

Action Plan and Progress Assessment (APPA) for the implementation of audit recommendations from the OAG- Prepared for the Select Standing Committee of Public Accounts  
**Attention: Mike Bernier, Chair and Rick Glumac, Deputy Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

An Independent Audit of the Recruitment and Retention of Rural and Remote Nurses in Northern BC Released [02/18]

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<b>PAC Meeting Plan<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>[29/03/18]</b>	<b>Prepared by:</b> Doug Blackie, Director, Ministry of Health (MoH)	<b>Reviewed by:</b> David Byres, Assistant Deputy Minister, MoH
<b>1<sup>st</sup> APPA Update</b>	<b>[01/04/19]</b>	<b>Prepared by:</b> Kevin Brown, Executive Director, MoH	<b>Reviewed by:</b> Mark Armitage, Assistant Deputy Minister, MoH
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> APPA Update</b>	<b>[29/02/20]</b>	<b>Prepared by:</b> Joanne Maclaren, Executive Director, MoH	<b>Reviewed by:</b> Mark Armitage, Assistant Deputy Minister, MoH
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> APPA Update</b>	<b>[24/02/21]</b>	<b>Prepared by:</b> Joanne Maclaren, Senior Director, MoH	<b>Reviewed by:</b> Mark Armitage, Assistant Deputy Minister, MoH

Rec. # Accepted? Yes / No <sup>2</sup>	OAG Recommendations	Actions Planned & Target Date(s) <sup>3</sup>	Assessment of Progress to date <sup>4</sup> and Actions Taken <sup>5</sup> (APPA update)
1 Yes	Include each recommendation from the OAG report on a separate row	Briefly describe the action(s) you plan to take to address the recommendation. <b>Note:</b> If you have <u>not</u> accepted the recommendation, explain your rationale for not accepting the recommendation; this may include any alternative actions you will take and how those actions mitigate the risk underlying the OAG recommendation. <i>(Note: If your original "Actions Planned" description requires revision in subsequent APPA updates, please identify as "Revised" where necessary.)</i>  <b>Target Date:</b> dd/mm/yyyy	<b>Progress Assessment:</b> "Fully or substantially implemented," "Partially implemented" or "No action taken" <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> This section provides you an opportunity to describe the actions that you have taken, to fully implement the OAG recommendation. Also include any relevant comments that will help PAC members understand your progress to date and your assessment of that progress. <b>Note:</b> If the you have <u>not</u> accepted the OAG recommendation <b>and</b> have planned alternative actions, assess your progress as above and describe the actions that you have taken.

<sup>1</sup> The audited organization will be required to present their initial action plan at this meeting (i.e. First three columns completed for each OAG recommendation included in the audit report)

<sup>2</sup> For each recommendation, the audited organization should state whether or not they have accepted the recommendation and plan to implement it fully by typing either "Yes" or "No" under the number of the recommendation.

<sup>3</sup> Target date is the date that audited organization expects to have "fully or substantially implemented" the recommendation. If several actions are planned to implement one recommendation, indicate target dates for each if they are different.

<sup>4</sup> The Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) will request that the audited organization provide a yearly update (i.e. completed "Assessment of Progress and Actions Taken" column) until all recommendations are fully implemented or otherwise addressed to the satisfaction of the PAC. This is for the APPA update.

<sup>5</sup> This action plan and the subsequent updates have not been audited by the OAG. However, at a future date that Office may undertake work to determine whether the entity has implemented the recommendations. The results of that work will be reported in a separate report prepared by the OAG.

