



# REPORT

To: Health Care Scholarship Committee

Report Number: FN-HCSC-009

From: Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer

Date: July 7, 2022

**Subject: PRRD/NHA Memorandum of Understanding, Health Care Scholarships**

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## RECOMMENDATION:

That the Health Care Scholarship Committee recommend that the Regional Board (PRRD) renew the Memorandum of Understanding with the Northern Health Authority (NH), for a three year term, effective May 1, 2022, confirming a total annual contribution of \$55,000 from the PRRD to NH and delegating authority to NH to administer the following PRRD Health Care Scholarships:

1. RN/RPN (Registered Nurse/Registered Psychiatric Nurse) Return of Service Scholarship, Part 2
2. Licensed Practical Nurse Scholarship
3. Technical Career Professional Development Scholarship
4. RN/RPN (Registered Nurse/Registered Psychiatric Nurse Professional Development Scholarship;

further, that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the PRRD.

## BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the PRRD and Northern Health Authority (NHA) supports a coordinated approach for the management of the PRRD Health Care Scholarship Program. The MOU, first established in 2020, outlines the guiding principles, roles, and responsibilities for the administration of four Health Care Scholarships and the related financial contribution in the amount of \$55,000. The current MOU was up for renewal as of May 1, 2022; however, at its meeting held on April 13, 2022, the Health Care Scholarship Committee (HCSC) identified that improvements were necessary to create a more adaptable process to accommodate a higher level of flexibility for NHA. As a result, at its meeting on May 12, 2022, the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

*MOVED, SECONDED and CARRIED*

That the Regional Board authorize staff to create a scholarship policy that is flexible enough for Northern Health to award scholarships to enable competitive Health Care Professional recruitment.

The attached MOU has been amended from the previous version, to capture the changes requested by Northern Health, as outlined in the attached NH Briefing Note, dated June 21, 2022. New additions to the MOU are shown in yellow highlight, and deletions are shown in strikethrough text. The proposed new MOU language establishes a more fluid and easy to follow process for administration of the four scholarship categories administered by NH, as per the Board resolution to make the program flexible enough to enable competitive health care professional recruitment. Below is a summary of the proposed changes to the MOU.

### Section 5.0 – Financial or In-kind Support

An increase in the duration of the MOU term from a one year to three years, which establishes a timeframe that supports an effective and efficient management process for both parties by removing the need to renew the entire MOU each year, decreasing the staff time spent on this process for both parties. All annual reporting requirements will remain the same and both parties will continue to review the statistics and progress each year in January, as set by the HCSC Terms of Reference.

### Section 8.0 – Responsibilities under this MOU

Inclusion of wording to ensure continued annual budgeting by the PRRD, and the development of a reporting template by the PRRD supports a commitment to NHA and a collaborative approach in the administration of the MOU. Further wording to permit discretion for NHA to award scholarship funding to the same recipient has been included based on the feedback from NHA. (ie: an employee who received a scholarship to complete a nursing degree, who continues to work for Northern Health, and applies for financial support to undertake professional career development training to further specialize their nursing training and certification).

### Section 9.0 – General Terms

Additions and deletions to this section were necessary to increase the duration of the MOU term from one year to three years with an option to renew for up to two additional one year terms.

### Appendix A

Prior feedback from NHA indicated that the guidelines reflected in Appendix A were restrictive and limited NHA's ability to award the total number of scholarships. The changes summarized below are based on the information provided in the NHA Briefing Notes in an attempt to increase flexibility and create a document that is more adaptable to NHA needs.

1. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) – Removal of the residency requirement for eligibility prior to enrolment in the programs at Northern Lights College and inserting in its place a preference given to PRRD residents.
2. Technical Career Professional Development Scholarship - Removal of technical wording from scholarship name, scholarship description and criteria, residency requirement, length and cost of program. Inclusion for NHA to award scholarship to same recipient, increase to the number of scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 from five to nine.
3. RN/RPN Professional Development Scholarship – Removal of number of years employed with NHA, duration of program and cost requirements.

NHA has suggested that a change to the RN/RPN Return of Service scholarship to award it as a post-completion of degree scholarship, in the amount of \$5,000 would make it more equitable and competitive. Currently, the scholarship is comprised of two parts each in the amount of \$2,500. Part one is awarded by the PRRD to support the recipient in their final year of their degree and part two is awarded by NHA upon successful graduation and the signing of a two year return of service agreement. All recipients of this scholarship are selected by the HCSC and approved by the Regional Board. One way the HCSC could support this change is to remove the management of the RN/RPN Return of Service Scholarship part two from the MOU and have the PRRD administer the full post-completion scholarship. This would reduce the financial contribution for the MOU as outlined in the alternate option included in this report.

Should the HCSC wish to recommend the alternate option to the Regional Board, further changes to the MOU would be necessary to delete references to the RN/RPN Scholarship – Part 2 currently administered by NHA. The PRRD, to administer a post-degree completion scholarship, would need NHA to confirm return of service agreements had been signed by scholarship applicants, as part of the PRRD scholarship decision making process.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**

1. That the Health Care Scholarship Committee recommend that the Regional Board renew the Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Health Authority, for a three year term, effective May 1, 2022, confirming a total annual contribution of \$40,000 from the PRRD to NH and delegating authority to NH to administer the following PRRD Health Care Scholarships:
  1. Licensed Practical Nurse Scholarship
  2. Career Professional Development Scholarship
  3. RN/RPN (Registered Nurse/Registered Psychiatric Nurse) Professional Development Scholarships;

further that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding of behalf of the PRRD.

2. That the Health Care Scholarship Committee provide further direction.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:**

- Organizational Effectiveness
- Comprehensive Policy Review

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):**

\$481,882 has been budgeted as a commitment in Function 180 – Health Related Services Grant-in-Aid, of which \$55,000 has been allocated to support each of the four scholarships administered by NHA under the MOU in the amounts outlined in the table below:

RN/RPN Return of Service Scholarship	\$15,000
Licensed Practical Nurse Scholarship	\$10,000
Technical Career Development Scholarship	\$15,000
RN/RPN Professional Development Scholarship	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>

In accordance with Section 5.0 of the MOU, the annual financial contribution will be issued to NHA on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):**

Staff will work with NH to create a template to assist with the reporting requirements, specific to each of the scholarship streams, and ensure all other the expectations outlined in the MOU are met.

**OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):**

If the Committee recommends Alternative Option 1 (retention of both parts of RN/RPN Scholarship at the HCSC level, and reconfiguring the scholarship to a single part, post-degree completion, contingent upon a 2 year ROS), students currently in the middle of the part 1/part 2 system would need to be accommodated in the transition years.

Attachments:

1. Draft - PRRD/NHA Memorandum of Understanding, Health Care Scholarships
2. NHA Briefing Note, dated June 21, 2022

External Links:

1. [Health Related Servicer Grant-in-Aid Policy #0340-64](#)