TRANSITION TO PRACTICE PROGRAM

Department of Veterans Affairs
White River Junction Medical Center
White River Junction, Vermont

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2017 – 2018
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER
White River Junction, Vermont

Transition to Practice Program (TTP)

Dear Candidate:

Thank you for your interest in the Transition to Practice RN Program at the White River Junction VA Medical Center! Acceptance to the program is competitive. Please review the Application Guidelines information carefully. The deadline date to receive application materials is March 31, 2017. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

This handbook provides essential information about the TTP program including what is expected of TTP Program participants as well as the White River Junction VA Medical Center. Questions about the program may be directed to Brad Peduzzi, MSN, RN, Clinical Nurse Educator at bradley.peduzzi@va.gov.

Again, thank you for your interest in the Transition to Practice Program. We look forward to reviewing your completed application!

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Veterans Affairs (VA) Purpose
To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise, “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan,” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s veterans.

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Mission
Honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

VHA Vision
VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in healthcare and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence-based. This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement. It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation’s well-being through education, research and service in national emergencies.

VA Core Values – “I CARE”
• Integrity – Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
• Commitment – Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA’s mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
• Advocacy – Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
• Respect – Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
• Excellence – Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

White River Junction VA Medical Center
In support of VHA’s Vision, White River Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center’s (VAMC) vision is to be the premiere provider of award winning, nationally recognized healthcare, education and research that is committed to making a difference to Veterans and their families, staff and the community.
Transition to Practice RN Program at White River Junction VA

Research has demonstrated that the traditional practice of a 12-week nursing orientation does not promote the solid preparation or safe practice needed for the newly licensed registered nurse. When provided with a yearlong residency program, newly licensed registered nurses are better prepared for their role as health care professionals. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health,” which was released in 2010, identified the importance of implementing Nurse Residency Programs:

IOM Recommendation #3:
Implement Nurse Residency Programs – following the completion of a pre-licensure or advanced practice degree program, or transitioning into a new clinical practice area.

IOM Recommendation #4:
Increase the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80% by 2020.

In an effort to facilitate implementation of the IOM recommendations, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Office of Nursing Services (ONS) developed a RN Residency Program Facility Implementation Guide to assist facilities in the development, implementation and evaluation of Transition to Practice RN Nurse Residency programs using the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Standards for Accreditation of Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Programs.

The White River Junction and Providence, RI VA Medical Centers have collaborated in the development and implementation of the Transition to Practice (TTP) Program and Post Baccalaureate RN Residency (PBNR – Providence only) curriculum. Many classroom learning sessions are provided jointly; either in person or via video conferencing. This approach provides participants the opportunity to develop and foster relationships with a larger cohort of new graduate registered nurses as well as provide TTP RNs exposure to expert faculty from both facilities.

Goals for Transition to Practice RN participants:
- Provide knowledge, skills and guidance to the RN with less than one-year of experience during the transition from the academic setting to clinical practice providing a foundation for growth as a safe, competent practitioner.
- Transition from entry-level, advanced beginner nurse to competent professional nurse levels as defined by Benner’s, “Novice to Expert,” theory (1984).
- Develop effective decision making skills related to clinical judgment and performance.
- Demonstrate ability to provide clinical leadership at the point of patient care.
- Strengthen commitment to nursing as a professional career choice.
- Demonstrate ability to incorporate research-based evidence into practice.

The 12-month TTP program consists of three phases that provide a structured plan of clinical practice, guidance, mentoring and structured learning experiences. As part of the TTP program, participants rotate through various clinical settings resulting in broad clinical exposures, opportunities to build relationships throughout the medical center and, insight of workflow and workload across the facility.
Phase I: Months 0-3

**New Employee/Nursing Orientation, Clinical Rotation:** Phase I, the first 12 weeks, consists of intensive classroom sessions designed for new nurse graduates, hospital orientation and rotations through various units and departments to enhance clinical skills. Some TTP RNs may have had the opportunity to work for a period of time at his facility and may not be required to repeat hospital orientation during week one if they previously attended this two day seminar.

Phase II: Months 4-9

**Professional/Leadership Development Component:** Phase II will last from months 4 - 9 and focuses on clinical practice and professional and leadership development. During this phase, TTP RNs will complete an orientation to a variety of assigned units and attend one to two full-day classroom sessions per month. Medical/surgical rotations will begin in month seven and will remain the primary clinical focus for the remainder of the program. Some months may have additional time designated for project work or attendance at various hospital councils or meetings.

Phase III: Months 10-12

**Evidenced Based Practice (EBP) Project, Synthesis, Recognition and Evaluation:** Phase III of the program is months 10 – 12 and consists of synthesis, assessment and evaluation. During this phase, TTP RNs will complete a Quality or Evidence-Based Project in conjunction with faculty support. The assignment of faculty support will be based on individual interests, level of educational preparation and type of project chosen. At the conclusion of the yearlong residency, the TTP RNs will exhibit their projects in poster and presentation venues.

