



Exemplary Practice Handbook

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ACRONYMS

ANF NT	Australian Nursing Federation NT Branch
ANMC	Australian Nursing And Midwifery Council
CHM	Community Health Manager
CNE	Clinical Nurse Educator
CNM	Clinical Nurse Manager
CNS	Clinical Nurse Specialist
DBE	Department of Business and Employment (was DCIS)
DHF	Department Of Health And Families
EDON	Executive Director Of Nursing
EN	Enrolled Nurse
EP	Exemplary Practice
EP1	Exemplary Practice Level 1 (Nurse 1 or Nurse 2 or Midwife)
EP2	Exemplary Practice Level 2 (Nurse 2 Nurse or Midwife)
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HRM	Human Resource Manager
ND	Nursing Director
N1 / N2	Enrolled Nurse / Registered Nurse or Midwife
NT	Northern Territory
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
OCPE	Office Of The Commissioner Of Public Employment
PNA	Principal Nursing Advisor
PP	Professional Portfolio
PSEMA	Public Sector Employment And Management Act
RN / RM	Registered Nurse And / Or Registered Midwife
WWP	Work Partnership Plan

SECTION 1: EXEMPLARY PRACTICE POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy is to provide direction to managers of nurses, eligible nurses and others who are involved in the process of managing, supervising, supporting or applying for Exemplary Practice (EP) status in nursing and midwifery.

POLICY STATEMENT

Exemplary Practice (EP) is a status awarded by the Department of Health and Families (DHF), to eligible nurses and midwives for sustained performance in the clinical setting. Awarding this status is an incentive for DHF to retain nurses and midwives in the actual delivery of patient care and in the achievement of quality patient outcomes.

Enrolled Nurses (Nurse 1), Registered Nurses and Midwives (Nurse 2) who hold non-promotional positions can apply for EP status provided they meet the eligibility criteria. There is one level of EP for Enrolled Nurses (EN) and two levels of EP for Registered Nurses (RN/RM). Achieving EP status provides increased remuneration and prestige to nurses and midwives within the clinical work environment.

LEGISLATIVE BASIS & RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Northern Territory Public Sector Nurses 2008-2011 Union Collective Agreement
- Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2007
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council, Standards for Nursing Practice
- NTPS Merit Selection Guide
- DHF Exemplary Practice Guidelines
- DHF Managing Performance Policies and Guidelines

DEFINITIONS

Scope of Practice is defined as the activities within a designated role for which one is educated, competent and authorised to perform. These activities are established through legislated definition of 'nursing practice'; and complemented by relevant standards, limits and conditions as defined by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council Competency Standards for the respective designation. In order to practice an enrolled nurse, nurse or midwife must be able to demonstrate competency according to the respective standard.

Exemplary Practice is defined as clinical practice, which develops through participation in self-education activities and ongoing commitment to professional development in conjunction with experience and skill development that allows a nurse and midwife to work within an expanded scope of practice within a designated role.

PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

The principles and aims of the EP assessment process are:

- to recognise that EP nurses and midwives function above and beyond the norm of a competent nurse and midwife within their scope of practice;
- to provide an opportunity to reward DHF nurses and midwives who wish to remain within the clinical work environment and who consistently work at an exemplary level;
- to encourage and provide an opportunity for nurses and midwives to contribute to the professional development of self and colleagues;
- to recognise nurses and midwives who contribute to the establishment and maintenance of their own professional knowledge and skills;
- to ensure that assessment is carried out by appropriately competent personnel;
- to ensure assessment is undertaken in accordance with the Public Sector Employment & Management Act, Merit Selection process, using the approved assessment tool; and
- to give equal regard to all clinical areas within DHF.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal Nursing Advisor (PNA) is responsible for overseeing, implementing and reviewing the EP Policy and Guidelines, managing the database, audit processes and for reporting agency performance and issues that arise in respect of EP.

Executive Nursing Directors/Nursing Directors are responsible for promoting the award of EP status, the approval of EP applications and ensuring staff adherence to the EP Policy directions, procedures and processes defined in the EP Guidelines.

The specific roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the EP process are as defined in the EP Guidelines.

OBJECTIVES

The Primary Objective of EP is to recognise and reward nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses for sustained exemplary nursing performance within their recognised scope of practice and who significantly contribute to their clinical work unit.

LIMITATIONS

There is no limitation on the number of EP nurses. EP status is determined by merit and is not subject to quotas.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Full-time and part-time nurses and those on temporary contracts for greater than 6 months, are eligible to apply for EP status, provided they have completed DHF Orientation, Work Unit Induction, a Cultural Safety or equivalent Program, Mandatory Training requirements and meet the criteria relevant to their respective designation as follows:

