

Aboriginal Trainee Enrolled Nurses in the Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP)

Document Number PD2006_024

Publication date 20-Apr-2006

Functional Sub group Personnel/Workforce - Conditions of employment
Personnel/Workforce - Recruitment and selection

Summary This policy directive prescribes the requirements of the Area Health Services requesting financial support offered by the Nursing and Midwifery Office in implementing the Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP) in the Trainee Enrolled Nurse (TEN) Program.

Author Branch Nursing and Midwifery Office

Branch contact Sue Balding 9391 9367

Applies to Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, NSW Dept of Health, Public Hospitals

Audience Chief Executives, Directors of Nursing/Midwifery, Area Managers
Aboriginal Health

Distributed to Public Health System, Health Associations Unions, Health Professional Associations and Related Organisations, NSW Department of Health, Public Hospitals

Review date 20-Apr-2011

File No. 05/645

Status Active

Director-General

Compliance with this policy directive is mandatory.

**STRUCTURED TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECT (STEP)
FOR ABORIGINAL TRAINEE ENROLLED NURSES (TEN)**

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Section 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1.1 Definitions:

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is a person of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent - Who identifies as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander - And is accepted as such by the community in which she or he lives
Aboriginal Employment Coordinators	Employees of NSW Health who work directly to achieve identified targets for Aboriginal employment.
Area Health Service	Means an Area Health Service pursuant to the provisions of the <i>Health Services Act 1997</i> , including all hospitals, facilities and other health services under the control and management thereof.
Cessation	Coming to an end
Designated	To select and set aside for a duty, an office, or a purpose
Enrolled Nurse	Means a person enrolled by the NSW Nurses and Midwifery Board as such
Exemption	To free from an obligation, a duty, or a liability to which others are subject
Indigenous Australian	A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as such and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives or has lived
Participant	Aboriginal TEN's registered under this STEP contract
Registered Nurse	Means a person registered by the Nurses and Midwifery Board as such
TEN Coordinator	The person who is in charge of coordinating the TEN program for that AHS
Trainee Enrolled Nurse	Means a person who is being trained to become an enrolled nurse in a hospital recognised by the Board as a training school for enrolled nurses

1.2 Acronyms:

AHS	Area Health Services
AEC	Aboriginal Employment Coordinators
ANMS	NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy
CDEP	Community Development Project Scheme
DEWR	Department of Workplace Relations
EN	Enrolled Nurse
HAC	Health Administration Corp (NSW Department of Health)

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NaMO	Nursing and Midwifery Office, NSW Department of Health
NMB	NSW Nurses and Midwives Board
NSW	New South Wales
RN	Registered Nurse
STEP	Structured Training and Employment Project
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TEN	Trainee Enrolled Nurse

Section 2: INTRODUCTION

'The NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy was established as a result of a State Government commitment to increase the number of Aboriginal nurses in NSW. The NSW Government has recognised the clear need for the Strategy and has allocated recurrent funding for its implementation'¹ p5.

The NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy (ANMS) has four objectives:

1. Strategic Planning

To ensure Aboriginal participation and partnership in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NSW Aboriginal Nursing & Midwifery Strategy.

2. Cultural Competence and Safety

To provide an educated nursing and midwifery workforce that is culturally competent and safe to care for Aboriginal people.

3. Workforce Development

To identify and promote nursing and midwifery career pathways, that are supportive, evidence based and responsive to the needs of the Aboriginal community.

4. Information Systems:

To develop effective information systems that will guide and assist in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the Aboriginal nursing and midwifery workforce.

Whilst strategies have been implemented to increase the number of Aboriginal people undertaking nursing as a career in some Area Health Services (AHS), others are struggling to meet the 2% Aboriginal Employment Strategy target across all nursing classifications.

¹ NSW Rural and Remote Aboriginal Nursing Strategy, NSW Health 2001

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Since the implementation of the NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy, the numbers of Aboriginal Enrolled Nurses (EN) registered with the NSW Nurses and Midwives Board (NMB) has been gradually increasing. For 2003, this figure reached 1.95%.

Of interest is the number of Aboriginal ENs who are continuing education and working towards completing undergraduate degrees in nursing. In a survey performed in February 2002, 45% of all Aboriginal undergraduate nursing students were converting their Enrolled Nurse qualification.