**Competency assessments utilized in the Transition to Practice Program include:**

- **Casey-Fink Graduate Nurse Experience Survey:** The Casey Fink Graduate Nurse Experience Survey is a standardized assessment instrument designed to assess a nurse’s experience on a predetermined set of factors. The Casey Fink is completed by the TTP RN at the beginning of the program and at 3-6-12 month intervals. The assessment tool may be completed on paper or online on the Office of Nursing Services website.

- **Resident Competency Assessment (RCA):** The Resident Competency Assessment (RCA) is a standardized competency model utilized during the course of the TTP program to measure progress and serve as a development roadmap for the TTP RN and preceptor(s). The RCA is completed at baseline (self-assessment by the TTP RN) and at 3-6-12 month intervals.

- **White River Junction RN TTP Orientation Competency:** The White River Junction RN TTP Orientation Competency document that outlines White River Junction specific criteria is completed by preceptors in each clinical setting.
General Information for Transition to Practice RNs

Historically, the Transition to Practice Program was referred to as the “Nurse Residency Program.” The terms “Nurse Resident / Nurse Residency” caused confusion about the position. The participants in the White River Junction Transition to Practice Program are now referred to as “**TTP RNs**.”

- **Clinical Rotations**
  - A schedule of clinical rotations will be provided to each TTP RN at the beginning of the program. Although the program is designed to provide experience in most clinical areas (inpatient and outpatient), there is significant focus on general medical surgical experiences. Changes to the rotation schedule will be considered on a case by case basis.
  - Prior to starting a rotation, the TTP RN will contact the Nurse Manager of the respective unit to discuss their preceptor assignment and schedule.
  - For each clinical rotation, TTP RNs will be assigned one preceptor and will follow that preceptor’s schedule, including weekends, off tours (i.e. days off) and holidays (see annual leave, sick leave and holiday section).
  - At the beginning of a rotation, the TTP RN will provide the Nurse Manager with a calendar of specific dates and times during which the TTP RN has program obligations (i.e. education sessions, project work times, meetings with the program coordinator, etc.). Additional times may be negotiated with the TTP coordinator and Nurse Manager (or designee).
  - The TTP RN will schedule a meeting with the preceptor and Nurse Manager at the completion of each rotation, or more frequently if concerns arise. At that meeting, the preceptor will review and discuss the preceptor’s evaluation of the TTP RN with the TTP RN and Nurse Manager. In addition, the TTP RN will also review and discuss their evaluation of the preceptor with the preceptor and Nurse Manager. If desired, the TTP coordinator may be invited to the meeting. Copies of the evaluations will be forwarded to the TTP coordinator for inclusion of the TTP RN competency folder.
  - Clinical documentation – no co-signature is needed for progress notes entered by TTP RNs. In some settings, TTP RNs may choose to review progress note content with preceptors prior to entry and signature.

- **Mentor Selection**
  - At the beginning of Phase II of the TTP program (early December), TTP RNs will have the opportunity to meet with and select a certified mentor. TTP RNs will schedule meetings with their mentor on a regular basis (at a minimum monthly).
  - The mentor will provide guidance to the TTP RN as they move forward with the selection and implementation of the EBP project.

- **Time Schedules**
  - Time cards will be maintained by the Education Department.
  - The TTP RN schedule will be included on the unit time schedule and certified time.
  - The unit Nurse Manager will forward copies of their posted schedule to the Education Department and the TTP coordinator prior to the beginning of each pay period.
  - Requests for schedule changes will be discussed with the Nurse Manager (or designee) and/or the TTP coordinator.
Approved changes (tour changes, unplanned leave, etc.) will be sent to the Education Department timekeeper with approval from the Nurse Manager (or designee).

In general, TTP RNs will not work overtime while in the TTP program; however, in the event that completion of their work for the shift necessitates the TTP RN work beyond their scheduled tour, the Nurse Manager may grant overtime for that limited period of time. It is expected that these situations will occur rarely, if at all.

- **Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Holidays and Premium Pay**
  - TTP RNs will be assigned one preceptor for each clinical rotation and will follow that preceptor’s schedule, including weekends, off tours and holidays. For the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s holidays, there may be an exception made for following the preceptor’s schedule providing the TTP RN works at least one of the aforementioned holidays (unless the TTP RNs rotation for the time period of all three holidays falls in areas that are not 24/7).
  - Requests for unscheduled leave will be made to the unit Nurse Manager (or designee) or off tour supervisor. The leave request will be recorded on the unit’s certified time log. Upon return to duty, the TTP RN will email the Education Department timekeeper and enter the leave into the VA Timekeeping System (VATAS).
  - Annual leave may be taken by TTP RNs. Requests will be submitted to the TTP coordinator and approval will be based upon the potential impact that the leave may have upon the TTP RN completing the requirements of the program. TTP RNs will be encouraged to refrain from taking leave during clinical rotations that are short (i.e. one month or less). Annual leave should not be planned when class sessions are scheduled.
  - TTP RNs are eligible to receive shift differential and weekend premium pay.