- EN applicants for EP assessment should have a minimum of three (3) years post-basic registration experience in a clinical setting. An earlier assessment may commence with a direct recommendation from the Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM)/Nursing Director (ND) to the Executive Director of Nursing (EDON)/Nursing Director (ND)/Community Health Manager (CHM).
- RN/RM applicants for EP1 assessment should have relevant post-basic qualifications followed by one (1) year of experience within the speciality area, **or** a minimum of three (3) years post basic registration experience with at least one (1) year of that period having been spent in the specialist area. An earlier assessment may commence with a direct recommendation from the CNM/ND to the EDON/ND/CHM.
- RN/RM applicants with EP1 status applying for EP2 status must have held EP1 status for at least (1) year prior to applying for assessment at the higher level. Where an application is made in the third year of EP1 status and unsuccessful, at the EP2 level, it will be reassessed for continuation of the EP1 Allowance for a further three (3) years from the date of the latest assessment. This is to negate the necessity of the applicant having to submit a separate application for continued recognition of the allowance at the end of the three (3) year period.
- RN/RM applicants applying for direct entry to EP2 must have at least four (4) years post registration experience, with a minimum of two (2) years having been spent in the speciality area; **or** have held a promotional position (Nurse 3 Clinical Nurse Specialist or equivalent) in a like clinical speciality area for at least one (1) year within the past 3 years of professional employment.

EP ASSESSMENT PANEL

The respective EDON / ND / CHM will nominate a chairperson and approve the composition of the EP Assessment Panel, similar to that for the recruitment to a promotional position. It is recommended in the interests of impartiality and bias that panel members be selected from outside the work unit of the applicant.

Under normal circumstances panel members will be established as follows:

- Chairperson – EDON, ND or an appropriate senior nursing / midwifery delegate;
- Member – Clinical Nurse Manager, selected by the chairperson and the EDON/ND; and
- Member – an EP nurse or Nurse 3, selected by the chairperson and the EDON/ND.

APPEAL

An EP applicant may lodge an Appeal in writing against the selection process and/or decision of the outcome of their application to the PNA within 14 days of notification.

The appeal process will be managed by the PNA. The PNA will appoint an independent trained panel, which will include a delegate of the Australian Nursing Federation, to reassess the application and review the previous selection documentation. The Panel will make a recommendation to the PNA based on their independent assessment and findings.

The PNA will review and endorse the decision of the independent panel and advise the applicant and the EDON/ND/CHM of the outcome of the appeal.

GRIEVANCE

Under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act Section 59(b)* an employee may, in any case where the employee is aggrieved by their treatment in employment in the Public Sector – within three (3) months after the action or decision by which they are aggrieved, request the Commissioner to review the action, intended action or decision complained of. The Commissioner of Public Employment Decision under this process is final.

CONDITIONS OF EXEMPLARY PRACTICE

Exemplary Practice Tenure

EP endorsement will be maintained for three (3) years, unless the EP Nurse / Midwife:

- successfully applies for higher EP status;
- undertakes a temporary promotion or is successful in gaining a permanent promotion;
- transfers to a different specialty; or
- through the WPP process, is identified as not continuing to meet the EP criteria

The nurse or midwife may relinquish EP status at any time. This advice must be provided in writing to the EDON/ND/CHM, through the CNM.

EP status is automatically relinquished when a nurse:

- applies for and is successful in gaining a substantive promotion position; or
- resigns.

The receipt of shift responsibility allowance **does not** influence EP Allowance.

EP Nurses Seeking Temporary Promotion or Gaining Permanent Promotion

EP nurses may act temporarily in a promotional position for up to five (5) consecutive days without relinquishing EP status. The EP Allowance will be temporarily ceased whilst working in the promotional position for periods greater than five (5) consecutive days. The promotional position does not include receiving the Shift Responsibility Allowance. Upon permanent appointment to a promotional position, the EP Nurse will automatically relinquish the EP allowance.

EP Nurses Seeking a Temporary Transfer

When temporarily transferring from one clinical speciality to a different clinical speciality, the EP status and allowance will continue for five (5) consecutive days.

Continuation of the allowance for the total period of the temporary transfer must be negotiated by the applicant, supported by the current CNM, recommended by the new CNM and approved by the EDON/ND/CHM.

EP Nurses Seeking a Permanent Transfer

When permanently transferring:

- from one ward/unit to another ward/unit but within the same or similar clinical speciality, the EP allowance may be continued if recommended by the CNM and approved by the EDON/ND/CHM. If approved the EP nurse or midwife must participate in a new WPP meeting with the CNM to ensure that the WPP and relevant specific goals are included to reflect the needs of the new work unit. If this is not approved the EP Allowance will be ceased and the Nurse must reapply; and
- from one clinical specialty to a different clinical specialty. To maintain their EP status and allowance after a permanent transfer, the nurse/midwife must re-apply for the continuation or reinstatement of EP status using the standard application process and any supporting evidence. If no application for EP status is received the allowance will cease from COB on the day before the permanent transfer takes effect.

TARGET

All Department of Health and Families employees involved in the Exemplary Practice Process.

SECTION 2: EXEMPLARY PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Introduction

These guidelines have been developed to assist key stakeholders, nurses and midwives and managers in the practical application of the policy and management of the EP Process.

For ease of reference and access for copying they have been divided into the two (2) Parts:

- Management Instructions; and
- Application Process.

