

 Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte Health Service Executive		Office of the National Director of HR, Block D, Floor 2, Parkgate Business Centre, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8. Tel: 01 6352827 Fax: 01 6352813 E-mail: nationalhr@hse.ie
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Circular 11 /2005

30th June 2005

To: HR Director
each HSE Area

Director
each Nursing & Midwifery Planning & Development Unit

Payment of Fees for Part-Time Nursing Degree Courses

Dear All

I wish to refer to the initiative introduced in 2000, by the Minister for Health and Children namely the payment of fees for part-time nursing and certain other undergraduate degree courses undertaken by registered nurses and midwives employed in the public health service (Circular 98/2000 refers).

As you are aware, the Nursing Policy Division of the Department of Health and Children has previously been responsible for the funding of the nursing education initiatives, including the part-time degree initiative. However, from 1st January, 2005 the Health Service Executive (HSE) has been responsible for all funding matters relating to nursing education.

The Department of Health and Children is currently providing assistance to the HSE on funding issues relating to nursing education and both organisations are working closely together during the transition period to ensure the smooth transfer of functions.

I wish to advise you that the part-time degree fees initiative will continue in operation until at least 2007 (including autumn 2007 intake), when it will be reviewed in the light of developments in nursing education.

The guidelines for the operation of the arrangements for payment of fees are as set out in Circular 98/2000 subject to the following clarifications:

1. Only nurses and midwives in the employment of public health care agencies are covered under this initiative. (Nurses and midwives employed in a private capacity i.e. private hospitals, private nursing homes, G.P. practice, agency nurses etc. are not included).
2. Nurses and midwives wishing to benefit from the fees initiative will be required to give a written undertaking to their employing agency that they will continue to work in the public health service (**immediately** following completion of the part-time nursing degree course) for a minimum period of time following the completion of the degree course. This minimum period will be either one or two years (i.e. 12 or 24 months) and will be determined by reference to the duration of the part-time degree course. The work commitment requirement will apply to part-time employees on a pro-rata basis.
3. A nurse or midwife on whose behalf a health service employer has paid fees in respect of a part-time degree course listed in Appendix 1 will be required to repay the fees if s/he:-
 - (a) discontinues or otherwise does not complete the course within the timeframe designated by the relevant third level institute, or
 - (b) ceases working in the public health service within a period of one year following the completion of the course
4. Where a nurse or midwife who has undertaken a part-time degree course extending beyond one academic year ceases working in the public health service later than one year but earlier than two years following completion of the course, s/he shall be required to repay 50% of the total fees paid by the health service employer on her/his behalf.
5. Directors of the Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Units should submit details of the full year costs associated with this initiative to Mr Larry Bane, Health Service Executive Midland Area, **and** during the current transition period the Nursing Policy Division, Department of Health and Children, as close as possible to the start of each new academic year but in any event not later than 1 November.



John Magner
A/National Director of Human Resources