

Link Nurse Role Definition and Description

Context

This document relates to the local recognition of nurses that contribute to nursing staff education and training, and the development of resources within an identified specialty topic of nursing practice.

Expected outcomes

- Define the role of the link nurse
- To provide an informative guide for all staff interested in becoming a link nurse
- To outline a process whereby link nurses can be recognised professionally and financially for their contribution to their specialty of practice
- For the link nurse role to be integrated into step 3 of the ICU professional development pathway

Definition

A link nurse is *“a nurse that is, or is moving towards being, an expert and resource person for an identified topic of specialty practice, in which they have an interest and passion”*.

Role description

The role of the link nurse will vary according to the topic of specialty practice and it is envisaged that individual link nurses will set their own strategic direction and goals within their individual scope of practice. It is encouraged that the following generic responsibilities be acknowledged and considered by link nurses when setting their goals.

Professional development

- To maintain a current up-to-date knowledge, experience and practice, based on the best available evidence
- To have an awareness of new products and to be knowledgeable regarding the purchase, introduction and use of specialty topic related equipment in ICU
- Maintain own professional development by attending relevant training and educational sessions and conferences relative to specialty topic
- To maintain a professional portfolio with appropriate reference to their role of link nurse
- To keep an activity record, in a personal professional portfolio, of professional contributions and time spent working on activities related to topic of specialty practice
- Consider representing Royal North Shore ICU at external appointments such as conferences eg poster development or presentations

Practice Development, Quality Improvement and Education

- To act as a clinical resource person for nursing colleagues concerning specialty related problems in the clinical area (e.g. policy, practices) in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders
- To be a role model and mentor to nurses wishing to become a link nurse in the specialty area of practice

- To take an active part in education, clinical supervision and practice development strategies relating to the topic of specialty practice, including workshop and call-back day coordination and lecturing
- To contribute to the strategic direction of practice by contributing to the development and updating of guidelines, policies and learning packages relating to the specialty topic
- To ensure that all link nurse initiatives relating to the specialty topic are consistent with existing and future education strategies implemented by the ICU education department
- To be a change agent and leader for change practice initiatives relating to the specialty topic, by actively engaging staff in the implementation of relevant policies and procedures
- To contribute to topic related improvements in quality of patient care through membership of the ICU Quality Forum and subsequent quality working parties

Communication

- To maintain a high level of communication between relevant stakeholders for matters relating to the specialty topic, including the Clinical Nurse Specialists, Clinical Nurse Educators, Nursing Unit Managers, Nurse Manager and Clinical Nurse Consultant
- Contribute to the ICU news letter on topic related activities and news
- It is the Link nurses responsibility to promote their role and position so that ICU staff are aware of who the link nurses are

Memberships

- Relevant ICU Quality Forum Working Party
- To join the relevant hospital wide committee and working parties if applicable
- Professional bodies relevant to specialty topic

Benefits to the Link Nurse

- Recognition of the contribution to current practice development (LN board and publication in 6th sense)
- Authorship of local policies, guidelines and publications
- Increased work satisfaction by having influence on clinical practice that improves quality of patient care
- Explicit pathway to assist in application and annual reapplication for CNS status

Application process

While there is no formal application process to become a link nurse, it is recommended that those interested in being recognised as a link nurse discuss this with both their NUM and CNE.

Activity Statement

The activity statement should be kept as a record of time spent working on link nurse related projects. For time in lieu to be considered, the activity statement must be submitted to your NUM, along with evidence of outcomes and accomplishments such as completed documents or workshop reports.

RNSH ICU Link Nurse Activity Record Sheet

Name: _____ Unit: _____ Topic of expertise: _____.

Professional development: (courses, lectures and inservices attended, literature searching)

Date	Activity	Action taken	Time spent

Education: (lecturing, workshop development and coordination,

Date	Activity	Action taken	Time spent

Resource development: (policy, guideline and learning package development)

Date	Activity	Action taken	Time spent

Publications and posters: (publications, news letter, tip of week, education posters)

Date	Activity	Action taken	Time spent

Meetings: (working party, hospital committees, professional bodies)

Date	Activity	Action taken	Time spent

RNSH ICU Link Nurse Time-in-lieu Application Form

Name:	
Unit:	
Date:	
Managers Name:	
Topic of expertise:	

Description of activity / project that time is being requested for: _____

This activity / project was completed after consultation with: _____

Goal of activity / project that time is being requested for: _____

Summary of evidence being submitted: _____

Outcome of Activity / project: _____

Total time spent on activity / project:	
Amount of time in lieu requested:	
Time in lieu granted:	
Name of Manager granting time:	
Managers Signature:	