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<p>1. Yes</p>	<p>Northern Health, to create a more effective health human resource plan, consider a broad range of factors, including community characteristics, population health needs, scope of practice, stakeholder input and current circumstances.</p>	<p>Complete comprehensive Health Human Resources Plan Target Date: 01/04/19 - Completed</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully implemented</p> <p><b>Action Taken &amp; Discussion:</b></p> <p>November 2017 to 2019 – Implementation of a Workforce Planning Toolkit at the departmental levels using a phased in approach across the Health Authority. The Workforce Planning Toolkit will collect data and information specific to operational challenges and incorporate strategic initiatives to augment unit specific needs. The workforce planning process will include feedback from various stakeholders and will inform an overarching recruitment strategy for RNs and NPs. Operational Workforce Planning was completed in early 2019. February 2020 – HR Metrics and workforce profile information continues to be available for operational leadership to support evidenced based decision making.</p> <p>March 2018 – Established a work plan incorporating key target dates required for the delivery of the HHR Plan by April 2019. The HHR Plan will incorporate the Workforce Planning Toolkit analysis, community needs, scope of practice and stakeholder input. This work plan includes the completion of a comprehensive Recruitment and Retention Strategy. Northern Health has undertaken the development of a robust Health Human Resource plan (HHR) incorporating a multi-faceted approach to workforce planning, recruitment and retention. The HRS plan incorporates the workforce planning toolkit that collects data and information specific to operational challenges and incorporates strategic initiatives to augment unit specific needs.</p> <p>Actions contributing to the development of the HHR plan: In April 2018, Nurse Practitioner (NP) recruitment transitioned to Medical Affairs to align NPs with Physicians.</p> <p>Northern Health conducted focus groups with Northern Health staff and leaders. May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Professional Practice- Nursing May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 North West Leadership Forum June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 North East Integrated Primary Care</p> <p>February 2020- In January 2020 NH HHR plan was presented to Executive, Governance and Management Relations Committee of the Northern Health board, and the NH Board for review and approval. Recommendations from Executive and Board were incorporated into the plan and received final approval in March 2020 from NH Executive.</p> <p>The HHR plan incorporated tracking of strategic actions and metrics that will be measured and updated on an annual basis (update in progress Feb 2021 including new priority professions that have been identified). Profession specific plans will be reviewed and updated annually. Metrics have been incorporated into each section of the HHR plan.</p>
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2. Yes	That Northern Health work with communities and the provincial government to expand temporary and long-term affordable housing options in northern rural and remote communities.	<p>Implementation of Strategies for Rural and Remote Nursing Recruitment Target Date: 01/06/18 - Completed</p> <p>Partnership with Local and Regional Government Target Date: 31-01-21 – Completed (and Ongoing)</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> Northern Health received Ministry of Health funding in 2017, via provisions in the Nurses Bargaining Association collective agreement, to pilot an Introductory Housing program that helps offset housing challenges in northern communities by securing properties that can be temporarily rented by staff as they work to obtain permanent housing. Communities for housing confirmed by April 15, 2018 with housing secured by June 1, 2018. Housing was confirmed for Fort St. John in 2018. Northern Health continues to work with local communities, local governments, and the province are ongoing to address additional housing needs in various communities.</p> <p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> Northern Health has a long-standing practice of engaging with communities and stakeholders to develop and implement recruitment/retention initiatives. For example, partnering with the Peace River Regional District where the Board recognized the need for more health care workers in the region and has built a scholarship program for this reason. This program will help to recruit new workers and encourage current workers to expand their skills. Northern Health continues to offer scholarships in partnership with the Peace River Regional District. In 2021 Northern Health worked with a community in the Northwest to support a similar program.</p> <p>Northern Health Recruitment Services meets bi- annually with First Nations Health Authority to identify options for collaborating on housing in our communities throughout the North beginning September 2018.</p>

