

Will new nursing graduates in the New Grad Transition Program or new nursing graduates hired into permanent or regular positions be entitled to benefits?

Yes. As a new nursing graduate hired into the New Grad Transition Program or into a permanent or regular position, you will be entitled to all the benefits afforded under the Nurses' Collective Agreement. These include coverage under the Medical Services Plan, Extended Health and Dental plans. In addition, you will have Group Life/ADD insurance. When you are successful for a permanent position, you will qualify for Long Term Disability Insurance.

When would my benefit coverage begin?

Medical Services Plan coverage starts on the first of the month following your date of hire. Dental and Extended Health coverage begins on the first of the month following 30 days of employment. Group Life/ADD coverage is effective on the first day following working 3-months.

How much will this benefit coverage cost?

While you are a regular employee, all benefits are fully paid for by VIHA.

The value of the MSP and Group Life coverage is considered a taxable benefit and you will have that amount included in your income and taxed appropriately.

Who can be covered under these plans?

You are able to have benefit coverage for your spouse and any eligible dependent children. However, while your spouse and dependents can be on two dental plans, you cannot. Therefore, you must ensure you do not have coverage through your spouse's dental plan.

Does VIHA have a pension plan?

Yes. We are an employer under the Municipal Pension Plan. You will be eligible to enrol after three months.

How can I find more information about these plans?

As part of your sign-up documents you will be given a package that includes application forms and booklets giving you details about the plan coverage.

Enrolment in the Extended Health plan is a condition of employment. Enrolment in MSP and the Dental plan is also required unless you have coverage under a spouse's plan. You will need to complete all application forms and return them to your nearest HR Data & Benefits office.

I understand I start to accrue vacation hours as soon as I start working. At what rate are they accrued? How soon can I take those hours?

Vacation hours are accrued at 8%. Any hours that are accrued from your start date to June 30, 2009 are available to be scheduled in 2009. Hours accrued after June 30, 2009 form part of the 2010 vacation that can be taken after January 1, 2010.

When do I start receiving Qualification Differential?

Qualification Differential (QD) is payable when a copy of your nurse's degree is received. When you give a copy to your manager, she/he will submit a Change Notice along with a copy of your degree to HR Data & Benefits to start the QD.

Since I was previously an Employed Student Nurse, does that entitle me to be placed at Pay Step 2?

The Employed Student Nurse Program agreed upon with the Nurses Bargaining Association identifies special wage rates at less than a Level 1 direct care nurse to recognize that Employed Student Nurses are not functioning as a nurse. Therefore, step 2, as a DC1 is not appropriate.

Can Employed Student Nurses use their seniority to bid into, or otherwise access, positions in the bargaining unit?

- While in an Employed Student Nurse role, Employed Student Nurses cannot bid on, and are not considered internal applicants for Registered Nurse bargaining unit positions.
- Seniority accrued as an Employed Student Nurse is not considered when applying on a regular position after graduation.
- New graduates that have been Employed Student Nurses will be able to retain the seniority that they accrued as an Employed Student Nurse under the following 2 conditions;
 1. The new graduate must be hired into a regular (permanent) position within 12 months of graduation
 2. The regular (permanent) position is within a consolidated bargaining unit or between consolidated bargaining units. That is, a nurse who accrues seniority in the central/north island bargaining unit and is also successful in securing a regular (permanent) position in south island, within 12 months of graduation, can have their Employed Student Nurse seniority recognized (NOTE: This does not include St. Joseph's General Hospital).
- If new graduates elect to be hired as casual, their Employed Student Nurse seniority will not be accessible unless they secure a regular (permanent) full time position within 12 months of graduation.

For further information, please contact VIHA's HR Data & Benefits:

**Victoria Office
250.370-8099 #4**

**Nanaimo Office
250.755-7615**

Or St. Joseph's General Hospital's Human Resources: Don Tait, Director – 250.339-1447