PART ONE - MANAGEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

The Primary Objective of EP is to recognise and reward registered and enrolled nurses and midwives for sustained exemplary performance within their recognised scope of practice and significant contribution to their clinical work unit.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF EP NURSES AND MIDWIVES

EP1 – EN & RN	EP2 – RN (Additional Key Responsibilities to EP1)
Engage in <i>exemplary clinical nursing practice</i> within a designated work unit.	<i>Initiate and lead a range of clinical activities, which demonstrate and model excellent nursing practice and promote learning skills for other staff within the clinical work environment.</i>
Engage in <i>professional development activities</i> that will ensure the maintenance of own knowledge and skills required for sustained exemplary practice.	<i>Actively participate in staff development and delivery of clinical education programs that support clinical excellence within the work unit.</i>
Assist in the <i>professional development of others</i> , undergraduate and postgraduate students and colleagues in the transition to the clinical practice environment.	Participate in the <i>formal education and evaluation of nursing students</i> undertaking clinical placement and new employees during the transition to the clinical work environment.
Contribute to work unit development of clinical policy and procedures.	Initiate and lead the <i>development, review and implementation of work unit policy</i> and procedures through research and evidence-based practice.
<i>Accept responsibility, provide clinical leadership</i> and assist with the implementation of evidence based practice within the clinical work environment.	Participate in the <i>development, review and implementation of patient flow policies</i> to facilitate work unit and health service needs.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The EP Assessment is based on the quality of the evidence and supporting documentation provided by the applicant.

The applicant is required to submit a current Curriculum Vitae (CV) and / or Professional Portfolio and demonstrate their ability to meet each of the essential selection criteria in respect of the EP key responsibilities, in accordance with their designated scope of practice.

The *5 essential selection criteria* encompass the key elements of exemplary practice that are clinical skills, professional development and professional contribution and are listed as follows:

1. Ability to apply *advanced clinical knowledge and skills* to the assessment and management of clients with complex needs.
2. *Commitment to own professional development* and maintenance of advanced clinical knowledge and skills.
3. Ability to *support and assist undergraduate and post graduate students* and colleagues in the transition to the clinical practice environment.
4. Ability to *contribute to the development of clinical policy and procedures* with advanced clinical knowledge, skills and through the application of research.
5. Ability to *accept responsibility, provide clinical leadership* and assist with the implementation of evidence based practice within the clinical practice environment.

Supporting Documentation includes Verification Statements, Description of Work Unit and referenced attachments supplied by the applicant as evidence to support their claims.

The EP Assessment panel / or members may contact the applicant and / or referees to further explore or verify claims made by the applicant or referees.

Refer to Section 2, Part 2 for details of EP Application Process.

Refer to Section 3 for the forms that are used for EP Application and Assessment Processes.

ROLE STATEMENTS FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The role statements identify the level of responsibility and tasks assigned to the positions of the key stakeholders involved in the EP process.

PNA

The PNA is responsible for:

- maintaining a central data base of EP nurses/midwives;
- undertaking annual random audits (minimum 10% of total number) of applications and assessment processes to ensure compliance with policy and procedures;
- managing appeal and grievance processes lodged by applicants in respect of their EP Application;
- reviewing and analysing EP processes and trends; and
- monitoring and reporting on EP issues in respect of collating Workforce data as required.

EDON / ND / CHM

The EDON/ND/CHM is responsible for:

- coordination of the local EP process including the promotion of the EP Allowance to ensure equality of access to all eligible staff;
- review and maintenance of all EP documentation;
- ensuring the applicant meets the eligibility criteria in accordance with the EP Policy;
- nominating the local EP Assessment Panel Chairperson and participating in the selection of panel members;
- approving Verifications to the local panel composition;
- offering advice and counsel to panels and applicants;
- addressing any procedural difficulties;
- providing feedback to applicants;
- **approval of EP status and allowance;**
- informing DBE salaries of EP Allowance payment arrangements pertaining to commencement, changes and continuation of the allowance;
- informing "One Staff Central Office" coordinators of details pertaining to EP recipients for inclusion of the information on the One Staff database;
- approving the notation of EP level on Staff Identification badge; and
- creating and maintaining Personal Corporate File (Trim) for all EP Applications.

CNM or Supervisor

The CNM or applicant's supervisor is responsible for:

- developing and maintaining an accurate Description of the Clinical Work Environment as per the recommended proforma;
- monitoring the EP status of staff and providing honest feedback in respect of managing their performance in respect of their EP status;
- undertaking scheduled WPPs with staff in the workplace and ensuring that relevant specific goals are included in those who have awarded EP status;
- completing the Verification of Nursing Practice Statement in a timely manner;
- being available for interview if requested by the EP Assessment Panel; and
- monitoring staff EP status as per 'Conditions of Exemplary Practice' and notifying the EDON/ND/CHM, PNA and Salaries in writing of any changes that may affect the payment of the EP Allowance.