This program aims to continue to increase the number of Aboriginal people studying nursing through the provision of additional funding from the Department of Workplace Relations (DEWR) and support through the Project Manager – Aboriginal Nursing Strategy.

2.1 About the Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP)

This policy has been developed in consultation with DEWR, who funds this program in partnership with NSW Department of Health.

‘The primary objective of Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) is to increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians, by providing funding for packages of tailored assistance, including structured and accredited training (preferably leading to formal qualification), that enable employers to provide long term jobs.’²

STEP provides an opportunity to support AHS in employing Aboriginal people in the Trainee Enrolled Nurse (TEN) program.

In June 2003 an expression of interest was sent to all AHS to assess the number of Aboriginal people who could be supported in the TEN program. These numbers informed the contractual arrangements for the STEP funding agreement. The agreed number under this contract is 32 positions.

The contract commenced on the 1st April 2005 and will conclude on the 1st April 2007. All project Participants under this policy directive must commence employment before 28th April 2006.

2.2 Who is this Policy Directive for?

This policy directive is for AHS wishing to access STEP funding for Aboriginal people employed in the TEN program between 1st April 2005 to 1st April 2007.

² STEP – Guidelines for Organisations Interested in STEP funding, Department of Workplace Relations 2005

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2.3 Aims of the STEP program

The aim of the STEP program is to provide opportunities for AHS to support Aboriginal people in the TEN program. AHS accepting funding through the STEP program must offer the TENs ongoing employment at the completion of the Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled Nurse) and on confirmation of enrolment with the NMB.

2.4 Increasing the Number of Aboriginal Enrolled Nurses

This policy will assist in increasing the pool of qualified Aboriginal ENs across the NSW Public Health Sector.

2.5 Meeting Aboriginal Employment Strategy Targets

The NSW Health, *Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2003-2007* 'forms part of the NSW Health response to address significant inequities detrimentally affecting the health status of Aboriginal people in NSW and to identify and address key workforce issues for Aboriginal people employed in NSW Health'³.

Strategy C4 NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy (PD2005_120) identifies the need for AHS to implement the target of 2% minimum Aboriginal representation across all areas within the workforce.

2.6 Improving Aboriginal Health

This policy provides an opportunity for AHS to assist in improving Aboriginal health status through employment and education. Implementation of the NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy ensures NSW Health is supporting Aboriginal communities in gaining better access to mainstream health services through the delivery of culturally sensitive health care.

Section 3: RECRUITMENT OF ABORIGINAL TENS

3.1 How many Aboriginal TENS should be employed?

The *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy* stipulates that all Area Health Services are to implement the target of 2% minimum Aboriginal representation across all areas within the workforce.

Under the *NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan – Two Ways Together*, NSW Health is committed to increasing the number of Aboriginal people employed in the Trainee Enrolled Nurse program by 30 positions⁴. This equates to 2.5% of the total TEN positions available per year. Funding has been provided from DEWR to support 32 Aboriginal TEN positions within this contractual arrangement.

³ Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2003-2007, NSW Health, p.1

⁴ NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan – Two Ways Together, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2003.

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3.2 NSW Anti Discrimination Act 1977 – Targeting particular groups

Under the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, organisations can target particular groups, for example Aboriginal people, ‘to give that particular group an opportunity that was previously unavailable to them, that is, to help redress past disadvantage or discrimination experienced by the particular group’⁵. An exemption is required ‘in situations where being of a particular race isn’t essential to do the job – for example a general clerical or managers positions. To get an exemption you will need to show that targeting a job will help redress past or present injustices experienced by the particular group in a specific occupation or area of employment’⁶.

3.3 How many positions does the NSW Department of Health have exemption for?

According to the Two Ways Together – NSW Aboriginal Affairs plan, NSW Health is to recruit 30 Aboriginal people into the TEN program each year.

Under the NSW Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy, NSW Health has applied for and has been granted an exemption from the race discrimination provisions of the *Anti Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)* to target 32 Aboriginal TEN positions per year across NSW.

This exemption will remain in force for a period of 5 years from the 4th January 2006.

