

---

# Clinical Scholar Program

Guide for Health Care Organizations

Ministry of Health

June 2023

## Purpose

This guide outlines details and requirements for implementing the Clinical Scholar Program (CSP). Hospitals are required to consider various factors, including those identified in this guide, to determine the appropriate implementation of the CSP at their facilities.

## Version

Current version: 1.0 (June 2023)

# Table of Contents

Terms Used.....	4
Overview.....	5
Hospital Eligibility.....	5
Eligible Expenses.....	5
Clinical Scholar Role.....	5
Program Beneficiaries.....	7
Financial Expense Submissions.....	8
Program Reporting Requirements.....	8

## Terms Used

The full form or explanations provided below pertain to this document only. The terms used here may have other meanings in different contexts and documents.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Full form or Explanation</b>
Program	Clinical Scholar Program
Experienced Nurses	RNs or RPNs with competencies to provide clinical training and mentorship to newly graduated nurses and take on the role as Clinical Scholar
Supernumerary position	Above the current number of staffing positions
"newly graduated nurses", "new nursing graduates", "new grads", and "new nurses"	Used interchangeably throughout this document, these terms refer to the program beneficiaries which includes nursing graduates, internationally educated nurses (IENs), and nurses looking to upskill.
"hospitals", "health care organizations", "hospital organizations", and "organizations"	Used interchangeably throughout this document, these terms refer to all 141 publicly funded hospitals that are eligible to participate in the program.
Nursing professional	Includes Registered Nurse Practitioner (NP)/advanced practice nurse (APN), Registered Nurse (RN), or Registered Practical Nurse (RPN).
"the ministry"	Ministry of Health

## Overview

Clinical Scholars are experienced nurses with frontline experience who are employed in supernumerary positions to provide mentorship to newly graduated nurses to support their transition into the workforce. Types of new nurses include nursing graduates, internationally educated nurses (IENs) and nurses looking to upskill. Each organization is required to determine how Clinical Scholars can be incorporated appropriately to best support workflow and patient management.

## Hospital Eligibility

Clinical Scholar Program (CSP) is available to all 141 publicly funded hospitals.

Eligibility inquiries can be directed to the ministry at: [ClinicalScholar@ontario.ca](mailto:ClinicalScholar@ontario.ca)

## Eligible Expenses

The wage and salary expenses associated with Clinical Scholars are considered eligible expenses for each participating hospital.

Other expenses related to the hiring and onboarding of the Clinical Scholars, conferences, and special projects are not eligible expenses.

## Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)

Organizations may employ a Clinical Scholar at 1.0 FTE in a supernumerary role. The FTEs can be distributed amongst staff based on hospital needs, as long as the role continues to be used in a supernumerary capacity.

The ministry will provide funding for the Clinical Scholar role pro-rated at \$130,000 per year (\$66.67/hr) per 1.0 FTE for the salary and benefits.

Please refer to the Director Memo sent directly to your organization's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that outlines the funding allocation for the CSP.

## Clinical Scholar Role

Clinical Scholars must work in **a supernumerary role** and must be experienced nurses with frontline practice. Experienced nurses can gain mentorship experience

as a Clinical Scholar by providing support to newly graduated nurses, IENs and nurses seeking to upskill.

Through this program Clinical Scholars are required to focus exclusively on mentoring newly graduated nurses in their transition into the nursing workforce without a patient case load.

## Clinical Scholar Eligibility Requirements

Experienced nurses looking to become a Clinical Scholar must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Any Registered Nurse (RN) or a Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) in the General Class; or nurses who have retired and still registered with the CNO.
- Experience in frontline care in a hospital clinical setting and competencies to provide training and mentorship to newly graduated nurses, confirmed by the participating organization's Professional Practice team.

Please note that nurses in a Casual contract and work type position are not eligible for the Clinical Scholar role.