CNE or CNS

The Clinical Nurse Educator (CNE) or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) is responsible for:

- promoting and supporting the clinical development of staff within the work unit who have or may be eligible to apply for EP status;
- participating in the work unit clinical assessment, education, support and review of staff who have or are eligible to apply for EP status;
- assist the CNM with monitoring the EP status of staff and providing honest feedback to the staff member and CNM regarding the staff members application of clinical knowledge and skills within the work unit;
- completing the Verification of Nursing Practice Statement in a timely manner; and
- being available for interview if requested by the EP Assessment Panel.

Applicant

Applicants are responsible for:

- submitting a comprehensive and complete application package, attaching any evidence that relates to the selection criteria;
- supplying further evidence if required by the EP Assessment Panel;
- being available for interview if requested by the assessment panel or during any auditing processes;
- developing and reviewing their WPP with their manager to include specific EP goals. this must be undertaken within one (1) month of receiving the EP Allowance in accordance with the DHF Performance Management Policy;
- being aware of the 'Conditions of Exemplary Practice' and discussing any change in EP status with the CNM or other line manager; and
- informing the CNM of any changes or concerns that they may have in respect their EP status.

In addition Applicants have the right to expect:

- confidentiality within the assessment process;
- that the due process of merit selection and natural justice will apply;
- a fair, equitable and comprehensive assessment is undertaken by a competent panel;
- information about the procedures for EP assessment;
- that they can withdraw their application at any time during the assessment period with notice in writing through their CNM;
- that the assessment process will be completed in a timely manner;
- feedback from the assessment process on request;
- regular performance development and review meetings with their CNM or clinical supervisor;
- support and guidance for additional education, support and advice if required;
- a review of a panel decision by Appeal if lodged through the Office of the PNA or Grievance if lodged through the Commissioner for Public Employment if required;
- that their EP application and assessment process may be audited by a delegate of the Office of the PNA to ensure quality standards are maintained; and
- that if they transfer to another area their EP allowance **may be ceased** as this allowance not routinely maintained. *Refer EP Policy: Conditions of Exemplary Practice.*

EP Assessment Panel Members (refer EP Policy)

Under normal circumstances the EP panel will be established as follows:

- Chairperson - EDON, ND or appropriate senior nursing delegate;
- Member - Clinical Nurse Manager – selected by the chairperson; and
- Member - an EP Nurse – selected by the chairperson.

The **Chairperson** is responsible for:

- selecting panel members in consultation with the EDON / ND / CHM;
- coordinating the selection process i.e. meeting, date, time, venue and distribution of copies of each application to the respective panel members;
- ensuring panel members are familiar with the EP policy and procedures and are aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- ensuring the panel completes their respective sections of the assessment in a timely manner;
- participating equally as a member of the assessment panel in respect of decision making;
- forwarding the entire, completed EP assessment documentation, marked 'confidential', to the EDON/ ND / CHM by the due date;
- destroying any copies of the application papers and working documents that were used during the panel deliberation process; and
- providing constructive advice / feedback to the applicant, on the assessment process and decision if requested by the EDON / ND / CHM.

The EP Assessment **Panel Members** are responsible for:

- ensuring the assessment complies with the EP policies, procedures and the Principles of Merit Selection in accordance with PSEMA;
- compiling an independent, fair and comprehensive assessment of the application against the selection criteria, using the correct form;
- obtaining additional information from the applicant, referees or the applicant's managers, where information is unclear or concerns exist, within a reasonable timeframe before the finalisation of the assessment;
- reaching agreement before making recommendations of endorsement or non-endorsement of EP status to the EDON / ND / CHM; and
- being accountable for the recommendations provided to the EDON / ND / CHM.

In addition the EP Assessment Panel has the right to expect that:

- applications will be complete, accurate and contain all relevant documentation;
- applicants will accept and respond in a professional manner to any communication from the panel in regards to evidence received on their performance;
- support and assistance will be available from a Human Resource Manager (HRM) or other authoritative resource in relation to procedural issues pertaining to the receipt of the EP Allowance; and
- the EP application and assessment process may be audited by a delegate of the Office of the PNA to ensure quality standards are maintained.

ASSESSMENT PANEL PROCEDURES

The EP Assessment panel is responsible for assessing the merit of each application and making a Recommendation to the EDON / ND / CHM for Approval.

The Chairperson will confirm that each panel member:

- is familiar with the EP Policy and guidelines in respect of EP processes;
- understands their rights and accepts responsibility in respect of the role of being a panel member; and
- has access to an EP Handbook to reference and use as a resource during the assessment process.

The Chairperson will provide each panel member with a confidential copy of the application/s and the EP Assessment Panel Member Scoring Form. This form identifies the key elements of each selection criteria that define exemplary practice.

Panel members are asked to review the application and individually assess the information provided, using the EP Assessment Panel Member Scoring Form. The assessment of each element is to be scored on a rating scale of 0 – 3 as follows;

3	Met	
2	Partially met	
1	Requires development	
0	Not met	
	Unsure	(where you are unable to determine a rating for the applicant)

Comments must be objective and note specific points that reflect the individual panel members' opinion of how they reached the relevant rating score.

