

Employing a Nurse: Benefit Assessment Tool

Healthy Practices

APNA has produced a suite of resources to help general practices employ nurses and optimise their role in the general practice setting. Fulfilling these aims will help build Healthy Practices that deliver positive outcomes for their communities through nursing skills and expertise.

Is your practice ready to employ a nurse? This benefit assessment tool will assist you in determining how nurses can bring positive changes to your workplace.

Use this tool in conjunction with **Resource 18 Employing a nurse: Risk assessment tool** to assess the benefits to be gained and risks to be managed when employing a nurse.

Table 1: Benefit Assessment Tool

This table provides examples of benefits that may be applicable to your practice:

| Examples of benefits | Analysis <small>*Adjust for your circumstances, then determine rating using Benefit Scale (Table 2)</small> | | Explanation of benefits | Your practice strategies <small>Does this apply to your practice?</small> |
|---|---|--------------|---|--|
| Capacity to extend service delivery to patients | Likelihood | Very Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared clinical workload - Patient assessment and preparation of draft MBS care plans (GP Management Plans and Team Care Arrangements) - Patient assessment and preparation of draft patient MBS health checks and health assessments - Increased opportunity for patient education and improved lifestyle risk management - Opportunity to develop nurse clinics for in areas such as (but not restricted to) healthy lifestyles, immunisation, chronic disease management, men’s health and women’s health - Improved triage processes in the practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [Include your own responses and actions to maximise the benefit] |
| | Impact | Major* | | |
| | Benefit Rating | 5 | | |
| Improve range of clinical skills within the practice | Likelihood | Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialist nursing skills can provide valuable benefits, e.g. a nurse with expertise in asthma/spirometry management, a nurse immuniser, a diabetes nurse educator, a nurse wound care specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | Impact | Moderate* | | |
| | Benefit Rating | 2 | | |
| Management of recall and reminder systems for patient follow up | Likelihood | Very Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved follow-up of patients and more opportunities to provide outstanding continuity of care - Increased active management of patients requiring regular follow-up - Potential reduction in medico-legal risk | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | Impact | Moderate* | | |
| | Benefit Rating | 3 | | |

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|---|---|--------------|---|--|
| Ability to attract more general practitioners to the practice | Likelihood | Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General practitioners may feel more supported and professionally satisfied working in practices that employ or engage nurses - Improved work-life balance for general practitioners | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Impact | Moderate* | | | |
| Benefit Rating | 2 | | | |
| More time and expertise to manage clinical risks such as (but not limited to) infection risk (sterilisation) and cold chain management (vaccine management) | Likelihood | Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some activities that may have previously been undertaken by administrative staff can be more safely managed by a nurse - Nurses can expand practice policies and procedures to cover clinical areas | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Impact | Moderate* | | | |
| Benefit Rating | 2 | | | |
| Improved practice business administration | Likelihood | Very Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement in key areas of the practice such as accreditation, documentation, policies, procedures, services and resource management - Reduction in risks associated with operating a general practice - Marketing opportunity – that the practice engages nurses | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Impact | Major* | | | |
| Benefit Rating | 5 | | | |
| Access to additional funding | Likelihood | Very Likely* | (Current February 2015) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) funding of up to \$125,000 per practice can partially cover the cost of employing a nurse - \$5,000 PNIP payment for practices registered for PNIP but not accredited, to assist with attaining accreditation - Increased ability to attract PIP (Practice Incentives Program) funding, which will increase the general practice income | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Impact | Moderate* | | | |
| Benefit Rating | 3 | | | |
| Support during staff absences | Likelihood | Likely* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursing staff may be able to provide general support to other staff during absences of general practitioners or receptionists | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Impact | Minor* | | | |
| Benefit Rating | 1 | | | |

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| Examples of benefits | Analysis <small>*Adjust for your circumstances, then determine rating using Benefit Scale (Table 2)</small> | Explanation of benefits | Your practice strategies <small>Does this apply to your practice?</small> | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|--|--------|--|----------------|--|--|--|
| <i>Identify additional practice benefits here:</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <tr><td>Likelihood</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Impact</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Benefit Rating</td><td></td></tr> </table> | Likelihood | | Impact | | Benefit Rating | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
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| Impact | | | | | | | | | |
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Table 2: Benefit Scale

The following scale can be used to assess the likely benefits of employing a nurse in your practice. Connect 'likelihood' and 'impact' to determine the Benefit Rating (Table 1).

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Likelihood | Very likely | Medium Benefit: 2 | High Benefit: 3 | Outstanding Benefit: 5 |
| | Likely | Low Benefit: 1 | Medium Benefit: 2 | High Benefit: 3 |
| | Unlikely | Low Benefit: 1 | Low Benefit: 1 | Medium Benefit: 2 |
| | Minor | Moderate | Major | |
| | Impact | | | |

Impact description

- Low Benefit: the benefit of employing a nurse in your practice will be minor.
- Medium Benefit: the benefit of employing a nurse in your practice will be medium.
- High Benefit: the benefit of employing a nurse in your practice will be high, and is a strong reason to proceed with employing a nurse.
- Outstanding Benefit: the benefit of employing a nurse in your practice is compelling, and is a very strong reason to proceed with employing a nurse.

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APNA acknowledges and thanks the Australian Primary Health Network for use of this material.

This resource is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health.



Nurses are a healthy investment.

APNA provides general practice support and advisory services to help you employ and optimise the nursing role in your practice. Healthy practices, strengthening communities.

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