

The Recognition Pathway - Wakefield Hospital's Professional Development and Recognition Programme

Our Recognition Pathway reflects the refinement and development of an initiative begun in 1996 between nursing staff and management at Wakefield Hospital. Its goal is to provide the opportunities, incentives, motivation and feedback nurses seek when they are advancing in their practice and professional development. It is a recognition and reward system that includes financial reward.

Overall, we expect that the Recognition Pathway contributes positively towards an environment that attracts and retains nurses of a high calibre, through outcomes that include:

1. Enhancement of nursing commitment to best practice, reflected in the standard of care patients receive and their satisfaction with that care.
2. Nurses' uptake of opportunities to meet learning and development needs.
3. Nurses' satisfaction with their own choice of position on the Pathway.
4. A professional nursing culture characterised by staff supportiveness and cohesiveness.
5. A system that records nurses' fulfillment of continuing competence requirements through the Pathway's appraisal and panel application processes.

What the Recognition Pathway means for you

The seven step Recognition Pathway includes everyone employed in a Registered Nurse position at Wakefield Hospital - from new graduates to highly experienced and qualified nurses. Participating in our Pathway - which is a professional development and recognition programme (PDRP) approved by Nursing Council - means that you fulfill the continuing competence requirements and are thus exempted from audit by Council.

Step 4 reflects the standard for RN practice set by Wakefield nurses themselves, and performing at this level is the career choice of many. This standard, which we call 'Wakefield Standard', is outlined in the job description and detailed in the appraisal form used in an annual assessment with your manager. In this assessment you receive formal feedback on your performance and achievements in the preceding year, and plan your development for the coming year. We see it as a time for both you and the organisation to focus on your work and professional life.

There is a place on the Pathway to suit everyone's current career involvement. Advancing on the Pathway is a matter of choice as to how much you involve yourself in your professional role, and nurses often make this decision in relation to their personal commitments. You may move in both directions along the Pathway - that is, increase and decrease your involvement - according to the criteria and policies.