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AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center

Nursing Fellowship Program Information & Frequently Asked Questions - 2010

Historical Overview

The Nursing Fellowship program through AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center (ARMC) was initiated in 2001. The program was designed to encourage and support a diverse population of employees and members of the community pursuing a career in Nursing.

The program affords students opportunities to attend the college of their choice. This has enabled ARMC to support both baccalaureate and associate degree preparation of students. Financial assistance provided through the fellowship is utilized to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and books up to a specified allocation as outlined in an educational agreement signed by each fellow.

Over the last several years interest in nursing as a career has increased in both high school and second career populations. Nursing schools have experienced record applications and are challenged with accommodating the increased number of potential students due to limited physical space, numbers of qualified nursing educators, and clinical practice settings. AtlantiCare has been a staunch supporter of our local nursing school programs as well as forming alliances with programs outside our immediate locale. The increase of interested students is greatly needed due to the projected workforce shortage expected to peak over the next ten years. One result of this heightened interest is the ever increasing competitiveness for acceptance into a nursing program. The required scholastic performance for entrance into and completion of a program has created additional challenges for a number of college bound students.

What is a Nursing fellowship?

A fellowship is a specified sum of money allocated to cover college expenses for Nursing School. The primary expense covered is tuition. The fellowship may cover 100% of your tuition, books, and college fees or it may cover a smaller amount; based on the college you attend, tuition, fees, and book costs. It does not cover room and board or miscellaneous expenses.

Expected requirements such as maintenance of grade point average and communication with fellowship staff are part of the fellowship role. A timeline for completion of your education will be outlined for all candidates when offered a fellowship. Failure to comply with fellowship requirements can result in loss of the fellowship and repayment of funds.

The Nursing fellowship program is for completion of a pre-licensure Registered Nurse program only.

What are the eligibility requirements?

Eligibility requirements are defined below-

- **AtlantiCare employees** – Category 1 – Full time or part time employees. Potential candidates must have completed one year of employment and have been accepted or are waiting confirmation of acceptance into a pre-licensure AD or BSN nursing program. (If you are an employee and are currently enrolled in pre-nursing courses continue to use the tuition reimbursement benefit for those courses). *You must submit documentation of acceptance or application for admission to a Nursing program.* Please use the Employee application form.
- **AtlantiCare employees** – Category 2 – Nursing resource department (pool – employees) or employees who are not eligible for tuition reimbursement and have been employed for a minimum of 2 years (January – December). You must have worked 4 Holidays (if your department is open on holidays) during that time. You may apply during your pre-requisite coursework. Each year you will be required to provide evidence that you have worked a minimum of 480 hours and a minimum of 2 Holidays (as required).

(All AtlantiCare employees must be in “good standing” within the organization. This will include compliance with EWR and a satisfactory employee evaluation.). Please use the Employee application form.

- **Dependents of Employees**, Dependents of employees who wish to pursue a career in nursing and are graduating in the Spring of 2010 are eligible to apply as well as an employee’s spouse and children already graduated from high school (must have applied/been accepted into a BSN program or be enrolled/registered in a Community College).. Please use the Employee application form and check Employee Dependent.
- **Community fellowships**
These fellowships are being offered in an effort to encourage a broad field of applicants that will reflect the diverse community served by AtlantiCare. Students who are graduating High School in Spring 2010 and/or second career students living within a 50 mile radius may also apply (all community applicants must have applied/been accepted to a BSN program or be enrolled/registered in a community college). Please use the Community Fellowship application form.

We are proud to continue our work in collaboration with several community organizations who provide leadership and guidance to many of our fellowship candidates. These Atlantic County affiliates include:

- The Hispanic Alliance
- The NAACP
- The Philippine Nurses Association

When are fellowship applications available, and where can I obtain one?

Fellowship applications are **posted on an annual basis during the 1st Quarter of each year.** Applications are available via:

- AtlantiCare Internet (www.atlanticare.org/nursing under Nursing Career Growth) or through our internal Starfish Nursing Portal
- The Atlantic City NAACP, Hispanic Alliance offices or Philippine Nurses Association Members also have access to applications during this timeframe.

Follow the directions in the application, check for eligibility requirements as listed in the application, and submit with all required paperwork by the date listed. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

I am not currently employed by ARMC, if I receive a fellowship will I be able to become an ARMC employee?

You will be able to apply for positions that are available throughout AtlantiCare.

Will I be guaranteed a RN position with AtlantiCare?

Our fellowship selection process is designed to help us provide fellowships to candidates who potentially meet the criteria to be hired as a RN. During the last semester of Nursing school you will apply for a new graduate RN position.

I am an AtlantiCare employee. If I have applied to a RN program but have not been accepted prior to the application deadline can I still apply for a fellowship?

Yes, complete the application and submit all the required information including the name of the program you have applied to. A final decision for a fellowship award will be based on acceptance into the RN program.

If I have a degree outside of nursing and have been accepted into an accelerated RN program am I eligible to apply for a fellowship.

Yes, complete the application process. Be certain to list the nursing program you have been accepted into and the length of anticipated time it will take to complete.

What type of community service will I perform as a nursing fellow?

Each semester, Nursing fellows will be expected to participate in community service events to help promote nursing as a career and enhance health literacy in our community. ARMC nurse advisors or mentors will assist you with selecting events.

What is the length of service I will be required to work for ARMC once hired as a RN?

Length of service is based on the amount of your fellowship award. Generally, service obligations extend for 2-4 years.

As a fellowship recipient will I need to attend special classes or programs other than my college courses?

Yes, all fellowship recipients will attend an initial orientation program. Annually, you will be required to review a Roles and Responsibilities self-study packet which will provide guidelines to assist you in maintaining your “good standing” status as a fellow. Updates will be communicated via email or regular mail. Subsequently, additional educational preparation classes may be required based on your personal academic development. As part of the ARMC nursing family you will also be invited to attend ARMC nursing educational programs and celebration events.

What is a professional development plan?

After you receive notification of your fellowship award you will make an appointment to discuss with an ARMC nurse advisor your career goals, current grades, experiences and other information which can impact your educational success. You will then begin to design a plan that will help you to succeed with your goals. This will be

reviewed at a minimum of each semester or more frequently based on your needs and to follow your advancement.

What is the NET, and do all nursing schools require that you take this test?

The NET (Nurse Entrance Test) is a test that identifies strengths and weaknesses that can be useful in academic and career planning. Sections covered in the NET include: Math, Reading Rate, Scientific Reading Comprehension, Written Expression, Social Interaction, Stress Situations, Learning Styles, Test Taking Skills.

Not all nursing programs utilize this exam. Atlantic Cape Community College utilizes this as part of the RN program application process, other nursing programs may use a different entrance exam such as the TEASE, HESI, ATI, or NLN exams.

Interview Process

- A committee of professional nurses and community leaders review all applications.
- Potential candidates are further evaluated through an interview process at ARMC.
- Everyone will be asked the same set of questions in the interview – to really shine we suggest:
 - Be prompt
 - Dress professionally
 - Be able to speak to your application

ARMC Support System to Promote Success

- Access to a friendly and professional fellowship team
- Personal meetings, phone conversations, email contact to discuss your goals and needs
- Assistance in applying to Nursing Schools
- Tutors and/or tutoring referrals will be available upon request.

**If you are considering a career in Nursing please contact us.
We look forward to hearing from you.**

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Or visit us on the web

www.atlanticare.org