3.4 Advertising and recruiting to exempted positions for Aboriginal people

AHS recruiting to Aboriginal identified positions must advertise using the statement:

“An exemption has been granted under the provisions of Sections 8 and 51 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, for NSW Department of Health to designate, advertise and recruit (number) positions for as TEN’s for Aboriginal people”.

The exemption from the *Anti Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)* allows AHS’s to recruit Aboriginal people into identified TEN positions without being in breach of EEO principles and the Anti Discrimination Act.

3.5 Involving Aboriginal people in the recruitment and retention of TENs

To increase Aboriginal application and participation in the TEN program, AHSs are to provide supportive personal and cultural recruitment and retention mechanisms. It is recommended that Aboriginal people are included in the initial

⁵ When and How to Apply for an Exemption from the Anti-Discrimination Act – http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/adb/ll_adb.nsf/pages/adb_exemption_guidelines. 09.08.05.

⁶ When and How to Apply for an Exemption from the Anti-Discrimination Act – http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/adb/ll_adb.nsf/pages/adb_exemption_guidelines. 09.08.05.

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stages of development and implementation of the TEN recruitment and retention processes.

Each AHS has a valued and skilled Aboriginal workforce who can assist in the recruitment process. All AHSs employ Aboriginal Employment Coordinators (AEC) to 'work directly to achieve identified targets for Aboriginal employment in NSW Health'⁷.

Section 4: FUNDING FOR THE STEP PROGRAM (DEWR)

4.1 The STEP Program

All Participants must complete the Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled Nurse) administered by AHS throughout NSW. All Participants are required to attend the TAFE and clinical placements according to the TEN program.

All Participants under this program must be employed by the AHS and paid under the *Public Health System Nurses & Midwives (State) Award* as Trainee Enrolled Nurses.

4.1a DEWR funding for the TEN program

The DEWR contract states that funding is provided to:

- Support the Participants with appropriate mentor support and career pathways
- Promote cross cultural awareness to other employees and contractors where needed
- Case management
- Contribute towards salaries and on-costs

Funding is available from DEWR for any Aboriginal person employed in the TEN program between 1st April 2005 and 28th April 2006.

The total funding amount for the completion of the TEN program received from DEWR is **\$7,872 including GST**.

Provision of DEWR funding from NSW Health will NOT include GST, therefore AHS will receive up to \$7,156 for the completion of the program (\$7,872 – GST {\$716}).

Funding of \$2,385 is allocated after the achievement of each outcome (at 13, 26 and 52 weeks). If a Participant does not complete the TEN program, funding will be provided up to the outcome achieved (i.e. 13, 26 or 52 week).

⁷ Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2003-2007, NSW Department of Health 2003

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For example, if the Participant leaves after 6 months, the AHS can claim only up to \$4,771. If a Participant leaves after 16 weeks, AHS are entitled to \$2,385 of funding only.

4.1b How can the DEWR funding be spent?

The TEN coordinator in association with the AEC and the Participant will plan how the funding is to be spent. A minimum of 25% of the total funding **must** be spent directly on support for the Participant.

Suggestions for Participant support include:

- **25% (\$1,789 - minimum)** on administration, books, tutorial assistance, mentoring and clinical support, cultural awareness, equipment, uniforms, further education and conferences
- **75% (\$5,367)** on salary supplementation

It is up to the AHS to determine how the remaining 75% of the funding is spent, depending on the needs of the Participant.

AHS will be required to report the progress of the TENs and acquit the monies yearly according to the *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B).

4.1c Selection Criteria for AHS to receive DEWR funding:

All Participants must meet all of the following selection criteria:

- Of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
- Identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Is accepted as such by the community in which they live

A 'Confirmation of Aboriginality' is required as documentation from each Participant prior to entering the TEN program.

4.1d Applying for DEWR funding

At each intake commencement date, NaMO will forward the *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* (Attachment A) for that period. All AHS must get the Participant to sign this form. This completed form and a copy of a Confirmation of Aboriginality or Statutory Declaration stating Aboriginality, is to be forwarded to NaMO within one month of the intake commencement date.

NaMO will notify AHS of receipt of the initial commencement *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* with a letter stating when the *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Forms* are due, how the funding works and when payment will be made.

