

Supporting participants on the New Entry to Specialty Practice: Mental Health and Addiction Programme

Guidance for NGOs

The New Entry to Specialty Practice: Mental Health and Addiction (NESP) programme is for registered nurses, social workers and occupational therapists new to mental health and addiction work. Participants on the programme develop the skills and knowledge for mental health and addiction work, through education and professional support.

The NESP programme is highly structured, and employers are required to have several elements in place to support their staff on this programme. To help NGOs understand the level of support required for their employee, this resource outlines the programme requirements and best practice recommendations.

About the programme

The NESP programme is mainly vocational and combines academic and clinical practice components. Four particular areas of required knowledge and skill acquisition are: clinical, cultural, recovery and organisational systems. During the programme, participants work towards completing a post-graduate certificate in mental health and addiction specialism or a post graduate certificate in mental health and addiction nursing practice. Please refer to the Te Pou Skills Matter NESP programme service specifications (available from www.tepou.co.nz/skills-matter). Details of local programme providers can also be found on this website and these providers can assist with further information.

Requirements and recommendations

The following lists the factors required for the NESP programme (as defined by the service specifications) as well as factors that are strongly recommended to enable successful completion of the programme.

Leadership: It is important that a senior staff member of the organisation oversees the NESP participants employment and progress throughout the programme and liaises with NESP programme provider coordinators.

Orientation and workplace education: The organisation is required to provide the NESP participants with opportunities to participate in relevant workplace training and to support the orientation into the workplace culture and practices, and ongoing professional development.

Clinical experience: The clinical component of the programme will usually take place within the NESP participants employment environment, as they must be working in a mental health and addiction service for the duration of the programme. However, we recommend clinical placements outside the workplace are also offered, to extend the NESP participants learning and experience in different mental health and addiction settings.

Preceptorship-Nurses

NESP Nurses are required to have access to a preceptor at all times while on the programme. The Preceptor does not need to be employed by the NGO and preceptors can be accessed by phone or online. Preceptors are designated mental health and addiction nurses who are trained in preceptorship. The primary preceptor is responsible for evaluating the NESP nurse's competence in written form and

supporting the NESP nurse to develop a PDRP (professional development and recognition programmes) portfolio.

Clinical Mentoring-Social workers/Occupational Therapists

Clinical mentoring (provided as part of the clinical component) Each participant will have an identified clinical mentor, who may be their existing mentor. Clinical mentors will be experienced members of the multidisciplinary team. The role of the mentor is to provide a role model and support for the participant in relation to mental health and addiction team specific activities (e.g. recovery support, service planning).

Reduced workload: Organisations should allocate a reduced/shared workload for the NESP participant and preceptor/mentors if they are working within the same organisation. This is particularly crucial in the first half of the programme, as the NESP participant, begins to recognise and engage with complex clinical situations and health care systems. The NESP funding can be used to cover backfill that is required by an organisation.

Professional responsibility: The NESP participants should have a level of responsibility that reflects their level of professional development in mental health and addiction practice. Their capacity to hold responsibility will typically increase during the programme. It is important a NESP participant is not given responsibilities beyond their experience and skills as this has implications for safety and may limit their learning and development.

Professional supervision: Regular professional supervision (either individually or in a group) must be provided (between 10 and 20 hours during programme). Supervision can be contracted out if a suitable supervisor is not available within an organisation

Academic study: It is required that the NESP participant is given time away from the workplace to attend block courses and tutorials.

NGO and Te Whatu Ora partnerships: Te Pou suggest Te Whatu Ora and NGOs partner to support participants on the programme. While not a requirement, a partnership recognises the close working relationship between many NGOs and Te Whatu Ora and can help meet any gaps in programme support that an NGO participant might experience. A partnership can create opportunities for learning for the NGO nurse, for example, inclusion in a supervision group, in professional development sessions and PDRP portfolio development. An NGO participant may be able to have a placement which could broaden their experience and enhances their practice with people.

Partnerships should be explored on an individual basis, taking into account the resources available and the learning needs of the NESP participant. Assistance to develop this partnership can be developed with the tertiary programme provider and the skills matter project lead at Te Pou.

Formalisation of agreement: An agreement should be in place between the NGO and the NESP programme provider. This should reflect the unique features and practices of the individual NGO, the requirements of the funder and the professional development needs of the NESP participant. A MOU, or equivalent, will state the agreed commitments and responsibilities of all parties. This will include Te Whatu Ora where a partnership is formed between the NGO and Te Whatu Ora.

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