

08 February 2022

C144373

S 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe S 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 22 November 2021, to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa (Corrections), requesting the following information:

*Can you please let me know how common it is for graduate registered nurses to do their first year of practice at a prison? How long has this programme been running at Corrections? If you have the numbers of nurse graduates and prisons by year, that would be interesting.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982.

Nurse Entry to Practice (NETP) provides graduate registered nurses support and professional development to facilitate their transition during their first year of practice. The programme includes clinical work, a 12-month placement, and postgraduate courses.

Between 2016 and 2020 a NETP programme was initiated where funding was made available to support one NETP position per region (Northern, Central, Lower North and Southern), with a requirement for these positions to be formally linked to the regions District Health Board (DHB) NETP.

In 2021 Corrections had four nurses in their NETP year: two linked to Waitemata DHB, and two linked to southern DHB. We have endeavored to offer these NETP nurses' permanent positions once their year is completed.

Each Corrections' region and health centre has variable capacity to provide these positions – not only do the positions need to be funded, but the nurses require regular ongoing learning and training (which takes them away from clinical practice). They have a prescribed probationary time before they can join the roster as a stand-alone nurse, and they are assigned an experienced practitioner who works alongside that nurse daily. The NETP programme positions across all of Corrections currently occur at a regional level, within the established nursing resource for the health service and has not been recorded centrally.

Corrections does not currently have a centralised, formalised NETP programme, to employ new graduate nurses in their first year of practice. This sits with the individual regional health leadership teams. However, a priority for Corrections is developing a robust plan to grow and retain our workforce, with NETPs being one of many strategies being considered and discussed with DHBs and Universities.

Corrections Health Services, like other health care providers in the wider sector, is facing a competitive recruitment environment suffering the impacts of COVID-19 and reducing our ability to access the usual recruitment streams. We are currently exploring options available to attract and recruit our future workforce and to put a programme in place to support the first 18 months practice of newly employed registered nurses. It also provides an opportunity to engage with DHBs and training providers to support our recruitment and retention activities. NETP nurses are a valuable workforce which Corrections wishes to encourage and support into the future.

Although we can provide details of the numbers of NETP positions funded per region, we do not centrally hold the number of graduates who filled those positions broken down by year. The information does not currently exist in a form that can be readily supplied to you and would instead require a manual review of records. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by Corrections.

I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

I trust the information provided is of assistance.

Ngā mihi



Juanita Ryan  
Deputy Chief Executive Health