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At the 13-week, 26-week and 52-week outcome employment milestones, each Participant is to sign the *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* (Attachment A). NaMO will forward by email, a copy of the *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* when it is due (usually within one month of achieving that outcome). A copy of the *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B) is also to be completed at commencement with the contact details for further correspondence, indicated. Information gathered from the *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* will be used for the Final Project Report required by the DEWR contract.

Once the Participant completes the course and is enrolled with the NSW Nurses and Midwives Board (NMB), a copy of this enrolment is to be forwarded to NaMO.

The following table shows the employment outcomes of the TEN program which are covered under this contract:

Round	Commencement date (Intake)	Outcome 1 (13-week)	Outcome 2 (26-week)	Outcome 3 (52-week)
1	11.04.05	11.07.05	11.10.05	11.04.06
2	19.09.05	19.12.05	19.03.06	19.09.06
3	27.02.06	27.05.06	27.08.06	27.02.07
4	24.04.06	24.07.06	24.10.06	24.04.07

No payment will be made to an AHS where the Participant:

- Commences employment after the 28th April 2006
- Is supported by a wage subsidy provided by the Commonwealth, a state government or territory government and who has not been authorized in writing by DEWR to participate in the Project notwithstanding that support;
- Received Community Development Employment Project Scheme (CDEP) Participants allowance; or
- Already receives support under the Indigenous Employment Program; or
- A *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* (Attachment A) has not been received by the NaMO within one month of the form due date.

4.1e Reimbursement of DEWR funding

Reimbursement of funding for Participant support and salary supplementation of up to \$7,156 will be paid by way of a budget adjustment concurrent **with** the Nursing Strategies Budget Supplementation.

Funding will be identified in the Nursing Strategies Approval letter sent to all CE's as 'Structured Training and Employment Project for Aboriginal Trainee Enrolled Nurses funded by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations'. Reference to the TEN coordinators in AHS will be indicated as contact people for distribution of the funding.

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Funding accrued will be paid to AHS either in March or May of that financial year.

4.2 Offer of Employment

At the completion of their studies and once enrolment with the NMB is complete, ongoing employment is offered to the Participant.

The Director-General has the authorized AHS to recruit directly (Section 10 of the Public Sector Employment and Management (General) Regulation 1996 gives guidelines on application).

Section 5: MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND REPORTING

5.1 Participant Management Plans

Each AHS employing an Aboriginal person in the TEN program under this contract must develop up an *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B) to identify mentoring and support structures, tutorial assistance and any further support required.

5.2 Outcome and Progress Reports

AHS are required to submit a *STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form* (Attachment A) at commencement of the program and at the 13-week, 26-week and 52-week outcomes. NaMO will forward these forms when they are due.

The *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B) is required to be submitted at the 13-week, 26-week and 52-week outcomes.

Information submitted on the *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B) will inform the final report for the STEP contract.

5.3 Funding acquittal

A brief acquittal of funding is required at the end of the TEN program for that Participant and when the 52 week outcome is achieved, on the *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B).

5.4 Notification of cessation of program

AHS are to notify NaMO of the cessation of any Participant from the TEN program immediately and the reasons behind the withdrawal. AHS to complete final *Aboriginal TEN Management Plan* (Attachment B) indicating funding spent and a progress report.

Section 6: MENTORING FOR TENS

6.1 Mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship which gives people the opportunity to share their professional and personal skills and experiences, and to grow and develop in the process. Typically, it is a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced and a less experienced employee. It is based upon encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn and share.

6.2 The Role of the Mentor

Mentoring is a two-way relationship between the mentor and the Participant. The mentor will be an important link between the Participant's studies and their workplace. A high quality mentoring relationship is vital to the success of the STEP program. Some key aspects of the mentor's role are:

- Maintaining confidentiality
- Offering support and encouragement, and where necessary identifying and constructively discussing gaps in the Participants' agreed performance
- Providing direction, guidance and constructive feedback
- Facilitating the Participants' professional development
- Evaluating the Participants' plans and decisions and using this information in a positive way during mentoring meetings.