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<p>3. Yes</p>	<p>That the University of Northern British Columbia and the Ministries of Health and Advanced Education (sic) work with Northern Health and other key stakeholders to analyze the distribution of nursing education programs in the north and implement changes to address regional recruitment challenges.</p>	<p>Consider Northeast BC Nursing Training Program Target Date: 03/31/18 - Completed</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented</p> <p><b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b></p> <p>The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) and Northern Health collaborated on a proposal for a nursing program in the northeast quadrant of the province (e.g., Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, and Fort Nelson).</p> <p>A formal proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST) July 2018. The proposal was shared to Ministry of Health (MoH) to complete a review and share findings back to AEST. The proposal was discussed and endorsed in principal by the Planning Board for Health and Medical Education (PBHME).</p> <p>Funding to address regional pressures for nursing education in the northeast was requested in a Treasury Board submission in the fall 2018 and was approved as of February 25, 2019.</p> <p>February 2020- Funding was approved for a Northern Baccalaureate Nursing Program (NBNP) in Fort St. John, B.C., the first Nursing degree program in the North East. UNBC Senate and Board of Governors approved the program in Fall 2019. The first intake of this program is scheduled for September 2021 and will admit 16 students (with 32 students anticipated at full capacity). The program was expected to launch Sept 2020; however, there were delays associated with COVID-19 that impacted construction, equipment procurement and faculty recruitment, as well as low student enrolment. Key partners, including Northern Health, have initiated meetings to support this program. UNBC is working with Northern Health to finalize the clinical placement requirements for this program; this includes identifying clinical placement opportunities in new practice areas as well as expanding capacity in existing placement areas. Previously, students travelled to Prince George or Terrace. Now, students are able to study closer to home.</p> <p>In September 2020, the first UNBC Northern Masters of Physiotherapy program will intake 20 full time students. Admission preference will be given to those from rural backgrounds.</p> <p>In September 2020, the first UNBC Northern Master of Occupational Therapy Northern and Rural Cohort will intake 8 fulltime students. The number of fulltime students will increase to 16 in September 2022.</p> <p>Increased supply in Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy in the north will increase capacity required to implement interprofessional teams and attract nurses and other health care professionals interested in working within these teams.</p>
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		<p>Expanding Access to Nursing Education in the North Target Date: 01-09-21 - Ongoing</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Substantially Implemented</p> <p><b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b></p> <p>Northern Health, UNBC and local community colleges continue to work together to maximize educational opportunities and clinical practica for nurses. The practice-driven Rural Nursing Certificate Program at the University of Northern British Columbia is a key educational component for nurses practicing in rural communities.</p> <p>June 2018 Implemented a UNBC School of Nursing/ NH Clinical Placement Working Group. This group is developing collaborative approaches to enhancing our clinical placement capacity and addressing barriers.</p> <p>August 2018: Implemented a NH Education Program Planning Collaborative to identify synergies in health human resource planning, support student success, to develop a framework for communication of current and future health care education needs, and to provide a mechanism for collaboration. Membership includes, NH Education, Workforce Planning, Recruitment &amp; Retention Directors, NH Senior Leaders, First Nations Health Authority, and northern Post-Secondary Institutions Deans and Leads.</p> <p>Ongoing Committees include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Health Professional Practice &amp; Clinical Education and Schools of Nursing Connecting Meetings</li> <li>• Clinical Partnership Working Group</li> <li>• NH Preceptor Development Program</li> <li>• Clinical Placement Stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Specialty Education Strategy</li> </ul> <p>February 2020: One of Northern Health’s priorities includes projects to enhance the supply of skilled resources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancements to the Travel Nurse Pool</li> <li>• Improving uptake/interest in Specialty Education opportunities and launching a pilot project with UNBC re 4<sup>th</sup> year nursing students enrolled in specialty education programs pathway.</li> <li>• Funding approval for Northern Baccalaureate Nursing Program (NBNP) in Fort St. John, the first Nursing degree program in the North East (see above re “Consider Northeast BC Nursing Training Program”)</li> </ul> <p>Northern Health has regular meetings with various educational and nursing practice stakeholders to facilitate dialogue for improving access and content for rural nursing training programs and assess UNBC nursing education program alignment with the recruitment and retention needs of Northern Health. For example, since 2019 Northern Health has been working collaboratively with northern PSIs to increase practical nursing cohorts.</p>
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			<p>Northern Health meets with the northern Post-Secondary Institutions health program leaders at Coast Mountain College, University of Northern British Columbia, and the College of New Caledonia every two months. The purpose of these meetings is to work through shared needs and share information about program cohort numbers and graduation numbers. Northern Health Education &amp; Development leaders meet with FNHA clinical leaders every two months to identify synergies and collaborate around educational programming in rural communities.</p> <p>September 2020: Northern Health hired a Recruiter, Academic Partnerships (one-year term) to liaise with Indigenous partners and communities, community-based adult and youth employment services and post secondary institutions to identify opportunities and individuals from non-traditional populations interested in health care careers.</p> <p>Northern Health continues to collaborate with UNBC on the Rural Nursing Certificate Program. NH provides input into the curriculum based on feedback from point of care staff and leaders. This program is also embedded within specialty nursing training process.</p> <p>Northern Health collaborates with UNBC to provide student access to locally developed specialty education courses in Prince George (Pediatrics, NICU and perinatal). We have also been working closely with UNBC to develop a pediatric specialty course.</p> <p>As NH moves to a Service Network model, the Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs) are becoming aptly prepared to provide an education lens and support a regional approach to strategic initiatives in NH. One to two clinical educators will be assigned to each clinical Service Network. Their purpose is to represent Education and Development at a regional level. They will be assessing education needs and implementation requirements within strategic priorities as well as providing an education lens to the development of metrics.</p>

