

Nursing Graduate Guarantee Program: Frequently Asked Questions

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General:

- 1. What is the Nursing Graduate Guarantee (NGG) program?**

The NGG program provides new graduate nurses in Ontario, including those who studied out-of-province and abroad, with temporary full-time employment, above staffing complement, to support their successful transition into practice. The NGG program supports participating nurses in successfully transitioning into full-time employment or the equivalent of full-time hours.

- 2. Are graduates from out-of-province (e.g., outside Ontario) nursing programs eligible to participate in the NGG program?**

Canadian new graduate nurses and internationally educated nurses (IENs) who choose to live and work in Ontario and are within 12 months of registering with the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) are eligible to participate in the NGG program.

New graduates are responsible for ensuring they are legally eligible to work full-time or full-time equivalent hours in Ontario. NGG employers are also responsible to ensure that the new nurse they hire is legally eligible to work full-time or full-time equivalent hours in Ontario.

- 3. How long will the NGG program positions last?**

Eligible employers receive a total of 20 weeks of funding per new nurse participating in the NGG program. This includes 12 weeks for the new nurse's transition into practice period and 8 weeks for the reinvestment fund to support existing frontline nurses and their professional development.

4. How does participating in the NGG program help me transition into full-time employment?

The NGG program supports new nurses in transitioning to full-time employment, or the equivalent of full-time hours by helping them develop the skills required to deliver safe, high quality, patient-centred care in practice. Additionally, participating NGG employers are expected to transition new nurses into full-time employment or the equivalent of full-time hours for a minimum of 6 months (26 weeks) within 12 months of the new nurse's start date of the transition into practice period (12 weeks).

Employer:

5. How does my organization participate in the NGG program?

Employers must complete the following requirements to participate:

1. Analyze staffing and operational needs to project the need for full-time positions (or equivalent of full-time hours).
2. Obtain union support (if applicable) prior to participating in the program.
3. Register and post NGG program positions on the NGG online portal.
4. Interview new nurses (following the employer's regular interview process).
5. Use the NGG online portal to provide selected nurses with an offer of employment.
6. Submit a budget request to the Ministry of Health (ministry) through the NGG online portal, confirming:
 - a) The details of the offer;
 - b) That the union has been consulted (if applicable);
 - c) The organization's plan on how the reinvested funds will be utilized and;
 - d) The organization's capacity and plan to transition the new nurse into full-time employment or the equivalent of full-time hours for a minimum of 6 months (26 weeks).
7. Enter into a funding agreement with the ministry.
8. Provide the new nurse with a transition into practice period (12 weeks) in a full-time position that is above the regular staffing complement and in a clinical setting.
9. Offer the new nurse a full-time position (or the equivalent of full-time hours) within one year of the new nurse's start date in the NGG program. Employment must be for a minimum of 6 months (26 weeks) or funds will be subject to recovery by the ministry.

10. Use NGG program funds, including the reinvestment funds, by March 31st of the funding year for which they were allocated, or these funds will be subject to recovery by the Government of Ontario.
11. Submit final reports online, including financial, program and reinvestment reports and an Annual Reconciliation Report Certificate (ARRC).

6. Which health care employers are eligible to participate in the NGG program?

The NGG program is open to health care employers from all sectors, including acute care, long-term care, home care, community care, mental health, public health, and primary care, provided they register on the NGG online portal. To be eligible, an employer must:

1. Be a health care organization that employs nurses and is funded by the Government of Ontario for the provision of nursing services;
2. Have the infrastructure to support successful implementation of the NGG program (e.g., physical infrastructure, nursing education or professional development and management supports); and
3. Commit to transitioning new nurses into full-time employment or the equivalent of full-time hours within one year of the new nurses' start dates.

7. How will the new nurses be compensated?

New nurses will be paid sector-appropriate wages based on the rates negotiated between the employer and the bargaining unit (if applicable). Wages for Canadian new graduate nurses will be based on the starting salary at the employer's organization, whereas IENs can be paid according to their experience level, as applicable. Funding requests will include benefits (up to 24%).

8. How will the NGG program funding be released to my organization?

For all approved budget requests, 100% of the applicable funds will be provided to the eligible employer following ministry receipt of the executed funding agreement. Funds may be subject to recovery should provisions under the NGG Guidelines; Section 4,2 are not met.