The Chairperson will convene the panel to discuss the individual assessments of each of application. The Panel must compare and discuss the scoring results of each of the key elements and reach consensus on the overall assessment of each of the selection criteria.

The Exemplary Practice Assessment Panel Evaluation Record Form is to be completed and signed by each panel member. Comments on this form must also be objective and reflect the final decision of the panel in the respect of their assessment of each selection criteria

This form is submitted with the original application package to the EDON for Approval / Not Approval. This documentation and copies of other relevant correspondence must be kept as a Personal Corporate File within Nursing Administration for reference in the event of Appeal / Grievance and future Application processes for that staff member.

NB: The Chairman is responsible for destroying all additional copies of the application and any panel working documents associated with the EP assessment panel processes.

FEEDBACK TO APPLICANTS

Applicants will be advised in writing by the EDON / ND / CHM of the outcome of their application. Feedback can be provided to applicants on request through the EDON / ND / CHM. The information provided will not address specifics of the assessment process but be aimed at providing positive suggestions for career development. This will include a critique of the quality and presentation of the application, strengths and areas for improvement and any potential gaps in respect of the information provided.

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will:

- receive a letter from the EDON / ND / CHM informing them of the outcome of their application;
- receive a Certificate denoting their Exemplary Practice Status; and
- have their EP Status recognised on their Staff Identification Badge.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants:

- will be provided with a letter and written statement explaining the reasons why their application was unsuccessful;
- can request and receive further feedback and professional support if requested;
- with current EP1 status applying for EP2 status will retain their EP1 status for the remainder of the three (3) years. If this application is made in the third year of EP1 status and unsuccessful then the applications will be re assessed for continuation of the EP1 Allowance for a further three (3) years from the date of the latest assessment;
- EP2 applicants found unsuccessful will be re assessed for EP1 status at the time of assessment. The EP Assessment Panel will use the EP2 application as the basis for this assessment;
- may reapply for assessment at a later date;
- may Appeal the decision, in writing, through the Office of the PNA; and
- may lodge a grievance with the Commissioner for Public Employment under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act Section 59(b)*.

EP VERIFICATION STATEMENTS

Two EP Verification Statements are included in the application package and must be completed by:

1. the Applicant's Clinical Nurse Manager; and
2. a Clinical Nurse Educator or Clinical Nurse Specialist, from the specialty area, who is able to verify the performance of the Applicant against the Criteria as evidenced in the application.

The EP Verification Statement is a professional reference for the applicant. This Statement provides a rating of the applicant's performance against the selection criteria in the considered opinion of the referee and is intended to support the application. **NB: Please select correct form.**

Where nurses who have recently commenced employment in the Northern Territory are applying for EP, either Referee may contact their previous supervisor. The referee must / provide details on the Verification Statement if this contact has been made.

Intending applicants can use the EP Verification Statement as a mechanism of self-evaluation before submitting an application for EP status.

There are different forms for EP Verification Statement EP1 and EP2.

Refer: Section 3 for Template and Example.

EP WORK UNIT DESCRIPTION

A current description of the work unit is required to inform the Assessment Panel of the applicants work environment. It is a summary of the work unit environment and refers to the needs, initiatives and / or challenges specific to the work unit(s) and must be prepared and reviewed by the CNM using the standard template.

Refer: Section 3 for Template and Example.

EP AND THE WORK PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Work Partnership Plan (WPP) is closely linked with the EP program. It is expected that, as with all nurses, the EP nurse will engage in an ongoing program of professional development and review through involvement in a WPP with their manager. Once recommended for the EP allowance it is essential that the EP nurse and manager initiate / review the WPP within one (1) month, to ensure the inclusion of specific EP related performance targets.

The EP Nurse and Clinical Nurse Manager (CNM) should use this process to:

- plan and collate evidence;
- review EP performance against expectations;
- confirm their ongoing demonstration of EP; and
- review and maintenance of the EP Allowance.

Evidence of and commitment to participation in WPP is essential for assessing eligibility for Application for EP2 and Application for Continued Recognition of EP Status.

Refer: DHF People and Services Division Intranet site for WPP Policy, Guidelines and Forms

MANAGEMENT OF EP PERFORMANCE

When a CNM identifies that the EP Nurse is not satisfactorily fulfilling the requirements of their level of EP, the CNM must manage this situation in accordance with the NT DHF Performance Management Policy.

The CNM must differentiate between those aspects of the staff member's performance which are solely related to fulfilling the requirements of their level of EP and those that relate to designated standards of practice and /or compliance with Legislation and DHF Policies and Procedures. If, the CNM considers the performance of the EP nurse is in relation to:

- not fulfilling the requirements of EP then they must consider supporting and monitoring the professional development of the staff member through WPP and Performance Review meetings (*Refer NT DHF Improving Performance Guidelines*), **or** ceasing the allowance;
- not complying with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) competencies standards for Enrolled, Registered Nurses and Midwives, or Legislation and DHF Policies and Procedures then he / she must manage this in accordance with the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act Section 44(b)* and DHF Performance Management Policy.

In either of the above scenarios the CNM should advise the EDON / ND / CHM as early as possible of these concerns so that assistance may be provided to the nurse and the CNM.

