

HP “how to” Update

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We did it! New Agreement for Health Practitioners

A completely new career structure, significant pay rises, and new allowances for professional development, higher qualifications, on-call work, rural and regional work – the new HP agreement is a huge step forward for the recognition of our important role in Queensland Health.

Strong campaign delivers results

Queensland Health had previously refused to recognise the important contribution Health Practitioners made to the health system. While delivering large pay increases to doctors and nurses, they had refused to budge on an agreement for other health professionals.

QPSU members weren't prepared to be ignored any longer – that's why we ran an intense three-year campaign for pay parity, better career structures, and a host of other improvements – until the employer came to the table and agreed to a totally new career structure.

Significant changes to remuneration

The base pay increase is 15.5 per cent over three years. The advantages of the proposed new career structure include the availability of non-managerial higher-level positions, wage increases at every level, clinical career pathways, and new arrangements for on-call and clinical education support.

More groups included

After continued pressure from members and delegates, QPSU members were successful in securing the inclusion of most PO and TO occupational groups represented by QPSU. Members who worked a 36.25 hour week voted overwhelmingly to join the agreement, even though it meant moving to a 38 hour working week.

A number of other groups were included after the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission held a special arbitration to determine which of those outstanding groups met the definition of “Health Practitioner”.

Big wage increases

The first increase will be backpaid to 1 September 2007. There will be increases at 1 September 2007 (4%), 1 March 2008 (3.5%) 1 September 2008 (4%) and 1 September 2009 (4%).



HP “how to” campaign

A new career structure and our own pay scale

Under the new HP agreement, eligible workers will translate from the Professional Officer and Technical Officer classifications to a new Health Practitioner Classification.

The new HP Classification has a number of benefits. The PO2 / PO3 bands have been compacted into 6 increments at HP3. This will greatly increase the pay for new and recent graduates, and remove the requirement to achieve progression from PO2 to PO3.

Over the course of the new agreement, the wage increases for HPs will range from 16% to 40%. There will also be more non-managerial positions at higher levels.

Where to from here

- From 1 September 2007 all eligible PO's and TO's will translate to the new Health Practitioner Scale.
- Employees will be backpaid to the operative date.
- Employees will retain their pay increment dates - unless specifically adjusted in the HP Agreement
- Over and above these scheduled pay increases, most employees who translate to the HP will receive either a further minimum translation increase of at least 3% at the time of translation.

Further upward reclassifications possible

After the translation to the HP classification structure is completed, all HP's will have their roles evaluated through a dynamic work unit consultation process led by their work unit manager and Discipline Leader.

In the event that an individual HP disagrees with the way their role has been described through the Workunit Proposal process they will have the opportunity to submit an employee initiated application for evaluation.

Professional Development allowance

A Professional Development Allowance will be paid to all permanently

employed Health Practitioners who work more than 15.2 hours per fortnight.

The allowance will be paid pro rata as a fortnightly allowance. The allowance will range from \$1500 for employees in metropolitan areas to a maximum of \$2500 for some rural and remote employees.

Clinical Education allowance

The lack of support for clinical education has been a long-standing issue of concern for many QPSU members. The HP agreement retains the \$10 per day allowance paid to each staff member who educates / supervises pre-entry level students during their clinical education. Only one staff member is eligible to receive this allowance per student per day.

The \$75 per student per week funding to departments for taking students will be gradually phased out over the life of the agreement to be replaced by a flexible model that will provide in excess of \$10.4 million recurrent per annum.

Recognition of higher qualification

There will be recognition of relevant higher qualifications for employees at level HP1 to HP4.

Retention Payments

The HP agreement provides a retention payment for professional groups where there are supply and skills shortages, interstate and private sector wage disparity or a requirement to maintain critical service delivery. A payment of up to \$3500 per year can be applied for all HP levels for the life of the Agreement. Guidelines for the application of these payments are still being developed.

Rural and Remote allowance

The existing arrangements for rural and remote allowances will continue.

Happy Pay Day celebrations!

To celebrate the win for all Health Practitioners that this agreement represents, union members will be holding celebrations at hospitals and other workplaces across Queensland Health. Stay tuned for details!



Questions?

QPSU HP "how-to" guides will be helping members in the implementation of our new agreement. They will be able to guide you through the process and provide more information. You can also call 1800 177 244.

Combined with the Professional Development Allowance this will equate to \$4880 \$7300 extra per annum for employees working in rural and remote areas. There will be a review of rural and remote incentives during the life of the Agreement.

On-call / Recall / Overtime

The minimum payment for recalls will increase from 2 hours to 3 hours for all Health Practitioners at the existing rates. There will be a new clinical on-call rate of 7% of HP3.7 per hour for every hour on-call. The existing on-call arrangement will continue for all other on-call situations eg. where the on-call is of an administrative nature, consultations are predominantly by phone, or there is not a 24/7 service.