



18 November 2010

Graeme Aitken
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Dear Graeme

Re: Career Planning

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to provide constructive input to further development of the proposals related to career planning for health professionals.

Context

Career planning processes for nurses must incorporate the gendered nature of the profession and the impact that has on the career trajectories of nurses. In order to support retention of women who have multiple life responsibilities it is important that processes, which specifically accommodate these challenges, are used to support nurse's career development.

Within nursing and nursing services there are multiple existing processes to support career planning. These include the Nursing Entry to Practice programme (NEtP), annual performance appraisal systems often including a professional development plan, professional development and recognition programmes (PDRPs), specialty accreditation systems, certifications for various activities, Nurse Practitioner regulation and credentialing guidelines.

Problem identification

We are unclear about the problem this policy aims to solve by proposing that individuals will only receive post-entry clinical training funding if they have a career plan in place.

Public funding to nurses for post-entry courses should already meet District Health Board workforce development plans and priorities.

We note that the issues that have been identified with the current system, and in particular the regulations of the previous clinical training agency, were raised with the HWNZ Board on 12 August 2010 by the combined nursing leadership group. It is our view that whilst some fine-tuning is needed, no major overhaul is indicated.

We would appreciate clarification from HWNZ as to what it is hoped to achieve in implementing the policy proposal.

Career planning guidelines

College members are especially supportive of and recommend the International Council of Nurses framework, *It's your career: take charge. Career Planning and Development* (Donner & Wheeler, 2001). We support this particular framework because it is based on extensive evidence, experience and application.

Nursing section

We now provide specific comment in response to the section on nursing on page 7 of the consultation document.

- As noted by HWNZ, nursing already has systems in place to support career development – PDRPs, first year of practice programme (NEtP), performance appraisal systems which are usually or should be inclusive of professional development planning. It is essential that those systems are built on to include the desired career planning.
- NEtP is regarded as a consolidation year for nurses to consolidate skills and knowledge in the practice environment following the 3 year degree. It is unlikely and probably undesirable for a graduate to make far-reaching decisions in that entry to practice year. There are however existing processes during the NEtP programme which provide formalised feedback which is the *beginning* of the career planning process.
- It is important not to depend too heavily on the NEtP year as more than 40,000 nurses have of course already passed that point in time.
- We wonder how individual career planning processes can best be linked to national workforce planning and service need. This seems of particular importance to determining investment in nurse practitioners and other levels of advanced practice but also applies to the nursing workforce at large.

Conclusion

We support career planning and professional development but cannot see the benefit of introducing career plans as a criterion for HWNZ funding of courses. At this stage an adequate case has not been made for so doing. We most specifically reject the need for career plans to be developed on entry to the NEtP programme but agree along with other nursing organizations that career and professional development planning should commence towards the end of the programme.

Yours Sincerely



Professor Jenny Carryer
RN, PhD FCNA(NZ) MNZM
Executive Director
(On behalf of the College of Nurses Members)