9. Does my organization have to guarantee the NGG nurse a full-time position after the NGG program?

The employer is expected to offer the new nurse full-time employment or the equivalent of full-time hours for a minimum of 6 months (26 weeks) within one

year (12 months) of the new nurse's start date of the transition into practice period (12 weeks). As part of the budget request process, the ministry will ask employers to demonstrate at the outset that they have the capacity and a plan to transition the NGG nurse into full-time employment or provide the equivalent of full-time hours within one year of the new nurse's start date.

10. What happens if an employer cannot transition the NGG nurse into a full-time position or the equivalent of full-time hours at the end of the program?

Employers have one year from the new nurse's start date of the transition into practice period (12 weeks) to transition them into a full-time position or provide the equivalent of full-time hours for a minimum of 6 months (26 weeks). If the new nurse does not make the transition because of extenuating circumstances, the ministry will engage in discussions with the organization to determine whether more time is needed. In other situations where the new nurse does not make the transition, funds may be recovered from the organization.

11. What advantages does the NGG program offer to my organization?

Through the NGG program, eligible employers receive 20 weeks of funding to support a new nurse's transition into practice and to support existing frontline nurses and their professional development. The NGG program also promotes health workforce planning at the organizational level by encouraging employers to project the availability of, and create full-time positions, based on an analysis of staffing and operational needs.

12. We're located in a remote area that's hard to "sell" to new nurses. How will the NGG program help us?

The NGG program helps employers in rural and remote areas by providing access to a large pool of Canadian new graduate nurses and IENs through the NGG online portal. The portal provides potential employers with an ability to connect with a broader range of new nurses to promote their organization. The portal can be accessed through the following link:

<http://www.nursescareerstart.health.gov.on.ca>

13. How does the reinvestment fund work?

Reinvestment funds are provided to all participating employers to support existing frontline nurses and their professional development. Reinvestment funds may be used for mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, internships in a specialty area and initiatives to support existing frontline IENs working within the organization.

14. What are the different types of reinvestment initiatives?

Participating employers can use the reinvestment funds to support existing frontline nurses by spending the funds in the following categories:

- **Mentorship Programs:** Funding may be used for nurse-to-nurse mentorship education programs. Funding may also be used to build/strengthen the mentorship capacity of organizations through the training of mid-career nurses to become effective mentors to new graduates.
- **80/20 For Staff Nurses:** Funding may be used to back-fill staff nurses, allowing them to spend 20% of their time on professional development opportunities (e.g., nursing councils, patient teaching, research, education). The remaining 80% of their time would be spent in clinical practice.
- **Internships for Experienced Nurses in Specialty Areas:** Funding may be used to allow more experienced nurses to spend time in an internship in a specialty area, above staffing complement, to assist them in gaining the knowledge and skills required to fill existing and potential vacancies.
- **Initiatives to Support IENs:** Funding may be used to help existing frontline IENs working within the organization.
- **Innovative Solutions:** Funding may be used to support the creation and implementation of innovative solutions, including technology-based solutions, to improve care delivery to support improved patient experience, transition and care outcomes.

15. If my organization submits a funding request, is it guaranteed that it will receive funding?

The ministry will review budget requests monthly to determine if they meet the NGG program eligibility criteria. Priority is given to requests that meet current nursing workforce demands. Health care organizations will be informed through the NGG online portal if their budget requests are declined. Please see the 2024-25 NGG guidelines for more details.

16. I work for an organization that has several sites. If I hire a new nurse into a full-time position at a different site from the one where the new nurse participated in the transition into practice period, would I meet the requirement of providing a full-time position?

A nurse can transition into practice in a different site within the same organization if there is a formal relationship between the sites (e.g., legal relationship), and all other program criteria are met. If there is uncertainty, organizations should check with the ministry prior to beginning the NGG program.

17. Why can't employers submit budget requests between November 15 and March 31st of each fiscal year? Can nurses start in the program between January and March?

New nurses can start the NGG program between April 1st and December 31st of the applicable fiscal year. The NGG online portal will be closed between November 16, 2024, and March 31, 2025, to ensure that new nurses have the opportunity to complete the 12-week transition period before March 31. This will also enable employers to spend NGG program funds within the fiscal year in compliance with the Transfer Payment Agreement and Directive.

18. Does the one-year period to transition new nurses to full-time employment begin when they start their transition into practice period or when they have completed the 12 weeks?

The one-year period begins when the new nurse starts their transition into practice period (12 weeks).

19. Who can I contact if I have questions or problems related to the NGG portal?

If you have questions or need support, please contact: nggmohltc@ontario.ca.