The following qualifications may be considered as part of a more comprehensive selection criteria for Clinical Scholars:

- Excellent clinical skills and competencies,
- Outstanding communication skills,
- Previous experience teaching, working with clinical learners, and/or precepting,
- Demonstrated leadership, change management, and problem-solving skills.

## Considerations

### Clinical Scholar Mentorship and Supervision

Clinical Scholars are responsible for providing mentorship to the program beneficiaries and to support their nursing practice and integration into the clinical

area in accordance with organizational and professional standards, and in collaboration with clinical teams.

## Workflow

The CSP leverages the clinical service delivery expertise of participating hospitals. Each organization is responsible for identifying how the Clinical Scholar role is incorporated in its workflow.

## Program Beneficiaries

CSP beneficiaries includes the new nurses that will be mentored and supported by the Clinical Scholars. New nurses should work as part of the interdisciplinary team and may be under direct or indirect supervision of regulated health care professional in the care environment, as deemed appropriate by the hospital. The supervising health professional should be aware of the patients/clients' conditions, activities and associated risks for care and environment supports.<sup>1</sup>

## Program Beneficiaries Considerations

Clinical learners and students are not eligible as program beneficiaries under the CSP.

The training and registration requirements that should be considered for each type of program beneficiary are outlined below.

### Nursing Graduates

New nursing graduates beginning their practice as RNs or RPNs may participate as a program beneficiary.

Please note these excludes new graduates part of the Nursing Graduate Guarantee program.

---

<sup>1</sup> CNO, 2013

## Internationally Educated Nurses

Newly licensed IENs, IENs with a Temporary Class license, or IENs who completed the Supervised Practice Experience Program (SPEP) may participate as a program beneficiary.

## Nurses looking to upskill

Existing nurses currently transitioning to a new hospital unit whereby upskilling their nursing knowledge.

## Financial Expense Submissions

The ministry requires all hospitals participating in CSP to submit financial reporting through the [Health Data Collection Services \(HDCS\) website](#). Hospitals are responsible for the submission of the financial expenditure and key metrics on a quarterly basis whereby entering data for each month the CSP was implemented in your organization.

Hospitals will be required to provide the following information as part of their financial reporting:

- . Program metrics for the financial submissions include:
  - Compensation Expenses – Worked and Benefit
  - Number of Earned Hours – Worked and Benefit
  - Number of Employees - Headcount

For questions related to expense submissions, please email [ClinicalScholar@ontario.ca](mailto:ClinicalScholar@ontario.ca).

The ministry may request additional information from participating hospitals for program monitoring and evaluation purposes.

## Program Reporting Requirements

Hospitals participating in the CSP are required to submit monthly program reporting. The ministry will collect monthly program reporting through a Microsoft Forms link. The Microsoft Forms link will be sent to the program reporting contact(s) your organization has identified every last Thursday of each month.



The ministry may request additional information from participating hospitals for program monitoring and evaluation purposes.

- Number of Clinical Scholar headcounts cumulatively and actively in the program.
- Number of Headcounts of Nursing Graduates (i.e., RNs, RPNs, IENs) and Nurses looking to upskill who are mentored by a Clinical Scholar actively in the program.
- Numbers of hours worked by the New Graduates and Nurses looking to upskill who are mentored by a Clinical Scholar.
- Types of hospital unit(s) the new nurses have been mentored in.

### Pre-Program and Post-Program Survey

In addition to the monthly program reporting, the ministry will be closely monitoring program uptake and will be measuring baselines and key performance metrics. Hospitals are required to complete a pre and post program survey as part of their participation in the program.

At the beginning of the program, the ministry will send a pre-program survey via Microsoft Forms to capture baseline measures, needs and expectations of Clinical Scholars, new nurses, and hospitals.

Once the program year ends, the ministry will send a follow-up survey via Microsoft Forms to compare baselines measures of the Clinical Scholars, new nurses, and hospitals. This information will help determine program outcomes, including successes and areas of improvement. The ministry will be closely monitoring program uptake and will be measuring baselines and key performance metrics.