6.3 Mentoring Made Easy: A Practical Guide

All mentors and Participants are advised to read *Mentoring Made Easy: a Practical Guide*⁸, which is available from <http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/careers/mentorbook.htm>.

6.4 Non-Aboriginal Mentors

It is preferential, that all Aboriginal TEN's be offered mentoring by an appropriate Aboriginal person. In cases where this can not occur, it is essential that non-Aboriginal mentors undertake cultural awareness training in accordance with the *Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2004 – 2009*⁹ through the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training delivered by the AHS.

⁸ Mentoring Made Easy A Practical Guide (3rd edition) - Employment Equity and Diversity, NSW Premier's Department 2004

⁹ Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2004-2009, Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council.

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Section 7: ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL TENS

7.1 Aboriginal Education Centres/Units

All TAFE Institutes have an Aboriginal Development Manager, and most campuses have an Aboriginal Coordinator to assist Aboriginal students.

The Coordinators also work with the Aboriginal Student Support Officers, to get students started, provide advice and support whilst studying at TAFE. The Aboriginal Coordinator can help with:

- Enrolment procedures as well as information about how to contact the Aboriginal Student Support Officer
- Information about support services such as literacy and numeracy programs.

Section 8: FURTHER INFORMATION

Project Manager - NSW Aboriginal Nursing Strategy
Nursing & Midwifery Office, NSW Department of Health
Locked Mail Bag 961, North Sydney, NSW 2059
Ph: (02) 9391 9367
Fax: (02) 9391 9468
Home page: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing>
Email: Aboriginalnursing@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

Robyn Kruk
Director General



Indigenous Employment Policy

STEP Detailed Claim for Payment Form

(Outcome Form)

1. STEP Contract Number

Provider Details

2.	Name of Registered Employer	NSW Health Services	Name and Position of Contact Officer	Sue Balding – Project Manager
3.				
	Telephone	(02) 9391 9367		

Project Participant Details

4.	Surname/Family Name			
5.	Given Names			
6.	Home Address	Postcode		
7.	Date of Birth	/ /	Gender (<i>please circle</i>)	Male Female
8.	Commencement Date		Job Description	Trainee Enrolled Nurse Program

Outcome Details

		Date of Commencement
9.	or	Date of Outcome
		Please Tick
		Achieved
10.	Commencement in Employment	/ /
11.	Employment Outcome 1	/ /
12.	Employment Outcome 2	/ /
	Employment Outcome 3	/ /

Project Participant to complete

13. I certify that:

- The information supplied above is correct; and
- I am an Indigenous Australian

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name of Project Participant	Signature	Date

Provider to complete

14. I certify that:

- The above record of the Project Participant assisted under the Contract is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge (I have adequate evidence to substantiate this claim);
- The status of the Project Participant as an Indigenous Australian has been established; and
- The Project Participant has been paid their full entitlement under an industry award or a registered Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA), Certified Agreement (CA) or a State or Territory approved contract of employment.
- The Project Participant has been made aware that any Personal Information collected by my organisation in connection with the Contract may be provided to the Department and the Project Participant has consented to that disclosure.

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name of person authorised to sign	Signature	Date

Aboriginal TEN Management Plan

Participant Name:	Ph:
Area Health Service:	TAFE:
Mentor Name:	Ph:

	Date Outcome Form Due	Date Faxed to NaMO
TEN Intake date:		
Outcome 1 (13 weeks):		
Outcome 2 (26 weeks):		
Outcome 3 (52 weeks):		

Contact Person: <i>(Person to complete Outcome Forms)</i>	
Phone:	Fax:
Email:	

Progress Report: <i>(Fill in at each Outcome Date and fax with Attachment A)</i>	
Outcome 1: <i>(13 weeks)</i> <i>Date:</i>	
Outcome 2: <i>(26 weeks)</i> <i>Date:</i>	
Outcome 3: <i>(52 weeks)</i> <i>Date:</i>	

Complete at 52 week outcome:

Did Participant complete course? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If No, why not?

Post Enrolment Employment Plan: <i>(In consultation with the AEC and Participant)</i>	
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Funding Acquittal:	<i>Please provide a brief description of how the funding was spent</i>

All forms to be faxed to: (02) 9391 9468, Project Manager – Aboriginal Nursing Strategy