Refer: DHF People and Services Division Intranet site for WPP Policy and Guidelines for Managing Performance.

EP DATABASE MANAGEMENT

The Office of the Principal Nursing Advisor will be responsible for managing and maintaining the central data base of EP Applications NT wide.

To ensure the integrity of the database the EDON / ND / CHM is responsible for advising the Office of the PNA in writing of;

- the outcome of any assessment panel processes; and
- any decision made pertaining to the continuation of or cessation of the EP allowance during the approved period.

PAYMENT OF EP ALLOWANCE

The EDON / ND /CHM is responsible for informing DBE Salaries when a staff member has been approved to receive the designated EP allowance.

Refer Section 3 for Exemplary Practice Allowance Form

The EP Nurse and their CNM have a shared responsibility in advising Salaries of any underpayment or overpayment of the EP Allowance and arrangements must be made to reimburse or recover any amounts owing in accordance DBE standard operating procedures.

**RECOMMENDED EXEMPLARY PRACTICE APPLICATION & ASSESSMENT
TIMETABLE**

Timetable	Critical Tasks
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend relevant in-service as required / available. ▪ Read the Exemplary Practice Handbook. ▪ Discuss intentions with Clinical Nurse Manager. ▪ Self-reflect and seek feedback from colleagues. ▪ Allow at least two weeks to prepare detailed application.
Week 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applications submitted to EDON / ND / CHM
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicants receive Letter of Acknowledgement for the application.
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EP Assessment Panel established.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EP Assessment/s Completed & recommendation/s forwarded to the EON / ND / CHM.
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommendations assessed and letters sent to applicants with copy to the CNM. ▪ Certificates prepared for successful applicants. ▪ PNA Office provided with information for the EP database. ▪ One Staff Coordinators notified to ensure staff information updated ▪ DBE salaries notified for payment of Allowance
Within 2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicants may lodge an Appeal within 2 weeks of receiving the notification of the status of their application.
Within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicants may lodge a Grievance within 3 months of receiving the notification of the status of their application.

PART TWO -APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLICATION PACK

The initial Application for EP1 and EP 2 levels must include the following documents:

1. Application for Exemplary Practice Form (refer Section 3);
2. Statements of Evidence against each of the EP Job Description Selection Criteria (refer Section 3);
3. Evidence of having completed DHF Orientation, Work Unit Induction, A Cultural Safety Program and DHF Mandatory Training.
4. Curriculum Vitae **or** Professional Portfolio for EP1 Application
(**NB:** Profession Portfolio is mandatory for EP2 Applications)
5. EP Verification Statements x 2 (CNM **and** CNE or CNS)(refer Section 3); and
6. Description of Work Unit (refer Section 3).

EP applicants applying for the Continued Recognition of their EP status are required to submit the following documents:

1. Application for Continued Recognition Form (refer Section 3);
2. Professional Portfolio;
3. Evidence of Achieving EP WPP Goals;
4. EP Verification Statements x 2 (CNM **and** CNE or CNS)(refer Section 3); and
5. Description of Work Unit (refer Section 3).

NB: *It is recommended that documentation are submitted up to three (3) months before the expiry date of their current EP tenure.*

The completed application is submitted to the EDON /ND / CHM who will nominate an independent EP Assessment Panel to assess the quality of the evidence contained in the application.

The EP Assessment Panel makes recommendation to the EDON / ND / CHM according to the outcome of the assessment. The EDON / ND / CHM has the delegation to approve or not approve this recommendation and will advise the applicant in writing of the outcome of their application.

ADVICE TO APPLICANTS

Applying For Exemplary Practice Status

EP applicants must describe how they contribute to the workplace through exemplary clinical practice. All applicants are responsible for preparing and submitting a comprehensive application.

Application Cover Sheet

There are two application cover sheets to be found in Section 3 of these Guidelines:

1. Application for EP; and
2. Application for Continued Recognition of EP.

Please choose and complete the correct form and attached the correct relevant documents as required for the specific process.

Writing Statements of Evidence against the EP Job Description Selection Criteria

The EP applicant must reflect on the Primary Objective, consider the Key Responsibilities as defined, and describe how they meet each of the Selection Criteria within the context of their designated scope of practice.

NB: The 'dot points' identified under each Selection Criteria are the key elements that define exemplary practice, however they are not meant to restrict the applicant from including additional information that may support their application.

SELECTION CRITERIA 1

Ability to apply advanced clinical knowledge and skills to the assessment and management of clients with complex needs.

The Applicant must demonstrate:

- *how non-routine decisions are made, based on the knowledge, skills and experience, using advanced decision-making processes.*
- *how any actions / recommendation may have improved the standard of care for the client.*
- *how they were directly involved in the management of the entire situation, including any involvement with or education they have undertaken with family or carers.*
- *how they contributed directly to the client outcome and any follow up processes they may have coordinated or been involved with.*

Enrolled and Registered Nurses and Midwives must clearly demonstrate that they acted within the scope of practice as required for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board. Reference may be made to Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) competencies or recognised advanced clinical competencies for nursing specialists e.g. ACMI, CCNA.

