

# Career Pathway Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Why do we need a Career Pathway?

A career pathway provides a clear set of expectations for each nurse or midwife employed in the NT, addresses issues of equity across the diversity of nursing and midwifery scopes of practice, provides flexibility with direction for change management, clarifies the often confusing nursing and midwifery roles for our multi-disciplinary colleagues, and offers each nurse and midwife a well-defined path for meeting his or her own professional goals. It complements the current pay points defined in the EBA.

## 2. What is the difference between career pathway and pay points?

Pay points are about employment – conditions, pay rate, duty statements.

They are missing professional progression, clear descriptions of expectations for nurses and midwives at various steps in their career, and guidance for nurses and midwives regarding professional paths and how to progress their career aspirations.

A career pathway provides that structured sequence of progression, including expectations at each step. It overlays pay points to give guidance for a sequenced and structured advancement plan.

## 3. Who has been involved in the Career Pathway discussions?

In April 2016 the Nursing and Midwifery Leaders Forum agreed to establish a Nursing & Midwifery Career Pathway Review Working Party to build on work previously undertaken in order to draft a clear contemporary career pathway which reflects current nursing and midwifery professional positions and DOH service requirements.

This Working Party includes senior nursing and midwifery representation from both Health Services, the ANMF NT branch, Department of Health Human Relations and Industrial Relations, and the Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer (OCNMO).

## 4. What is the Strong model?

The Strong Model is a model of nursing practice that was developed in the early 1990s. It frames nursing and midwifery in five domains:

- Client care
- Support of Systems
- Education
- Research and
- Professional Development

The Strong Model was originally developed in North America to describe advanced practice however it has been modified for the Australian setting and used in research, education and professional policy in a number of Australian health care contexts.

5. What is the Capability and Leadership Framework (CLF)?

The [Capability and Leadership Framework](#) (CLF) was created to develop the leadership capabilities of Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) employees. The CLF describes the behaviour expected of public sector employees at every level, from entry level to the Chief Executive. It can be used across all agencies.

The framework can guide discussions about individual and team performance and help decision making about professional development.

6. Why do we have qualifications as part of the Pathway?

The introduction of a qualifications framework for nursing and midwifery has been messy with inconsistency in levels of qualifications, essential vs desirable, how qualifications fit with the Job Evaluation System (JES) etc.

It is time to take a step back and explicitly identify the end goal as well as how we reach that goal. We also need to take into account the various entry-to-practice qualifications across nursing and midwifery e.g. a midwife may have a Bachelor of Midwifery, Graduate Diploma of Midwifery or even a Masters in Midwifery as their entry to practice as a midwife.

The Career Pathway seeks to clarify expectations and to link formal postgraduate qualifications, professional development and experience into the criteria and characteristics for planning your career.

7. What are the relevant qualifications for each step in the Pathway?

In Aug 2017 the Chief Executive Officer approved the [Relevant Qualifications for Nursing and Midwifery Positions NT Health Policy](#) which sets the following post graduate qualifications as relevant qualifications beyond N2 entry level:

- Nurse 3: Graduate Certificate beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty
- Nurse 4: Graduate Diploma or equivalent beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty
- Nurse 5: Graduate Diploma or equivalent beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty
- Nurse 6: Master's degree or equivalent beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty/field
- Nurse 7: Master's degree or equivalent beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty/field
- Nurse 8: Master's degree or equivalent beyond entry to practice in relevant specialty/field

Equivalencies are laid out in the [Relevant Qualifications for Nursing and Midwifery Positions NT Health Policy](#).

8. Are these qualifications essential?

As determined by the Chief Executive Officer, the relevant postgraduate qualifications will be advertised as either 'highly desirable' or 'essential'.

If a post graduate qualification is advertised as 'essential', applicants not holding the essential qualification cannot be shortlisted.

If a postgraduate qualification is advertised as 'highly desirable' and the preferred candidate does not hold the relevant qualification, the candidate must successfully complete the qualification with a period of no more than two years for Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma or three years for Masters qualification, from the date of appointment. Progress is to be monitored and managed through the Work Partnership Plan.

9. Will I lose my job if I don't meet the criteria/qualifications for my step?

No. The current proposal is for a four to five year transition period during which NT Health will provide focused support e.g. Studies Assistance, study leave as per local policy to achieve qualifications. Such support will be formalised through the WPP.

It is important to note that no-one is going to lose their jobs – not over the transition period and not into the future. Qualifications will come into effect when positions are created, restructured or readvertised. A grandfather clause will cover everyone for the position they currently hold however to change positions, especially if you are interested in moving along the career pathway, you will need to plan your education, professional development and experience. The career pathway will help you do this.

10. Is the Career Pathway part of the Enterprise Agreement?

The OCNMO has asked the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) who negotiates all NT government EBAs to consider ensuring that the next EBA (due mid 2018) takes into consideration all aspects of the Career Pathway.

11. Where can I find out more about the Career Pathway?

Visit the [Career Pathway webpages](#) or contact the OCNMO on:

E: [nursing.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:nursing.info@nt.gov.au)

P: 1800 000 648