

FINAL 10 May 2019

Sector update re the Safe Staffing Accord

1. Representatives of the New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO), district health boards (DHBs) and the Ministry of Health signed an Accord on 30 July 2018 committing the parties to there being sufficient nurses in our public hospitals to ensure both their own and their patients' safety.

Agreed Commitments

2. The accord commits the Parties to the following:
 - a. to explore options for providing employment and training for all New Zealand nursing graduates and report to the Minister of Health by the end of November 2018
 - b. to develop any accountability mechanisms that the Parties believe are necessary (over and above those already agreed) to ensure DHBs implement the additional staffing needs identified by CCDM within the agreed timeframe (June 2021) and report to the Minister of Health by the end of February 2019
 - c. to develop a strategy for the retention of the existing nursing workforce and the re-employment of those who have left the workforce, and report to the Minister of Health by the end of May 2019.

Progress to date

3. Work progresses on the final part C of the Accord commitments.
4. This work will be presented to the Minister towards the end of May. The advice is not finalised yet but is likely to be high level, seeking the Minister's approval for a further work programme. The advice will include an analysis of data on entry and exit from nursing. It is likely to be action-orientated and to focus on a range of strategies for nurse retention and return to practice.
5. The advice to the Minister will draw on current work including existing strategies for nursing. The Accord Group has asked DHBs to share their current nursing strategies.
6. The Office of the Chief Nursing Officer presented an update of the Accord at the annual NEtP/NESP forum in Christchurch on 2 May. The group discussed potential strategies for retention and return to practice.
7. The Accord Group has been shown the DHB Graduate Nurse costing model spreadsheet. The purpose of the costing model is to highlight the full cost of employing all new nursing graduates.
8. The Minister endorsed the recommendation that all newly graduated nurses will be employed within six months and requested this timeframe is shortened, if at all possible. We are/will be working with Accord signatories to work as quickly as possible on this.
9. The Minister has formally indicated his support for a supported transition to practice programme for new graduate enrolled nurses.
10. Please also feel free to distribute this update widely and we will be posting this to our Safe Staffing Accord section on the Ministry's website.
11. We are keen to keep everyone informed on our progress and are always happy to receive contributions from people. If you do want to share your thinking, please feel free to email our office at chiefnurse@moh.govt.nz.

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