



College of Emergency
Nurses New Zealand
Ngā Ringa Ringa Aroha NZNO



College of Emergency Nursing New Zealand (CENNZ^{NZNO}) Position Statement for New Graduate Nurses in the Emergency Department

Purpose

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand (CENNZ) advocates for transition to practice programmes and pastoral support for new graduate nurses in Emergency Departments (ED) across Aotearoa New Zealand. Employment of new graduate nurses in EDs requires educational support, clinical supervision and mentorship to enable evidence-based decision making and high-quality nursing care in the first year of clinical practice.

Background

New graduate nurses in the ED specialty need to be strongly supported by both their colleagues and the system that they work within in order to retain an emergency nursing workforce that has been educated in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Emergency department has a constantly changing healthcare environment, complexity of patient care dealing with a variety of undifferentiated presentations and emergence of newer technologies for newly graduated nurses (Wallace et al., 2023). Transition to practice programmes must provide learning opportunities and bridge the gap between pre-registration programmes and the reality of patient care.

Nursing Entry to Practice (NEtP) is a career programme developed by the Ministry of Health, Health New Zealand (formerly District Health Board) and Ministry of Health funded providers. NEtP was designed to support newly graduated nurses in their pathway to safe, confident and skilled nursing practice (Te Whatu Ora, 2023)

Historically, CENNZ considered the unpredictable and constantly changing workload in the ED environment not conducive to support new graduate nurses. Following reports of successful graduate education and training programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand, CENNZ has since changed its position on this, and recommends a structured first year practice programme, including orientation, education and supervision.

The ideal period for a formal and flexible orientation programme for newly graduated nurses is a minimum of 3-6 months. It is important to note that new graduate nurses should not be counted as part of the staffing numbers until their orientation has been completed (ENA, 2024).

The role of the ED nurse is complicated by both its breadth and depth. The nursing role includes clinical assessment, diagnostic reasoning, the administration of therapies, monitoring, the monitoring of therapeutic interventions, resuscitation and triage (Curtis et al., 2024). Triage in itself is an advanced assessment skill that requires a prerequisite of two-years emergency nursing experience (CENNZ, 2024; Sweet & Foley, 2020); thus should not be undertaken by a nurse in their first year of practice.

The Tuakana-Teina relationship is pivotal in Māori culture. In this context, Tuakana-Teina is the concept whereby a new professional (Teina) gains a mentoring opportunity by an experienced expert (Tuakana) in their field to enhance their skill-set, and build both competence and confidence (Ministry

of Education, 2024). New graduate nurses must be supported by senior, experienced emergency nurses and nursing management to facilitate optimal patient outcomes (Yoder-Wise, 2014). Where possible, a strong Tuakana-Teina model should be employed to facilitate new graduate nursing transition in the ED.

Key Recommendations

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand that:

- In collaboration with the NEtP programme recommendations, the supernumerary orientation period for any newly graduated nurses in the ED should be a minimum of 12 weeks.
- To fulfil Nursing Council competency requirements, Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora) and Private Urgent Care facilities must allocate funding to the education and professional development of new graduate nurses in the ED; this funding needs to be in excess of other standard education required for the nurse, or by the organisation.
- To exercise clinical judgment and develop nursing skills, the new graduate nurses in the ED must undertake service specific ED development courses. These should include but are not limited to: basic and advanced life support, simulation and ED skills education. These courses are in addition to standard courses expected of new graduate nurses within the wider organisation.
- New graduate nurses entering emergency nursing require support in transition to specialty nursing and should be continuously nurtured and attend well-being programmes.
- A Tuakana-Teina framework to support new graduate nurses in the ED is endorsed. A consistent mentoring relationship between the graduate nurse and the specified or allocated ED nurse mentor throughout both the orientation programme and NEtP year is required. This should be prioritised for, but not limited to newly graduated Māori nurses.
- To tautoko new graduate nēhi Māori, continuous support from senior Māori nurses and Māori nurse leaders within the organisation is required and this needs to be supported by a fully funded Tuakana-Teina programme. The Tuakana-Teina model requires protected study days in order to create space for cultural and pastoral support. These study days are in addition to standard organisational requirements for nurses and the additional education requirements needed for working in the ED environment.
- New Graduate Nurses should not undertake a triage role.

Further Rationale

- Emergency nursing practice requires specialty knowledge that includes assessment and management of a wide range of undifferentiated presentations, time critical aspects of care, and management of a variable workload.
- Nurses can find the transition to the unpredictable and acute nature of emergency nursing challenging, and benefit from preceptorship and mentoring to develop strategies to manage the practice stressors.
- The nursing graduate is beginning to consolidate learning, application of theory to practice, socialisation into team, and has limited experience of managing emergency practice.
- A structured transition to practice programme promotes safe practice transition, staff retention, and safe care.
- New graduates are interested in the specialty of emergency nursing and represent a valuable resource.

- Effective orientation programmes and preceptorship establishes good practice skills that will assist practice development and increase workforce capacity, engagement, and quality care.

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