

FACTS

Applying to the Nurse Residency Program – UPH DM

As a condition of hire for UPH DM, all NLRNs (Newly Licensed Registered Nurse) with six months RN experience or less at the time of application are hired through the Nurse Residency Program. Applicants must complete an online application and apply for “Registered Nurse Residency”.

Program Highlights

The transition from nursing student to professional nurse can be challenging. UPH DM has created a Nurse Residency Program dedicated to helping NLRNs acclimate to their new careers. The one year program is the gateway for NLRNs to start working at UPH DM, occurring in five cohorts (groups). The cohorts begin in February, May, July, October and December. The first half of Residency includes a clinical track orientation and a series of thoughtfully developed seminars that will enhance skills in critical thinking, assessment, leadership and clinical decision making. During the second half of Residency, participants will have the opportunity to identify, develop and implement a Residency Project.

Our Nurse Residency Program offers orientation track options in specialized areas of care with either Adult or Pediatric patient populations. This allows NLRNs to focus on the patient populations that match their interests and career goals. Orientation Track options include:

- Tele/ICU
- Adult Medical Surgical (5 cohorts per year)
- Emergency
- Pediatrics
- Rehab
- NICU
- Maternity Services
- Behavioral Health
- Surgical Services

Benefits of Participation Include:

- Experienced preceptors, professional nurse mentors and nurse educators in all clinical areas who provide support and guidance through continuing education and professional development.
- The knowledge and expertise provided by our UPH DM content experts
- Focused training at the department/unit level after placement in a clinical area
- Use of clinical simulation to foster effective critical thinking skills.
- Participation in this program is part of the regular work assignment
- A series of seminars that will enhance skills in critical thinking, assessment, leadership and clinical decision making.
- Understanding that Evidence Based Practice is at the forefront of nursing excellence. Participants will have the opportunity to identify, develop and implement a Residency Project during their residency program.

Nurse Residency Program Seminars and Workshops

The program will consist of Seminars that promote professional socialization including good communication, problem solving skills, trust and understanding other point of views. Professional reflection with an emphasis on emotional intelligence facilitates individual professional growth. An introduction to Peer Review, Shared Governance and owning your professional practice is incorporated into our Residency Seminars. Nurse Residents conclude the program with the completion a residency project utilizing evidenced based practice and/or Adaptive Design principles.

Nurse Residency Program Clinical Orientation Tracks

Clinical Orientation Tracks focus on population specific didactic content, clinical skills and simulation to foster critical thinking and decision making at the bedside. Each Clinical Orientation Track provides a formalized, competency based orientation plan guided by national standards of care that progresses from simple to complex. Nurse Residents will work closely with preceptors and Clinical Education Specialists to meet performance criteria; learning core competencies and building knowledge and skills throughout the residency program.

Requirements for all candidates including current UPH staff

- Graduate of an accredited nursing program, preferably BSN or MSN
- Successful completion of NCLEX-RN (you may apply for a residency position prior to taking NCLEX-RN)
- Current Iowa RN License or Compact State RN License by stated deadline for each cohort
- Less than six months RN work experience at the time of application
- If current UPH staff, must be in good standing (i.e. no current corrective action)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR *APPLICANTS*

Q: How long is the residency program?

A: The Nurse Residency Program lasts for approximately one year. The first half includes the residency seminars/workshops every two weeks and the clinical orientation for the clinical track. A Residency Project comprises the second half of the program.

Q: What is “placement” in the Nurse Residency Program?

A: Each department will determine how many positions will be filled through the residency program for each Clinical Orientation Track prior to applicant screening. Residents are hired into a Clinical Orientation Track, specific to a patient population. During or near the end of the Clinical Track Orientation, nurse residents are assigned (“placed”) to a unit & shift.

Q: Do I have to wait to begin my employment at UPH DM as a RN if I have graduated, passed NCLEX and have my nursing license?

A: Yes, all graduate nurses must start their RN positions with a cohort.

Q: What if I haven’t taken my boards or found out if I passed the test? Can I still be hired into the Nurse Residency Program?

A: If offered a position in the RN Residency; the offer is contingent upon passing boards and any other HR hiring criteria. RN Licensure must be verified by the stated deadline for each cohort. If any one of these criteria is not met; the NLRN must reapply for the next cohort. In the state of Iowa, individuals such as internal PCTs may continue to work in their PCT role until they have begun to practice nursing in their first RN job.

Q: When can I apply?

A: Applications for the nurse residency program are accepted five times a year. Applications are accepted for all of the Clinical Orientation Tracks with the February, July and October cohorts. There are two additional tracks specific to the Medical-Surgical Orientation Track offered in May and December. Check the website <https://www.unitypoint.org/desmoines/nurse-residency-program.aspx> for exact dates and deadlines. Please note:

Q: How do I apply?