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4 Yes	That Northern Health continue to work with the British Columbia Nurses' Union to develop and implement new recruitment and retention programs for RNs in the north.	Targeted Strategies with BC Nurses Union to Recruit and Retain Rural Nurses: The Ministry, HEABC and the Nurses' Bargaining Association negotiated a \$2 million fund to support recruitment and retention strategies in rural BC health authorities. Target Date: 31-01-21 - Completed (and Ongoing)	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented</p> <p><b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b></p> <p>Northern Health received Ministry of Health funding in 2017, via provisions in the Nurses Bargaining Association collective agreement, to pilot an Introductory Housing program that helps offset housing challenges in northern communities (see above).</p> <p>Northern Health has implemented a Travel Nurse Pool employing nurses that NH can assign to various worksites within the health authority.</p> <p>February 2020: The Strategic Nurse Staffing Committee meets on a monthly basis to consult on health authority level nurse workforce planning including trends, activities and initiatives related to the following:</p> <p>Regularization of hours, recruitment and retention strategies, regular relief positions, other relief needs, nurse education and training (including specialty nursing), seasonal strategies, annual vacation, and other organization-wide staffing matters.</p>

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5 Yes	That Northern Health develop an RN recruitment strategy with clear goals and performance measures that guide its activities and enable it to assess progress.	Complete a comprehensive Health Human Resources Recruitment Strategy Target Date: 31/10/18 - Completed	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented</p> <p><b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b></p> <p>Northern Health has developed a singular and comprehensive recruitment strategy for nurses and other priority healthcare providers that recognizes the unique needs and features of the North</p> <p>Established a work plan incorporating key target dates required for the delivery of the comprehensive Recruitment Strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and Retention focus groups in each Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) which will include Northern Health leadership and staff, community members, and indigenous partners.</li> <li>• Identifying overarching recruitment strategies and profession recruitment plans.</li> <li>• Implemented standardized recruitment philosophies.</li> </ul> <p>Identified and implemented key performance indicators and recruitment metrics to monitor progress of the strategy.</p> <p>February 2020- NH HHR Plan incorporates New Graduate RN recruitment strategies, metrics, and goals including annual updates for Executive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NH successfully enhanced its Employee Referral Program and referrals changed from 3 referrals in 2017, 5 referrals in 2018, and increased to 14 referrals in 2019 after implementation of the changes.</li> <li>• The Travel Nurse Pool is operational and currently has 8 nurses employed.</li> <li>• NH is implementing Advanced Hire positions for New Graduate RNs in March 2020. This initiative promotes workforce sustainability by providing more opportunity for new graduates and to build our RN workforce.</li> <li>• NH is contacting Employed Student Nurses (ESNs) and offering them casual employment conditional upon successful graduation and registration.</li> </ul>

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6 Yes	That Northern Health establish clear responsibilities for all aspects of its recruitment and hiring processes, including oversight.	<p>Create a Regional Director, Recruitment and Retention Position Target Date: 28/02/18 - Completed</p> <p>Collaborative Focus for the Health Authority in all aspects of Recruitment and Retention Target Date: 01/05/18 - Completed</p> <p>Reviewed and Refreshed Current Manager Recruitment and Retention training resources and processes Target Date: 31/03/19 - Completed</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> In February 2018, Northern Health’s Human Resources department created a Regional Director, Recruitment and Retention position to enable a region-wide focus on attracting and retaining nurses and other health care professionals. This position has clear responsibilities for all aspects of Northern Health’s recruitment and hiring processes including identification and monitoring of metrics.</p> <p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> Northern Health Recruitment meets with senior leaders to have a focused review of all current postings and are intended to result in a more proactive approach to recruitment and retention of nurses and other health care providers, i.e. Managers connect with qualified candidates upon receipt of their application within 48 hours.</p> <p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Fully Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> Northern Health reviewed and refreshed current HR training, processes and resources for managers to enable improved and transparent practices for the recruitment, selection, and retention of nurses and other health care providers. Northern Health reviewed and refreshed the recruitment manager orientation training. Northern Health has revised and enhanced the curriculum for the Northern Health recruitment training workshop. Northern Health Recruitment continues to provide orientation training for managers. The curriculum for the recruitment training workshop has been revised. Northern Health has introduced a values based approach to interview guides.</p>