Suggestion: *use the STAR¹ model to describe minimum of two (2) complex scenarios where advanced decision-making processes were used and not routine decisions that are made every day by a competent nurse.*

¹ STAR refer page 23

Scenarios chosen should be complex with multiple issues that require advanced knowledge and skills.

*The **Results** should define the outcome and a reflective assessment of the overall process. Include a brief summary relating to any research undertaken, or additional skills and knowledge that may have been developed during the episode of care represented in the scenario.*

SELECTION CRITERIA 2

Commitment to own professional development and maintenance of advanced clinical knowledge and skills.

The Applicant must demonstrate:

- how they are actively involved in professional development activities that enhance their clinical practice;
- how involvement as a member of a professional organisation, network or group supports professional development and assists in the development of standards of clinical practice within the work unit or across the organisation as a whole.

The examples provided need to be current and relate to the current clinical practice environment.

*NB: Registration / Enrolment with the NT Nursing and Midwifery Board is **not** viewed as membership of a professional organisation.*

SELECTION CRITERIA 3

Ability to support and assist undergraduate and postgraduate students and colleagues in their transition to the clinical practice environment.

The Applicant must demonstrate:

- significant involvement in the work unit orientation and induction of new staff.
- how they support and assist in the supervision of undergraduate and post graduate students during clinical placements within the work unit;
- how they contribute to the maintenance and improvement of clinical standards of practice within the work unit by acting as a resource to other staff, clients and family / carers.

SELECTION CRITERIA 4

Ability to contribute to the development of clinical policy and procedures with advanced clinical knowledge, skills and through the application of research.

The Applicant must demonstrate:

- how they actively participate in quality improvement programs within the work unit that have a direct impact on the review and development of work unit policies and procedures.;
- how they undertake research and make recommendations accordingly in respect of introducing evidence based practices within the clinical practice environment;
- how they participate in the education of others through research, and review of clinical practice standards.

SELECTION CRITERIA 5

Ability to accept responsibility, provide clinical leadership and assist with the implementation of evidence based practice within the clinical practice environment.

The applicant must demonstrate:

- how they support the team leadership role, use initiative and respond to changing nursing priorities within the work unit;
- how they manage and deal with complex communication or interpersonal issues with students, professional peers, colleagues, clients and family or carers that may arise and impact on the efficient running of the work unit;
- how they provide clinical leadership within a multidisciplinary team environment.

Further advice on how to address the Selection Criteria

Selection criteria are the key competencies required for a position therefore, the EP applicant would apply the basic Principles and Guidelines for addressing the selection criteria as if they were considering any job application. These are as follows:

1. Collect the information you need

- Obtain the position description - i.e. have a clear understanding of the EP policy & procedures;
- find out the knowledge and skills required i.e. what is the standard required for EP practice within the work unit?
- Ask further questions to clarify the issues i.e. have a discussion with the CNM and /or CNE / CNS. You may consider this discussion as a part of your WPP with your CNM.
- Don't assume any details without checking with relevant personnel.

2. Identify each criteria

Write each selection criteria and break it up into distinct, workable parts. Avoid repetition.

3. Brainstorm your examples

Address each of the parts of the criteria giving equal attention to each. Brainstorm as many examples as possible.

4. Revise and refine

Consider the brainstorming exercise and choose those examples that will best support your application. Once again avoid repetition.

In respect of the EP Application, when considering each selection criteria, think of a scenario and consider how you can describe and demonstrate your ability to meet the criteria, using advanced decision making processes and methods that may be superior to other ways of managing the scenario?

It may be useful to apply the STAR model to describe particular scenarios or examples. Placing examples of how you have demonstrated your skills into the STAR model is critical for developing or supporting an effective statement.

The STAR acronym stands for:

Situation (briefly describe the context)

Task (what were your responsibilities or initiatives?)

Action (what did you do?)

Result (what were the outcomes?)

For each criterion:

- write the name of each criteria;
- start with a positive claim, using an active verb;
- give a specific example;
- describe how you acted; and
- describe the result – what difference did it make - to the client outcome / your practice /or contribute to the outcomes for the work unit.

When preparing your evidence:

- present the information in the first person (eg I did, I was, I learnt, etc);
- be clear, concise and factual;
- answers should ideally be no more than one page in length;
- dot points can be used;
- consider presenting examples of clinical case studies, using the STAR model. This can be written up and submitted as an attachment provided clear reference is made in the relevant selection criteria;
- avoid repeating the same scenario for each selection criteria;
- examples should be drawn from recent experiences (< three (3) years) and where possible should illustrate practice that can be verified by the Referees in the Verification Statements; and

- Be clear in the use of abbreviations and if used they must be referenced in the document according to academic writing principles.

Curriculum Vitae (CV) / Resume for EP Application

The CV must be prepared by the Applicant and **must not** exceed five (5) A4 typed pages excluding the cover page in Arial 11 point typeface or equivalent for ease of reading.

