



<b>Policy Title:</b>	LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant Policy	<b>Applicable to:</b>	LPN
		<b>Approved Date:</b>	July 5, 2024
<b>Responsibility Authority:</b>	Patient Care Optimization Committee	<b>Review Date:</b>	
		<b>Revised Date:</b>	
		<b>Next Review Date:</b>	July 2027

**1.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

Established in 1999, the Nurses Recruitment and Retention Fund (NRRF) is committed to enhancing the delivery of health services in the province of Manitoba, by addressing issues of nursing supply. Main functions of the NRRF include the development of strategies to assist with the recruitment and retention of Registered Nurses (RNs), Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in Manitoba.

To support enhanced education and training of nurses in the Manitoba health system workforce, NRRF supports the use of grant funds for enrolment of LPNs into BN or BPN programs

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

Nurses constitute approximately 2/3 of health care professionals across Canada. Therefore, nurses play integral roles in promoting and maintaining a system of health, which addresses the needs of populations, ensures high quality care, and fosters the support and confidence of the public.

A shortage of qualified nurses has been well substantiated. Subsequently, employers have had increasing difficulty filling positions across the country. To offset issues of inadequate numbers, the majority of governments have initiated strategies for recruitment. One strategy for recruitment and retention is the use of financial compensation to facilitate and encourage individuals who are LPNs, to upgrade education and training to the Bachelor of Nursing or Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing degree.

**3.0 PURPOSE**

- 3.1** To encourage and support education and training of Licensed Practical Nurses who are currently employed with an approved employer wishing to become Registered Nurses or Registered Psychiatric Nurses.
- 3.2** To assist eligible Manitoba employers to decrease RN and RPN vacancies.

## DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant:** Financial support of \$8000 for an individual currently registered as an LPN in Manitoba to upgrade education and training for eligibility to become Registered Nurses or Registered Psychiatric Nurses, contingent upon successful completion of an approved BN or BPN Program.
- 4.2 Return of Service Agreement (ROSA):** A written contract stating the nurse's commitment to provide nursing service with an eligible employer in Manitoba in a position of 0.6 EFT or higher for a one-year period of time, in return for the investment of the \$8000 LPN to RN or RPN Grant Program costs by NRRF. The ROSA period will be extended by the full term of any leave of absence which is four (4) weeks or greater.
- 4.3 Approved BN or BPN program:** A Bachelor of Nursing program that is recognized by the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (CRNM), or a Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing program that is recognized by the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba (CRPNM) in preparing individuals for licensure as RNs or RPNs respectively in Manitoba
- 4.4 New Student:** A LPN who is not currently enrolled in a BN or BPN program.
- 4.5 Completed student:** A LPN who has successfully graduated from a BN or BPN program.

## 5.0 POLICY

**This policy applies to:**

### 5.1 Eligible Individuals:

- 5.1.1 Licensed Practical Nurses** who are currently employed by an eligible employer in Manitoba who are accepted into an approved BN or BPN Program.
- 5.1.2 Licensed Practical Nurses who completed the BN or BPN program January 1, 2024 and subsequent years.**
- 5.1.3 Confirmed employment as an RN or RPN (post-graduation from a BN or BPN program) with an eligible employer in Manitoba, in a permanent or term position that is at least one year in duration and 0.6 EFT or higher. This includes multiple permanent or term positions for a duration of one year or longer where the combined EFT is 0.6 EFT or higher. **This excludes ALL terms that are under one year in length, indefinite terms, and casual employment.**
- 5.1.4 Acceptance of and compliance with the conditions of a Return of Service Agreement

### 5.2 Eligible Employer:

- 5.2.1** Employers receiving public funds from the province of Manitoba. This includes but is not limited to Manitoba Health, the Service Delivery Organizations (SDOs), Cancer Care Manitoba and Shared Health. Private for-profit agencies are not eligible employers.

## CORE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

### 6.0 Standards:

#### 6.1 Nurses Responsibilities:

- 6.1.1.1 The nurse is responsible for reviewing the terms and conditions of the LPN to RN or PRN Bridging Grant and upon acceptance, compliance with the terms and conditions.
- 6.1.1.2 The nurse must have enrolled with an approved BN or BPN program.
- 6.1.1.3 The nurse must successfully complete the BN or BPN program and be eligible for registration as an RN or RPN in Manitoba.
- 6.1.1.4 The nurse must secure a position in accordance with 5.1.3 within six (6) months of completion of the program. The nurse must sign a return of service agreement with their employer to begin upon commencement of employment as an RN or RPN.
- 6.1.1.5 The nurse must submit requests for funding along with the required documentation to the NRRF Administrator within 6 months of successful completion of the program.