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			<p>Phase Two Clinical Skills are completed within the 3-month probationary or as defined within the schedule of the plan. Orientation plans can be adapted where relevant and within the scope of practice to other health care professionals.</p> <p>A review of CAPE tools to be completed by February 1, 2021; to be entered in a Learning Hub shell by end of March 2021. Information Technology Services (ITS) to work on developing a Managers dashboard to track education needs for individuals and teams (anticipated by summer 2021).</p> <p>Phase Two was completed for Community Based Services on December 31, 2019. Phase Two for Long Term Care and Specialized Services will be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Long term care Cape tools under review and to be installed in the Learning Hub shell by end of March 2021). Acute care is in the queue for completion Fall 2021.</p> <p><i>Phase Three:</i> Phase Three is specific education relevant to the department and unit the RN works within. This education will be developed in consultation with local leadership, to ensure the needs of their departments and units are met. Phase Three moves beyond “standardized orientation” and is therefore inclusive of unit specific education requirements. The Clinical Education Team will assist Managers/Team Leaders to develop Competency, Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation (CAPE) tools to ensure efficient tracking of unit competencies and staff development needs to meet those competencies. The work on Phase Three will commence in spring 2019.</p> <p>NH has fully implemented a refreshed Northern Health Onboarding Program. Soon to be available is a new Manager orientation including a comprehensive health and safety orientation and site-specific checklist.</p> <p>NH has developed an interprofessional training curriculum that will be specifically delivered to rural and remote sites utilizing simulation. The aim of this approach is not only to develop skills, but also to develop trusting working relationships between the physician group, interprofessional team and nurses. The goal of this program is to improve retention and morale in rural and remote sites, through building and supporting interprofessional relationships.</p> <p>February 2020: Phase Three for Community Based Services will be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. This work is ahead of schedule. All other streams will commence in alignment with Phase two timelines identified.</p>

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<p>Earning Hub 9 Yes</p>	<p>That Northern Health develop an RN retention strategy with clear goals and performance measures that guide its activities and enable it to assess progress</p>	<p>Complete a comprehensive Health Human Resources Retention Strategy with a focus on psychological health and safety in the workplace (PHSW). Target Date: 30/04/2019</p>	<p><b>Progress Assessment:</b> Substantially Implemented <b>Actions Taken &amp; Discussion:</b> Northern Health established a work plan incorporating key target dates required for the delivery of the comprehensive Recruitment and Retention Strategy. This timeline included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and Retention focus groups in each Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) which included Northern Health leadership and staff, community members, and indigenous partners.</li> <li>• Identifying overarching recruitment strategies and profession recruitment plans (Sept 2018)</li> <li>• Implemented recruitment philosophies</li> </ul> <p>Northern Health has developed a comprehensive Health Human Resources Strategy, inclusive of a comprehensive retention strategy for nurses and other priority healthcare providers that recognizes the unique need and features of the North (updated on an annual basis)</p> <p>February 2021: NH is increasing psychological health and safety and cultural safety awareness in its workplaces and to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health. It is important to recognize, address, and treat mental health with the same attention as physical health or any other health-related condition. In NH, the well-being of every worker is a priority</p> <p>NH is well positioned for implementation the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (PHSW) Standard with clear and strong alignment to the current Strategic Plan which extends to 2023. In June 2019, NH convened a PHSW Working Group with representatives from all major health care unions, operational leadership representatives, HR/organizational development, Doctors of BC, local physician, and medical affairs. This working group will help guide the implementation of the Standard. A Communications plan has been developed to raise awareness/ and understanding of workplace PHS (initial introduction to the PHS Standard; monthly status update on the 13 workplace factors (for 13 months). Also, staff and leadership COVID-19 related memos have been circulated.</p> <p>A priority initiative for NH to complete is focused work on organizational culture. An important component is the analysis of the culture and engagement surveys that have been done by Doctors of BC and within NH over the past few years (four-year cycle as per Accreditation Canada expectation). This survey will transition to the Guarding Minds at Work survey (aligns with PHSW Standard) in spring 2021.</p> <p>The desired future state is for Northern Health’s organizational culture (<i>the Northern Way of Caring</i>) to be focused on person- and family-centred care and continuous quality improvement, within an environment that is physically, psychologically and culturally safe.</p>
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