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HSE HR Circular 14/2005

October 2005

To: All HR Directors:

All Directors of Nursing

All Directors of the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units

Financial Support for Nurses/Midwives Returning to Practice

I wish to refer to the initiative introduced in 2000, by the Minister for Health and Children to provide financial support for nurses/midwives returning to practice (Circulars 151/2000 and 29/2003 refer). Details of this initiative have been revised and are as follows:

The revised arrangements for the implementation of the return to practice initiative are effective for those nurses and midwives undertaking return to nursing/midwifery practice courses commencing on or after 1st August, 2005. Financial support for these nurses and midwives will be provided through a funding agreement between the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units. The responsibilities of the Health Service Executive include the funding of nursing/midwifery education initiatives.

The Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units will oversee the administration of the return to nursing/midwifery practice courses, which will be delivered by the local Centre of Nurse Education/School of Midwifery.

The following revised procedures for the administration of the initiative will apply:

1. The costs associated with the delivery of return to nursing/midwifery practice courses will be met by the HSE.

2. A non means-tested grant of €1,500 towards the overall costs involved in attending the course (including travel, accommodation child-care etc) will be provided by the NMPDU to participants at the end of week four of the return to practice course. A participant who fails to fully complete the first four weeks of the course will not be entitled to receive any payment. For participants undertaking a part-time course, the grant will be paid at the end of week eight. A participant on the part-time course who fails to fully complete the first eight weeks of the course will not be entitled to receive any payment.
3. The Centre of Nurse Education/School of Midwifery will notify the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit in advance of the course (at least two weeks before the commencement of the course or as agreed locally) of the number of expected course participants.
4. In order to process payments, the Centre of Nurse Education/School of Midwifery providing the course will notify the NMPDU of the names, addresses, PPS numbers, and bank details of those participants entitled to the grant.
5. Nurses/midwives who successfully complete the return to practice course and who secure employment in the public health service within six months of completing the course will be entitled to receive a further bursary of the sum of €1,500.
6. In order to avail of this bursary, applicants will be required to sign a written undertaking that they will continue to work in the public health service for a period of 1 year (12 months). Payment of this bursary will be made through the established payroll system. The individual's Director of Nursing will facilitate this.
7. An employee who does not remain in employment in the public health service for the specified 1 year (12 months) will be required to repay the €1,500 bursary in full.
8. Health service providers can recoup this €1,500 from their local NMPDU.
9. Advice from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners (see attached letter of 14th October 2005) indicates that the first €1,500 is tax free while the second €1,500 is subject to deductions at source under thePAYE system.
10. Providers of return to practice courses will give each participant a certificate on completion of the course.
11. Participation in a return to practice course is not reckonable for superannuation or annual leave purposes.
12. The payment of the non means-tested grant and the bursary will not apply to:
 - (i) nurses/midwives who are currently employed in the public health services and who wish to move to a different area of practice, or

- (ii) nurses/midwives who are in receipt of another payment from the public health service, or
- (iii) nurses/midwives who have received financial assistance under this initiative within the previous five year period.

This initiative will be reviewed in autumn 2006 in the light of service requirements.

The Health Service Executive will provide funding via each Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit to cover the cost of implementing this circular. This will be done on receipt by the Nursing Policy Division of the Department of Health and Children of details of the costs of implementing the initiative. (These funding arrangements will apply to the current financial year only. You will be notified of the funding arrangements for 2006 onwards in due course). As the HSE is accountable for this funding, details for monitoring the uptake and effectiveness of the scheme will be required from each Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (a memo will issue with the required details).



John Magner
A/National Director of Human Resources

To all Directors of NMPDUs
And
All HR Directors
2005

30th November

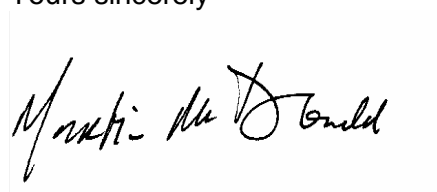
Re: **Return to Nursing/Midwifery Practice Circular**

Dear

I am writing to you to in relation to Circular 14/2005 - Return to Nursing/Midwifery Practice. Since its publication last month some queries have arisen in relation to section 5 and section 12 of the circular. I propose the following information points by way of clarification:

1. Regarding point 5 of the circular, Nurses/midwives who successfully complete the return to nursing/midwifery practice course and who secure employment in the public health service within six months of completing the course will be entitled to receive a further sum of €1,500. (This payment does not apply to nurses/midwives currently working in the Public Health Sector undertaking the R.T.N.P course).
2. In relation to point 12 of the circular, the payment of the initial bursary (non means-tested grant) *will not apply to:*
 - (i) Nurses/Midwives
 - a) currently employed full-time in the public health service and in receipt of their full salary
 - b) who have received financial assistance under this initiative within the previous five year period.
 - (ii) The payment of the bursary (non means-tested grant) *will apply to:*
 - Nurses/midwives who undertake the Return to Nursing/Midwifery Practice course in their own time (i.e. on their off duty time).

Yours sincerely



MARTIN McDONALD
A/NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF HR