- **Application process for permanent RN positions**
  - TTP RNs are hired as term employees for one year and one day, allowing them to be eligible for benefits and to accrue leave.
  - Midway through the year, TTP RNs are invited to apply for a permanent appointment. The application process will include an interview.
  - TTP RNs selected for permanent employment will begin their final rotation on the unit where the TTP RN has been selected for a position.

- **Classroom learning session guidelines for TTP program participants**
  - Program announcements are most easily conveyed by email. Check your Outlook email daily for any messages.
  - Be engaged in your learning. Participation in classroom discussions helps you learn to communicate in a professional manner with those who may or may not share the same viewpoint. In the classroom, all views may be expressed openly.
  - All assignments must be completed by the due date given.
  - Cell phones should be silenced. Refrain from texting, emailing and browsing the web during classroom sessions.
  - Listen and respond to your colleagues in the class with respect. We need diverse viewpoints to build an effective, high-performance team.
  - Sign the attendance roster for each class and complete session evaluations.
  - If you miss a class an alternative assignment will be created to help you achieve learning objectives.
Program Evaluation

Program evaluation information is collected for the purpose of:

- Assessing developmental progress
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the learning experiences provided
- Providing evidence that the program is meeting its intended purpose and goals.

Feedback from all TTP RN participants provides a rich source of information for determining the effectiveness of the TTP program in achieving outcomes and meeting goals. In addition to completing the formal tools contained in the White River Junction Transition to Practice Evaluation Plan, TTP RNs are encouraged to share their impressions of the program at any time through conversations with nursing leadership, mentors, preceptors and the program coordinator.
Department of Veterans Affairs
White River Junction Medical Center

Nursing Mission, Core Values and Philosophy

Mission Statement
The mission of nursing at the White River Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center is to provide high quality care that is timely, comprehensive and delivered in a compassionate and ethical manner, focusing on the unique needs of patients and their support systems.

Core Values

We care about the:

Patient  The needs of our patients and their families/supporters guide our nursing care.

Team  We are committed to fostering an environment that promotes respect, positive communication and collaboration among all members of the patient/family/healthcare team.

Hospital  Our practice reflects VHAs core values of trust, respect, excellence, compassion and commitment.

Community  We are dedicated to serving Veterans who come to us for care, honoring their unique and diverse needs.

Profession  We are committed to excellence in nursing by creating a culture of lifelong learning that integrates evidence-based practice, research and professional development.

Philosophy

- The philosophy of Nursing at the White River Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center reflects the vision and values of our organization. We support an environment that promotes professional nursing practice and which emphasizes several key principles:
- Nursing care for each patient and family is individualized, compassionate and culturally appropriate.
- Nurses collaborate with patients, families and other health team members to plan and provide nursing care that will achieve an optimal level of health and wellness, or when this is not possible, support the experience of loss and death.
- Holistic, coordinated and effective patient care is based on scientific and ethical principles, research findings, cultural understanding and experience-based intuition.
- Excellence in nursing practice is achieved through a shared governance approach that promotes the involvement of the professional nurse in interdisciplinary collaboration and provides venues for the nurse to advocate for the patient in clinical and organizational decision making.
- We believe in creating a work climate for nurses that nurtures and supports clinical expertise, education, shared governance and research, fostering the recruitment and retention of nursing staff who demonstrate the highest integrity, competence and qualifications.
Memorandum of Understanding
RN Transition to Practice Participants 2017-2018
(to be completed following notification of acceptance to the TTP Program)

The White River Junction RN Transition to Practice Program Requirements:

Commit to yearlong RN Transition to Practice program to receive a certificate of completion.

Attend all classroom, simulation, observational experiences and unit rotations. Sign-in to every session attended and complete session evaluations for all speakers and presenters.

Take responsibility to make up content for any classroom, simulation, observational experiences misses.

Rotate to a variety of units, both inpatient and outpatient, and work with assigned preceptor including following their schedule, off tour, weekend and holidays, not to exceed 40-hours per week. Take accountability and responsibility to work with staff, managers, preceptors and residency director and co-director to ensure attendance at all required curriculum sessions.

Take responsibility to notify unit assigned if you will be out unexpectedly. Email program Coordinator and Education Department timekeeper regarding your absence for tracking purposes.

Work independently on Quality and/or Evidence Based Practice project to ensure completion of assignments based on timelines in curriculum guide and per faculty coach.

Conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times with focus directed toward providing safe, high quality care with a veteran centric approach.

Collaborate as a team player with veterans, family members, staff, managers, leaders, residents, contractors, volunteers and students.

Maintain confidentiality of staff, veterans and peers at all times.

Be open to feedback, both positive and negative, understanding all feedback as an opportunity to develop professionally. Give open, honest, direct and respectful feedback to staff, leaders and program Coordinator.

You must check and read your email regularly. There will be updates to schedules, room changes and unanticipated real time changes of which you will need to be aware.

______________________________________________
RN Transition to Practice signature

______________________________________________
RN Transition to Practice printed name
Date