A: All candidates including current staff should apply by completing an online application for the “Registered Nurse Residency” posting at <http://www.unitypoint.org/careers.aspx>. In addition, ALL applicants (including UPH staff) should submit the following documents by the deadline listed on the website:

1. Professional Resume
2. Letter of Intent that answers/describes:
 - a. What influenced you to pursue a career in nursing
 - b. Why you are interested in the RN Residency Program
 - c. Where you see yourself in five years
 - d. An essay discussing the patient population(s) you are most interested in providing nursing care. Include an explanation of how the art and science of nursing specifically impact patient outcomes
 - e. Two written professional letters of recommendation; one from a nursing faculty member on program letterhead
 - f. **If current UPH Staff**, a third recommendation letter should be submitted from your current Manager
 - g. Official copy of Nursing School Transcript(s)

Please e-mail the above documentation to UPHDMNurseResidency@UnityPoint.org. E-mail is the preferred method, if you are unable to e-mail, please send documents to the following address:

UnityPoint Health – Des Moines
Nurse Residency Program
1200 Pleasant Street, ERC Ste 152D
Des Moines, IA 50309

Q: When should applicants expect communication after initially applying on-line at UPH DM for the Nurse Residency Program?

A: Upon completion of the initial online application for the Nurse Residency Program, if applicants meet screening requirements, they will receive an e-mail or phone call to set up an interview. If minimum requirements are not met, candidates receive a “regret email”.

Q: When and how are candidates notified of an offer or declination for the Nurse Residency Program?

A: The initial offer to the residency program is made via telephone by a hiring leader in the Clinical Orientation Track following completion of all interviews. Applicants not selected for interview consideration will be notified in writing.

Q: As a current UPH employee, do I need to do anything differently?

A: Yes, as described in the “how to apply” section above, you must submit an additional letter of recommendation from your current Manager for a total of three recommendation letters. All other requirements, including all stated deadlines and the online application, are the same. Your application and documents will be screened and reviewed following the same standards as all other applicants.

Q: Will applicants indicate clinical orientation track choices on the online application?

A: No. Applicants will indicate the patient population(s) they are most interested in providing care in the Letter of Intent and will also be asked about unit and Clinical Track preferences during their initial interview.

Q: Can applicants transfer among Orientation Tracks?

A: UnityPoint Health – Des Moines requires an individual to wait six months after date of hire before transferring to another open position. Specific to the residency program, because of the intensity of the six month initial orientation period, and in an effort to ensure maximum support and benefit to the NLRN, transferring before 12 months and thus the completion of the residency curriculum in its entirety is highly discouraged. However, in the event a NLRN is dissatisfied with the track they are assigned, this should be brought to the attention of the hiring manager immediately in order to discuss additional support or options available to the NLRN.

Q: If hired into the Nurse Residency program, what shifts and/or hours will NLRNs work?

A: The total hours worked each week range from 32 – 40 hours per week (full-time) during orientation. There will be some variation of numbers of hours per day and number of days per week during the first weeks. However, residents will not work more than 40 hours in a week and not more than 12 hours in one day during orientation. Residents will work 8 or 12-hour shifts during department orientation, with the exception of designated days for classroom or simulated lab instruction. There are regularly scheduled educational sessions that all NLRNs are expected to attend during the program. Following orientation, residents may work full or part time hours.

Q: Are NLRNs paid and eligible for benefits?

A: Yes, NLRNs are paid an hourly rate. Nurse Residents who are considered full-time employees are eligible to receive full-time benefits, which include:

- Health benefits (Medical, dental, vision, life insurance)
- Vacation (Sick and paid)
- 401k
- Tuition Assistance (after 6 months employment)
- Potential merit and market increases

Q: Can a personal leave be taken while in the Nurse Residency Program?

A: Participation in the Nurse Residency is a condition of hire. UPH DM considers your clinical track orientation and education vital to your successful transition into practice, therefore personal leave will not be granted during the time you are completing clinical track orientation, unless previously negotiated and approved by your manager. Any absence from a scheduled shift, class, simulation or residency activity will be considered an occurrence and subject to the UPH DM attendance policy. A maximum of three absences is allowed for Nurse Residency Seminars. However, all legally protected leaves, such as but not limited to those provided for by the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act or as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, will be complied with and any leave that falls under this type of protection will not count toward the maximum number of allowable absences in the program.

Q: Is a shift differential offered in the Nurse Residency program?

A: Yes. UPH DM offers \$4.00/hour for hours worked between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Q: After accepting a position in a specific department, what shift will NLRNs work?

A: In general, NLRNs are placed on the night or evening shift. Depending on the staffing needs of the department, there may be a day shift available.

Q: Should NLRNs attend school during the Nurse Residency Program?

A: We recommend thoughtful consideration of work life balance when contemplating continuing education during the Nurse Residency Program.

Q: Who is the best contact for additional questions regarding the Nurse Residency Program?

A: Christine Clancy, Residency Coordinator, can be reached at Christine.Crook@unitypoint.org or (515) 241-6864.