. You will be asked to list

your preferred areas during the application process, please indicate your interest in these areas. Interviews will be based on our current operational needs and future projections. Applicants who have completed their electives, co-op, or clinical hours in these areas will be considered in advance of others.

Central Graduate Nurses that missed these opportunities can always seek to apply to People Service's Expression of Interest for a Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre (RNPDC) specialty program after gaining some work experience. Graduate Nurses interested from Western, Northern, and Eastern zones should contact their Manager for approval to participate in a RNPDC specialty program. Information on RNPDC programs can be found at <http://www.rnpdc.nshealth.ca/>. You might be eligible for sponsorship if you are successful with assessment. Successful applicants hired into these areas may be required to sign a return of service agreement based on the hiring zone.

### **What do I need to do if I want to eventually work in ICU, ER, OR, or PACU?**

Central Graduate Nurses that missed these opportunities can always seek to apply to People Service's Expression of Interest for a Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre (RNPDC) specialty program after gaining some work experience. Graduate Nurses interested from Western, Northern, and Eastern zones should contact their Manager for approval to participate in a RNPDC specialty program. Information on RNPDC programs can be found at <http://www.rnpdc.nshealth.ca/>. You might be eligible for sponsorship if you are successful with assessment. Successful applicants hired into these areas may be required to sign a return of service agreement based on the hiring zone.

### **What is the Nursing Resource Team/Float Pool/Permanent Resource Nurses?**

Central Nursing Resource Team (NRT) is comprised of Nurses trained to work on several different units within a service cluster to help meet the staffing needs throughout the zone. The NRT supports both the QEII and Dartmouth General acute inpatient areas.

Once hired to the NRT, Nurses will be supported by a Clinical Nurse Educator and Health Services Manager committed to working with staff and colleagues to establish and support these teams. Nurses will receive orientation and ongoing education to develop their nursing skills and competencies. Nurses will be supported to identify their career goals and will have the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of practice settings and experiences to help them achieve their goals.

The NRT posts a schedule in advance in accordance with the collective agreement. NRT Nurses will be assigned within a cluster based on needs either in advance or to fill a last minute staffing need. Here is an example of clusters:

#### **Medicine: General**

8.4 Community Health Unit

#### **Medicine: Oncology**

5A Gynecology and Radiation Oncology,  
Palliative care

#### **VMB**

6 East, 6  
West

8.1 Neurology, Stroke	8A Hematology, Oncology	5 East, 5 West
6.2 Cardiology, Telemetry	7A Palliative Care	4 East, 4 West
8.2 General Medicine, Medical Teaching Unit	8.2 General Medicine, Medical Teaching Unit	3 West

Northern and Eastern's Permanent Resources Nurses and Float Pools take a similar approach to Central Zone's NRT, but work schedules and assignments may differ depending on your area. Eastern requires six (6) months of recent and relevant nursing experience to be eligible for a position of this nature.

### **What is the starting salary for Graduate Nurses?**

- NSNU Graduate Nurse \$29.1852/per hour and after you provide proof of your active-practicing license with CRNNS it is \$32.8441/per hour
- NSGEU Graduate Nurse \$29.1852/per hour and after you provide proof of your active-practicing license with CRNNS it is \$32.6817/per hour

### **What documents do I need if selected for hire?**

The documents below are required in advance of finalizing your hire:

- Temporary License
- Copy of degree
- Proof of BCLS
- Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search (Externals only)
- Immunization records up to date (Externals only)
- Copy of social insurance card or top portion of a tax assessment (Externals only)
- Copy of birth certificate or passport (Externals only)
- Confirmation of NCLEX-RN examination date
- References

Details will be emailed to you from People Services in relation to the additional paperwork that will be required. Please ensure to check your spam or junk folder. Failure to provide this documentation in a timely fashion will result in your hire being delayed or rescinded.

### **Other Questions:**

#### **Once hired, when can I start? Can I start before I receive my license?**

No, you can't start before we receive a copy of your license. Your tentative start date will be based on our operational needs. All Graduate Nurses will join and attend orientation together. Any

deviation from this date will be decided by the hiring Manager and People Services. Before you can start, you need to satisfy the conditions outlined in your conditional offer letter.

**Is my start date flexible? I have a vacation planned and would like to join at a later date.**

There is extensive training and orientation planned which Graduate Nurses will benefit from attending. Time-off and leave requests will not be approved during this time.

**What is a “supernumerary” position?**

Hiring supernumerary is a proactive approach to staffing fluctuations, retirements, and transfers expected throughout the coming year. Hiring Graduate Nurses into supernumerary positions is an operational decision. Below are several points for your consideration:

- supernumeraries are an addition to the units regular complement;
- supernumeraries may or may not be assigned to a unit for their supernumerary duration depending on their hiring zone;
- the supernumerary duration could be permanent, full-time for six (6) months to one (1) year, temporary, full-time for one (1) year, or casual relief depending on the hiring zone and collective agreement;
- supernumeraries are entitled to all the benefits associated with their respective position;
- during the supernumerary duration, supernumeraries are guided to actively apply for non-supernumerary positions throughout the organization, assignment and permanent; and
- People Services will monitor and follow up on supernumeraries in collaboration with Managers to ensure non-supernumerary positions are secured.

**Can I delay writing my NCLEX-RN?**

Graduate Nurses are expected to write the NCLEX-RN within two (2) months of commencing employment. Graduate Nurses being hired into ICU, ER, OR, or PACU may be required to write the NCLEX-RN and pass prior to commencing employment based on the hiring zone.

It is the Graduate Nurse’s responsibility to submit application for licensure, register to write the NCLEX-RN, and inform People Services of the writing date.

**I want to work with newborns/children/woman at the IWK? How do I do that?**

IWK recruitment is independent of NSHA recruitment. You will need to apply directly to the IWK.

**Which geographical areas does NSHA cover?**

NSHA provides health care and services throughout Nova Scotia. A listing of our facilities can be found at

[http://www.nshealth.ca/locations?field\\_geofield\\_distance%5Bdistance%5D=10&field\\_geofield\\_distance%5Borigin%5D=Enter%2BStreet%2BAddress%2Bor%2BPostal%2BCode&field\\_location\\_type\\_tid%5B%5D=59](http://www.nshealth.ca/locations?field_geofield_distance%5Bdistance%5D=10&field_geofield_distance%5Borigin%5D=Enter%2BStreet%2BAddress%2Bor%2BPostal%2BCode&field_location_type_tid%5B%5D=59).

NSHA is made up of four zones. Below are the zones:

- Northern Zone - Colchester East Hants, Cumberland, and Pictou
- Western Zone - Annapolis Valley, South Shore, and South West
- Central Zone - Halifax, Eastern Shore, and West Hants
- Eastern Zone - Cape Breton, Guysborough, and Antigonish

**If I am successful, which union will I belong to?**

You will be a member of the Nursing bargaining unit and the union representing Nurses determined by work location.

**I currently work for NSHA. If I am successful in a Graduate Nurse position, what will this mean for my seniority and service?**

The Nursing Bargaining Unit includes Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses. If you currently work for NSHA in a unionized position outside of the Nursing Bargaining Unit and are successful in obtaining a Graduate Nurse position, your seniority will not carry with you to the Nursing Bargaining Unit. Your service date is not impacted by a change in bargaining unit.

**What if I have other questions?**

You can email us at [Recruitment.Services@nshealth.ca](mailto:Recruitment.Services@nshealth.ca).

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