

## OCHRE TO AQUA

### 2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR GRADUATE NURSE PROGRAM - REMOTE

The Department of Health and Families in the Northern Territory is introducing an advanced graduate program for those nurses who want to try something outside the hospital setting. The Department recognises the contributions that a graduate nurse brings to the health team. It is committed to providing a skilled workforce that is supported within the individual's nursing practice while promoting an opportunity to make a difference to the remote Indigenous population of the Northern Territory.

The Ochre to Aqua (O2A) graduate nurse program assists the new beginner within the nursing profession to commence a supported transition process into the remote nursing workforce.

The program facilitates a safe working environment in a remote Indigenous community. O2A allows for introduction to the unique clinical skills and requirements of primary health promote the professional and personal development of the graduate nurse. The health service model and the participant's goals and needs are coordinated to ensure that the placement is beneficial to all parties. The nurse graduate is integrated into a transdisciplinary team that delivers health care using a primary health model. This team is comprised of Remote Area Nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers, Community Based Workers, Rural Medical Practitioners and other supporting staff.

#### **Aim:**

The aim of the remote graduate nurse program, O2A, is to support newly placed graduate nurses in Indigenous remote communities to develop the skills, knowledge and values that are required to become an effective member of the remote primary health care team. The program provides a career pathway for Registered Nurses to enter the remote workforce.

#### **Objective:**

O2A offers a structured support process to the graduate nurse in a range of remote settings enabling the participant to:

- Experience a range of clinical demands of primary health care, including trauma and emergency care, day to day acute care, health promotion and preventative interventions
- Develop advanced practice and collaborate with ranges of specialist nursing and medical services: chronic disease, maternal, child and family health, mental health, alcohol and other drugs, sexual health
- Become a competent, confident professional while ensuring cultural safety
- Experience Aboriginal culture, and also tourism, mining and pastoralist industries
- Commence postgraduate studies in remote health practice

After completion of this program, it is anticipated the nurse will be attracted to remote nursing as a future career path, and as an employee with the Department of Health and Families.

#### **Entry Requirements:**

Selection process is based on merit, subject to the following requirements:

- a) Applicants must be newly graduated (N, Y2 or N2 Y2).
- b) Applicants must have an interest in nursing in remote communities.
- c) Applicants must have successfully completed a 1 year graduate nurse program.
- d) Applicants must be eligible for registration within the Northern Territory.

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- e) Applicants must have received satisfactory clinical and professional reports from the graduate nurse program. References will be sought from 1<sup>st</sup> year graduate program coordinators.
- f) Applicants must be able to travel in small aircraft and/or 4 wheel drive.
- g) Undertake the pre-employment test, and,
- h) Undertake a criminal history check or provide evidence of possessing a clearance.

### Duration of the Program:

The program consists of up to two main placements over a 12 month period. These placements will be in remote communities in the Top End and/or Central Australia regions. A shorter rotation may involve being placed with a visiting program nurse e.g. Chronic Disease Nurse, Women's Health Nurse, Child Health Nurse. This may require the graduate to be based in a bigger centre and undertake regular visits to remote communities.

It is a requirement of the graduate nurse that they reside in these remote communities for the duration of the placement. The exemption may be if they are placed with a program area in either Alice Springs or Darwin that works on an outreach format. It may be a requirement that some shorter stays in other remote communities may be required.

All remote entitlements for other staff apply to these participants including single person accommodation. There is no expectation that the Graduate will be required to participate in the on call after hour's roster. However, the Graduate may accompany the rostered nurse on call outs, towards the end of the program, if mutually agreed.

### Employment Modalities:

The position is for 8 days per fortnight and includes study placements described below. Time beyond contracted hours may be used to engage in cultural activities within the community. The salary for this position will be Nurse 2, increment 2 on a temporary contract of 12 months duration.

### Program Timeline (approximate scheduling):

#### *Prior to placement in the community:*

- Undertake the remote health orientation program (2 weeks)
- Undertake 4 wheel drive course (2 day)
- Undertake Advanced ACAP (2 day)

#### *On Community placement:*

- 1 week cultural orientation with identified community mentor
- Clinical objectives setting

#### *By 4 months:*

- About Giving Vaccines (AGV) course <sup>1</sup>(self directed learning)

#### *At 6 months:*

- 2 weeks annual leave
- Mid program performance review
- Relocation to second placement
- Plan placement with visiting program area (e.g. chronic disease)

<sup>1</sup> The "About Giving Vaccines" and Remote Emergency Courses are accredited courses. Completion of the AGV provide authorisation to administer immunisations according the NHMRC Guidelines and Northern Territory Immunisation Guidelines.

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**6-12 months:**

- Remote Emergency course (2 day course)<sup>2</sup>
- Program area placement
- Completion of Primary Health Care project:

“Select a primary health care program. Using this program, apply the primary health principles. Participate in this program under the supervision of the program leader. Identify the components of the program including methodology used to ensure that the program is sustainable.” (3000 words)

**At 12 months:**

- Final performance review

The study program offered can be used as RPL for enrolment in some post graduate courses if desired. Graduates enrolling in relevant Remote focused post graduate studies will be supported.

**Program Supervision:**

The regional Nursing Director is the Graduate's line manager with on site direction and authority delegated to the Health Centre Manager.

During the placement in the Ochre to Aqua program, the Graduate is teamed with a Preceptor and a cultural mentor. These people will help the Graduate integrate into the remote environment in a community based primary health care setting. Work is undertaken in the health centre along side the Preceptor for at least the first three weeks. After this time, allocation into other areas of the health centre may occur under the supervision of other members of the primary health team.

**Performance Appraisal:**

Performance appraisal within Remote is similar to the process that is undertaken in graduate programs. At the commencement of placement in the remote community health centre, the Graduate will meet with the Health Centre Manager for the purpose of establishing clinical objectives to be undertaken during the placement.

The paperwork process required for performance appraisal is the same as during the graduate year program.

**Evaluation of the Program:**

Providing feedback to the Remote Health Branch, Preceptor and Mentor is a valuable contribution that the graduate nurse participant can make. This evaluation provided enables the Remote Health Branch to gauge the effectiveness of both the graduate program and benefit to the Graduate. Feedback also provides an avenue for improvement in other areas of Remote Health.

<sup>2</sup> Completion of the REC provides a nationally recognised qualification that requires second yearly renewal.

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