

# **New Graduate Nursing Programme**

## **Employer Information 2026**



This booklet covers relevant information in relation to employing a graduate registered nurse (RN) as part of the Te Whatu Ora/Health NZ (TWO/HNZ) Supported First Year of Practice (SFYP) programme.

Pinnacle MHN will provide support to employers, for a planned and supported first year of practice, coupled with preceptorship to enable a graduate RN to transition into practice.

### **Supported first Year of Practice (SFYP) Programme for Graduate Registered Nurses (RNs)**

General practice employers, who meet the eligibility criteria, may apply for TWO/HNZ Funding to support the recruitment of graduate RN/RNs.

Details of criteria and application can be found here:

<https://www.tewhatuora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/nursing/primary-and-community-funding-for-graduate-rn-employment#supported-first-year-of-practice-sfyp>

Employers who receive this funding, are required to have a SFYP programme in place, and provide evidence for this and the other Eligibility Criteria for Employers (Appendix A), via reporting to TWO/HNZ at 6 & 12 months, to show how they are supporting the graduate RN.

### **SFYP programme**

Graduate RNs may attend their regional SFYP programme. This was previously known as the Nurse Entry to Practice (NETP) programme. Typically, this includes several study days held at their regional hospital and completion of programme requirements which are individual to and outlined by each regional TWO/HNZ programme. Some regions require full attendance of their programme while others are flexible with what primary care graduate RNs might attend.

It is expected that the employer will fund selected professional development and course fees during the SFYP from the TWO/HNZ funding. This could include:

Attendance at a NZQA accredited cervical screening course

And either: the 2-day IMAC (Immunisation Advisory Centre) vaccinator's training course

OR the IMAC flexible learning online theory of 12 hours plus attendance at a four-hour tutorial (all close to the graduate's home base where possible)

Relevant diabetes training

CPR training

## **Pinnacle MHN Graduate RN support**

Employers and graduate nurses are encouraged to liaise with the Pinnacle Nurse Leads, via [nursing@pinnacle.health.nz](mailto:nursing@pinnacle.health.nz) to help determine their individual practice SFYP plan. The Pinnacle Nurse Leads liaise directly with each regional TWO SFYP programme lead, for details of their programme.

For 2026, Pinnacle will continue to provide ongoing support for graduate RNs via primary care specific professional development days and monthly virtual peer groups for graduate RNs as part of the SFYP.

An Orientation Day will be held, Tuesday 10 February 2026, with topics including the role of the PHO, an address by the Pinnacle Nursing Director, Jan Adams, and presentations on primary care specific programmes and services. Graduate RNs will be invited to attend this face-to-face day at each of their regional Pinnacle offices.

Two further days are offered in July, following on with more information delivered by programme leads on regional specific services and key professional nursing topics such as clinical leadership, quality improvement, workforce development, professional standards and emerging health priorities.

Monthly peer groups, held via Teams, are a valuable way for the graduate nurses to connect with their peers, share and reflect on their practice, discuss any challenges and receive support and guidance from the Pinnacle Nurse Leads if needed.

We would encourage you to support release time for the graduate RNs to attend these planned opportunities which provides professional development for transition towards competent RN by the end of their first year.

## **Pinnacle MHN Preceptor Support**

Each graduate nurse must be supported by a trained nurse preceptor within the practice. As part of our commitment to enhancing the preceptorship environment for new graduate nurses, we are offering a support package for preceptors. This includes:

- Bimonthly (every two months) virtual peer-group sessions for preceptors to share experiences, challenges and best practices.
- A preceptorship update course delivered online, in partnership between Pinnacle and Wintec (Waikato Institute of Technology) to refresh and upgrade preceptor competencies. This course is open to all existing or previously trained preceptors employed in a Pinnacle general practice. Funding is available to cover course costs and support attendance (via backfill) for those preceptors supporting a graduate nurse on a SFYP programme.
- On-site visits to the practice by regional nurse leads, to provide tailored support, facilitate reflection, and promote high-quality preceptorship.

## **Employer Support & Funding**

We recognise that enabling preceptors to attend these sessions and courses may require back-fill of clinical time. Therefore:

- Pinnacle will provide funding support to cover both the course fees and the back-fill cost for the preceptor's time away from the practice.
- Practices are encouraged to facilitate the release of the preceptor for the training and peer-group sessions, which supports strengthening the skills and confidence of preceptors, thereby enhancing the onboarding, support and transition of graduate RNs.

There is evidenced long-term value of investing in preceptor development for reduced attrition of graduate RNs, staff retention, quality of care and workforce sustainability.

*The refresher course will also be available for any other interested RNs, at the standard course cost. Those RNs who have not previously completed preceptor training will be encouraged to complete other relevant preceptor training.*

### What to Do Next

1. Identify the nurse(s) in your practice who are currently serving or will imminently serve as preceptors for graduate RNs.
2. Confirm their availability for the first peer-group session 17 February 2026 and enrolment in the refresher training course (dates to be confirmed)
3. Submit the back-fill funding request to Pinnacle for preceptorship update attendance, according to the process outlined in the Letter of Agreement with Pinnacle Inc -to be provided.
4. Encourage your preceptor(s) to attend both the peer-group sessions, preceptor refresher course and support PHO nurse lead on-site visits as part of their professional development plan.
5. Please contact [nursing@pinnacle.health.nz](mailto:nursing@pinnacle.health.nz) by **January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026**, to register your practice's participation, or if you have any questions.

We appreciate your commitment to developing a robust preceptorship framework within your practice. By enabling and supporting your preceptors through this initiative, you are investing in staff expertise, quality patient care, and the future of the general practice nursing workforce. Thank you for your leadership and cooperation.

### Appendices

Appendix A: *Eligibility criteria for employers*

<https://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/health-workforce-development/nursing/primary-and-community-funding-for-graduate-rn-employment#supported-first-year-of-practice-sfyp>

To be eligible for this funding, a primary care or community provider must meet all of these criteria:

- A signed employment contract with a graduate RN who has less than three months' (90 days) experience working as an RN.
  - Able to provide preceptorship and clinical support for the graduate RN over 12 months:
    - Preceptorship courses can be delivered in a variety of ways including through the district, education providers or by employers themselves.
    - Online preceptorship training is freely available through Health NZ Ko Awatea LEARN
- Links [Introduction to Preceptorship - Ko Awatea Learn\(external link\)](#)
- A supported first year of practice delivered by employer or PHO/local primary/community providers or
  - Access to the district SFYP (previously NETP) programme or a similar programme.
- Ability and commitment to support the graduate RN to develop their practice in a supported and effective manner:
  - Specify the processes and responsible personnel in any case where graduate RN requires additional support for example performance improvement plan.
- Graduate RN should be working a minimum of 0.6 FTE.
- Able to provide evidence of systems to support all the above.