

FNIHB-OR Nursing Policy and Procedure

Section:	Administration	Policy Number:	I - 06
Subject:	Regional Nursing Education Policy	Issued:	March 31, 2015
Distribution:	All Nursing Facilities	Revised:	

1. POLICY:

1.1 Full time and regular part-time nurses working with First Nations and Inuit Health Branch – Ontario Region (FNIHB-OR) may apply to the Regional Nursing Office for education funding to support the following:

- 1.1.1 Courses leading to master's degree in nursing or other related area
- 1.1.2 Courses leading to Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner certificate
- 1.1.3 Courses and/or programs leading to client specific care certification
- 1.1.4 Conferences and workshops.

Approvals for reasonable education funding and leave requests are subject to budgetary and operational constraints.

2. PRINCIPLES:

- 2.1 This policy is complementary to Article 18: *Career Development of the Agreement between the Treasury Board and the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.*
- 2.2 The College of Nurses of Ontario Professional Standards requires each nurse to maintain and improve competence by participating in the Quality Assurance (QA) program.
- 2.3 FNIHB-OR supports ongoing learning opportunities for its staff in order to offer safe, effective, and evidence – based health care services within its communities.

3. DEFINITIONS:

Nurse: Refers to Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Registered Practical Nurses.

4. PROCEDURE:

4.1 Learning Plan:

- 4.1.1 Each nurse shall develop and submit his/her Annual Learning Plan to his/her Manager for prior approval before requesting funding support. The Learning Plan must include:
 - i. What the nurse plans to do on his/her own to meet his/her learning needs;
 - ii. What supports the nurse requires from his/her immediate supervisor; and
 - iii. What support the nurse requires from the regional level to carry out the learning

plan.

- 4.1.2 Must be consistent with the nurse's Performance Management Agreement

4.2 *Letter of Intent to undertake an education program:*

- 4.2.1 The nurse shall submit a *Letter of Intent* to the ZNM / ZNO when seeking funding support from the region. The ZNM / ZNO will submit copies of the Learning Plan and the Letter of Intent to the Regional Nursing Educator.
- 4.2.2 The *Letter of Intent* shall be submitted to the ZNM / ZNO in advance of the intended educational program, as follows:
- i. At least 90 working days before the start of the conference / workshop; and
 - ii. At least 90 working days before the start of a university / college course.
- 4.2.3 At minimum, the *Letter of Intent* shall include the following points:
- i. Specific funding amount being requested;
 - ii. A detailed explanation why funding is being requested; and
 - iii. How the education program will support the nurse's professional development goals outlined in the Learning Plan.

4.3 *Requests for funding support to attend a conference:*

- 4.3.1 The nurse shall submit the completed *Conference Form* to the ZNM / ZNO, who then forwards it to Regional Executive Office for review. Approvals are subject to budgetary and operational constraints.

4.4 *Funding Decision*

- 4.4.1 The Nursing Leadership Committee will review funding applications and respond to the *Letter of Intent* within ten (10) working days.
- 4.4.2 Funding considerations are for program tuition or registration fees only.
- 4.4.3 The timing and release of funds, once approved, will be determined by the type of course being undertaken.
- i. University / College Courses: Full reimbursement of tuition fees and textbook expenses will be provided following successful completion of the course (proof of completion is required);
 - ii. Conferences / Workshops / Other Short-term Courses: Full reimbursement of registration fees will be provided in advance as requested.
- 4.4.4 The nurse will sign the employer's *Letter of Undertaking*. At minimum, this letter will include:
- i. Details about the terms of any Compliance and Consequence issues as outlined in section 4.5 of this Policy;
 - ii. Specific details about paid leave, as negotiated with the employer;
 - iii. Specific details about the terms for any pay-back periods associated with the funding request (as negotiated with the employer).

- 4.5 Requests for paid or unpaid educational leave, to support successful completion of the intended program of study, may be submitted to the ZNO/ZNM. Approval for education leave is subject to budgetary and operational constraints.

Long term education leave applications are subject to the process outlined in the *Health Services Collective Agreement* and the *Long Term Educational Leave without Pay Guidelines*.

4.6 Compliance and Consequences:

4.6.1 Learning plans and letters will be used for tracking and accountability purposes.

4.6.2 If the conditions outlined in the *Letter of Undertaking* are not fulfilled, full return of funds will be expected.

4.7 Additional External Funding Sources:

When applicable, nurses are encouraged to apply for educational funding from external sources. Potential sources include:

RNAO Reimbursement for courses/training:

<http://mao.ca/education-funding/nei>

CNA Reimbursement for RNs and RPNs as well as Employers:

http://www.ona.org/education/financial_aid_and_bursaries/nursing_education_initiative.html

Provincial Government Funding for NWO health care professionals:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/northernhealth/nursestuition.aspx>

5. RELATED POLICIES:

Agreement between the Treasury Board and the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.
Long Term Education Leave without Pay Guidelines.

6. REFERENCES:

College of Nurses of Ontario (2002). Standards of Practice, revised 2002.

Canadian Nurses Association (2008). Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses.

Agreement between the Treasury Board and the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.

Treasury Board of Canada (travel, conferences)

Approved by:	Effective Date: March 31, 2015
Director of Nursing, Ontario Region Date:	
Regional Executive, Ontario Region Date:	