

Central Health

Questions & Answers

Issue: Recruitment of LPNs from Jamaica

Date: January 16, 2015

Why does Central Health have a shortage of LPNs?

LPN recruitment is a significant challenge for Central Health. This is because the demand for LPNs has increased at the same time the supply has decreased. With the change in licensure of LPNs in 2012, a number of LPNs chose not to re-license and that did result in approximately 50 vacant positions in the organization. In addition, the rate of attrition in the Practical Nursing program has increased significantly. Each September 35 seats at the Grand Falls-Windsor campus of College of North Atlantic are filled but results show that approximately only 18 to 19 students have graduated from this program in each of the past two years. Furthermore, the demand for LPNs has increased due to both skill mix changes as a result of their new scope of practice and the introduction of new services such as the Provincial Youth Addictions Treatment Centre.

Did you hire LPNs who were trained in NL?

Yes. The majority of the LPNs hired were trained in Newfoundland and Labrador. Central Health has hired all the new graduates trained in the province that applied and met the qualifications and standards required for the positions. Central Health also contacted all of the schools in Canada where the Practical Nursing program is offered to inform their students that we were actively recruiting LPNs. Despite these efforts a number of vacancies still remained.

Were there cases where Central Health did not hire LPNs trained in this province?

Yes. Often our greatest staffing needs are in the rural areas of the region. These areas are not always of interest to the local candidates applying. There are also circumstances where an applicant trained in the province does not meet Central Health's qualifications and standards.

In our current circumstance, all of the LPNs from Jamaica have accepted positions in the rural areas of the region. These candidates met all of the employment qualifications and standards for the posted positions.

Why did Central Health go to Jamaica to recruit LPNs?

Central Health recruited LPNs from Jamaica because these students have studied the Canadian curriculum for LPNs offered by the Centre for Nursing Studies in this province and delivered onsite in Jamaica. As well, they have already written and passed the Canadian National Exam for licensure.

How long have you been working on this recruitment initiative?

There has been a lot of work done by a number of provincial partners to try to address this issue over the past three years. Central Health is involved in a provincial committee that is looking at the supply of LPNs in this province. Through the work of that group, class sizes for LPNs have increased and there is now a \$5,000 bursary with a return in service agreement available for students. Additionally, The College of the North Atlantic is making its enrollment process for the LPN program a more competitive process in hopes that this will address some of the attrition issues we have seen in previous classes.

When do you expect the LPNs from Jamaica to arrive?

Offers of employment have been made to LPNs from Jamaica and they have accepted. Currently they are working through the immigration process. The immigration process can take anywhere from six months to a year, however, Central Health is hoping to have these LPNs working in the region by the Spring of 2015.

Where specifically will they be working when they arrive in central NL?

All of the LPNs from Jamaica will be working in the rural areas of the region specifically Springdale, Baie Verte and Brookfield.

What rate of pay will the LPNs from Jamaica receive when employed with CH?

These LPNs from Jamaica will be paid based on the NAPE HS collective agreement at an entry level of HS26. This is the same rate paid to any entry level LPN under this agreement.