#### 6.1.2 Employer Responsibilities:

- 6.1.2.1 The employer will be responsible for reviewing the terms and conditions of the LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant and the nurse's compliance with said terms and conditions.
- 6.1.2.2 The employer will be responsible for confirming a permanent or term position at 0.6 EFT or higher for a minimum of one year within their organization. This includes multiple permanent or term positions for a duration of one year or longer where the combined EFT is 0.6 or higher. This excludes ALL terms that are under one year in length, indefinite terms and casual employment.
- 6.1.2.3 The employer will be responsible for retaining complete records for each Nurse who received a LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant from the NRRF.
- 6.1.2.4 The employer will be responsible for tracking and notifying the NRRF Administrator if the one-year service commitment, or any requirement of the ROSA, is not fulfilled by the completion of the Employer Verification of Incomplete Service Agreement Form (Appendix 8.2).

#### 6.1.3 PCOC Responsibilities:

- 6.1.3.1 The NRRF Administrator will review eligibility of all requests for the LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant and approve applications in accordance with this policy.
- 6.1.3.2 The NRRF Administrator will defer to the PCOC for final approval or denial if the application is outside of policy guidelines or based on special circumstances.
- 6.1.3.3 The NRRF Administrator will advise individuals of the status of their

application via letter.

**6.1.3.4** The NRRF Administrator will maintain an account of approvals.

**6.1.3.5** The PCOC will provide a public report quarterly.

## **6.2 Procedures:**

- 6.2.1** The PCOC reviews allocations annually for the purposes of supporting the LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant.
- 6.2.2** Nurses meeting the eligibility criteria are entitled to apply to the NRRF for a grant to bridge their education and licensure from LPN to RN or RPN.
- 6.2.3** The nurse must provide documentation of a confirmed permanent or temporary nursing position with an approved employer in Manitoba which is at least one year in duration and 0.6 EFT or higher.
- 6.2.4** Requests for funding and the required documentation must be submitted to the NRRF Administrator within 6 months of completion of the BN or BPN program.
- 6.2.5** The Nurses Recruitment and Retention Fund will support costs to a maximum of \$8000 per individual for BN or BPN Program costs or portion thereof.
- 6.2.6** Failure to complete twelve (12) consecutive months of employment, or any requirements of the signed ROSA with an eligible employer in Manitoba in accordance with 5.1.3, will necessitate repayment of funds.
- 6.2.7** Upon receipt of a written request, the PCOC will consider extending the time to complete the 1-year return of service commitment or grant temporary absences. The PCOC will examine each request based on individual circumstances.
- 6.2.8** LPNs registered in Manitoba who have completed a BN or BPN Program outside of Manitoba, and have secured a position as a RN or RPN with an eligible employer in Manitoba, are eligible to apply for the LPN to RN or RPN grant. . The applicant and their employer must sign a one-year service agreement in accordance with 5.1.3.
- 6.2.9** Nurses who change employers within their one-year term of service agreement but maintain their eligibility for reimbursement of LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant costs must submit a revised return of service commitment signed by the new employer. The nurse must fulfill the remainder of their contract with the new employer.
- 6.2.10** Funding for training may be provided upon successful completion of a BN or BPN program. Applicants must submit proof of graduation from the Bachelor Degree program from a recognized Canadian institution.
- 6.2.11** LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant funding can be received combined, and in conjunction with other financial assistance from NRRF. However, the return of service for any combination of grants will be consecutive.

## **7.0 GUIDELINES**

### **7.1 New Students:**

- 7.1.1 Educational institutions offering BN or BPN programs will determine eligibility.
- 7.1.2 The PCOC and employers will promote awareness of the LPN to RN or RPN Bridging Grant.

### **7.2 Completed Students:**

- 7.2.1 Nurses must provide evidence of successful completion of the BN or BPN program
- 7.2.2 Nurse must have secured employment and an RN or RPN in accordance with 5.1.3 within six (6) months of completion of the BN or BPN Program.
- 7.2.3 Nurses may forward the completed Application for Financial (Educational) Assistance Form (Appendix 8.1) and the appropriate documentation to the Administrator of NRRF for review and consideration within 6 months of program completion regarding reimbursement of program costs.
- 7.2.4 The maximum dollar amount of the refund will not exceed \$8000.

## **8.0 POLICY DOCUMENTS**

- 8.2 Application for Financial (Educational) Assistance Form
- 8.3 Employer Verification of Incomplete Service Agreement Form