

NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM FACTS AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

FACTS

Applying to the Nurse Residency Program – UPH DM

As a condition of hire for UPH DM, all NLRNs (Newly Licensed Registered Nurse) with less than 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-Clinical Staffing”.

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 three cohorts (groups). The cohorts begin in February, July and October. The first six months 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 six months, 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 in either Adult or Pediatric patient populations. This allows NLRNs to focus on the patient populations that match their interests and career goals. Track options include:

- Tele/ICU
- Adult Medical Surgical
- 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 placements 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. Structured learning opportunities are specific to the clinical area using a focused case study approach to learning.
- 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 points of view. 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 of a Residency project utilizing evidenced based practice 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 formalized, competency-based orientation plans guided by national standards of care that progress 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 (you may apply for residency prior to taking NCLEX-RN)
- Current Iowa RN License or Compact State RN License
- 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 six months include the residency seminars/workshops every two weeks and the clinical orientation for the clinical track. A Residency project comprises the second six months of the program.

Q: Is the UnityPoint Health Des Moines Nurse Residency Program nationally accredited?

A: Yes, the UPH DM Nurse Residency Program has achieved accreditation with distinction from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Practice Transition Accreditation Program (PTAP). Having met ANCC evidence-based criteria, the UPH DM Nurse Residency Program demonstrates excellence in transitioning NLRNs to acute care practice settings. For more information please go to <https://www.nursingworld.org/organizational-programs/accreditation/>.

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. Nurse Residents are hired into a Clinical Orientation Track, specific to a patient population.

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 the 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. If any one of these criteria is not met; the applicant 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 three times a year for all Clinical Orientation Tracks. Check the table on the website <https://www.unitypoint.org/desmoines/nurse-residency-program.aspx> for exact dates and deadlines.

Q: How do I apply?

A: All candidates including current staff should apply by completing an online application for the “Registered Nurse Residency-Clinical Staffing” 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 impacts patient outcomes.
3. Be prepared to provide email addresses for 2 to 3 references. One must be a faculty member, preferably someone who has recently observed you in the clinical setting. If you are a UnityPoint employee, your second reference must be your current manager or supervisor. If you are not a UnityPoint employee, your second reference may be a faculty member or another individual.
4. Official copy of Nursing School Transcript(s) from registrar’s office at time of application. Note, this must be an official transcript but does not need to be the final transcript.

Please e-mail the above documentation to dm_nurseresidency@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
ERC Building, Suite 152D
1200 Pleasant Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

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

A: Applicants that have successfully submitted all application documents by the application deadline **and** that have met all screening requirements will be sent a link to schedule an interview via the email address on their resumes after the application has closed. Applicants not selected for an interview will be notified via email.

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

A: All offers and declinations for the Residency Program are made via telephone by a hiring leader following completion of all interviews.

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 for in the Letter of Intent and will also be asked about unit and Clinical Track preference during their interview.

Q: Can applicants transfer among Orientation Tracks?

A: Because of the intensity of the six-month initial orientation period, and to ensure maximum support and benefit to the Nurse Resident, transferring before 12 months and the completion of the Residency Program in its entirety is highly discouraged. In the event a Nurse Resident is dissatisfied with the track which they are hired, it should be brought to the attention of the hiring manager and Program Coordinator immediately to discuss additional support or options available to the Nurse Resident.

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 36 – 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, except for 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 the starting RN hourly rate. Nurse Residents are eligible to receive full-time benefits, which include:

- Health & Retirement benefits (Medical, dental, vision, life insurance, 401K)
- Vacation (Sick and paid)
- 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 are allowed for the Nurse Residency Program.

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 ADAAA, 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 pm and 6 am.

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: Julie Havel, Residency Coordinator, can be reached at julie.havel@unitypoint.org or (515) 241-4209 or email dm_nurseresidency@unitypoint.org