As with a CV submitted for a promotional position, the EP Assessment Panel are most interested in current and recent experience which highlights particular aspects of your experience and those key areas that support your application for EP Status. This CV is supporting document and information needs to be clear, concise, factual and easy to read.

A CV should explain to the reader what particular personal and professional attributes you will bring to the organisation. Therefore when developing a CV you need to determine which of those best describe you in respect of the particular application and then decide how you will provide the information and present the document.

A professional CV should include:

Personal Details

- May include strengths and achievements.

Qualifications

- Awards, institution, years, completed; and
- Non-award courses, training programs, etc.

Work History

- List positions held in chronological order, commencing with current position, emphasis should be placed on the responsibilities undertaken.

Professional Development

- In-service/course as a participant, year, presenter, duration, course title;
- In-service/course as a presenter, year, audience, duration, course title; and
- Attendance at conferences.

Papers/Reports

- Presented/published, where and when.

Professional Associations, groups and networks

- Briefly outline details of involvement, e.g. current membership, any office/s held, activities conducted or participated in.

Other Relevant Information

- You may include involvement with community organisations, travel, cultural activities, national, state/territory, health service involvement, responsibilities, etc.

Referees

- Two professional referees are usually included in a CV. This is optional for your EP Application as the Panel will refer to the Verification of Nursing Practice Statements.

The information should be presented under simple headings.

Once you have established what content will be included in your CV then concentrate on presentation. Decide how you going to send your CV.

Professional Portfolio

A Professional Portfolio is a tool that is used for personal or professional purposes to demonstrate continuing competence in an area of professional practice i.e. clinical, education, research, or management. The structure of a professional portfolio may vary depending on the purpose for which it is being developed. Refer Section Three of this document for an example of the DHF PP model; however, there are many other professional models available that can be viewed through internet searches e.g.

- www.nmc-uk.org
- www.ncnm.ie
- www.rcna.org.au
- www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au
- www.nbwa.org.au
- www.nursesboard.act.gov.au

It is recommended that **all** nurses develop a professional portfolio that will provide evidence to support continuing professional competence. Increasingly this evidence is required by regulatory authorities, academic institutes, or employers to ensure the highest professional standards of competence are maintained.

Evidence of continuing professional competence may include **any or all** of the following:

- evidence of completion of professional development activities, including meaningful reflection or commentary on the PD activity;
- a recent satisfactory performance appraisal e.g. WPP with a statement of competence from the nursing employer;
- evidence of peer review;
- any other evidence of continuing professional competence in your current position; and / or
- a professional portfolio.

NB: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in respect of EP is additional to Mandatory training activities.

A professional portfolio, may be submitted in lieu of a CV with the initial EP Application to minimise duplication of information. Evidence of CPD is a mandatory requirement for an Application for Continued Recognition of EP status.

RECOMMENDED DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

The following Glossary of Terms may be useful when responding to questions.

Comment on	To discuss or explain it's meaning.
Compare	To show both similarities and difference.
Competence	The condition of being capable – legally qualified or competent.
Competent	Possessing the attributes, knowledge, skills and experience necessary to perform a job to appropriate standards.
Contrast	To show the difference.
Contribute	To give support – to supply ideas or opinions.
Criticise	Analyse and evaluate.
Describe	To give an account of (something – event). To trace the outline.
Define	To give the exact meaning.
Discuss	To examine, giving the details and the points for and against – develop a logical argument backed by sound evidence.
List / enumerate	To list, name and number the main ideas one by one.
Evaluate	To give judgement, after showing the advantages and disadvantages.
Illustrate	To explain or make clear by concrete example.
Improvement	To improve – to make or become better in quality- to achieve a better standard.
Interpret	To give the meaning. You give your own opinion, backed by evidence.
Justify	To show why you think it is right- give reasons for your statement or conclusion.
Maintenance	The act of maintaining a level of knowledge.
Outline	To give a general summary of the main ideas supported by secondary ideas. Omit minor details.
Professional Contribution	Engaging in conduct and activities worthy of a Profession.
Professional Development	To grow in knowledge and experience in oneself in regard to a Profession.
Prove	To show by argument or logic that it is true - provide adequate



	evidence.
Relate	To show the connections.
Review	To make a survey in which you look critically at the important parts.
State	To specify the main points in precise terms - omit minor details.
Summaries	To give a concise account of the main ideas.
Trace	To follow the progress or history of a topic.



SECTION 3: FORMS AND EXAMPLES

A: APPLICATION

1. EP Call for Applications
2. EP Job Description
3. EP Application Form
4. EP Application for Continued Recognition
5. EP Verification Statements EP1 (CNE/CNS)
6. EP Verification Statements EP2 (CNE/CNS)
7. EP Verification Statements EP1 (CNM)
8. EP Verification Statements EP2 (CNM)
9. EP Work Unit Description (template)
10. EP Work Unit Description (example)

B: ASSESSMENT PANEL

1. EP Assessment Panel Evaluation
2. EP Scoring Sheet Assessment Criteria
3. EP Individual Panel Members Scoring Assessment

C: EP ALLOWANCE FORM