

# TRANSITIONING NEW-GRADUATE NURSES FROM THE GRADUATE NURSE EXTERN ROLE INTO INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

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## DESCRIPTION

Significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, health human resources remain in high demand and nursing shortages persist. Humber River Health (HRH) implemented the Continuous Student Model supporting students' transition into independent nursing practice. (Figure 1). This model offers the opportunity for graduating nursing students to apply for Graduate Nurse Extern (GNE) positions in order to retain them within the organization until they obtain their registration with the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO). By leveraging the provincial New Graduate Guarantee (NGG) Program, HRH was able to improve the ability to support and retain nursing graduates resulting in strategic growth of the nursing workforce.

## OBJECTIVE

To support new graduate nurse development through the NGG program.

## ACTIONS TAKEN

- Increased number of pre-graduate nursing students completing placements at HRH resulted in an expanded pool of future nurses.
- Newly graduated students were hired into GNE positions while preparing for their registration exams.
- Upon successful registration with the CNO, GNEs transition into supernumerary nursing roles under the NGG program, which is a long-standing initiative offered by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MoHLTC).
- As part of the NGG program, newly graduated nurses are provided with 12 weeks of supernumerary clinical training to support their transition into independent practice.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

By supporting GNE transition into independent nursing practice through the NGG program, HRH was able to better foster new-graduate nurse development. In comparison to the 5-week orientation offered to traditional new hires, the NGG Program's 12-week orientation facilitates the robust development of clinical skills and knowledge. Additionally, the MoHLTC also provides 8 weeks of reinvestment funding to HRH to support the professional development for their existing nursing workforce. In 2023, 49 NGGs have transitioned into independent practice at HRH.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Promoting GNE transition into new-graduate nurses through the NGG program supported HRH's ability to maintain a stable nursing workforce.

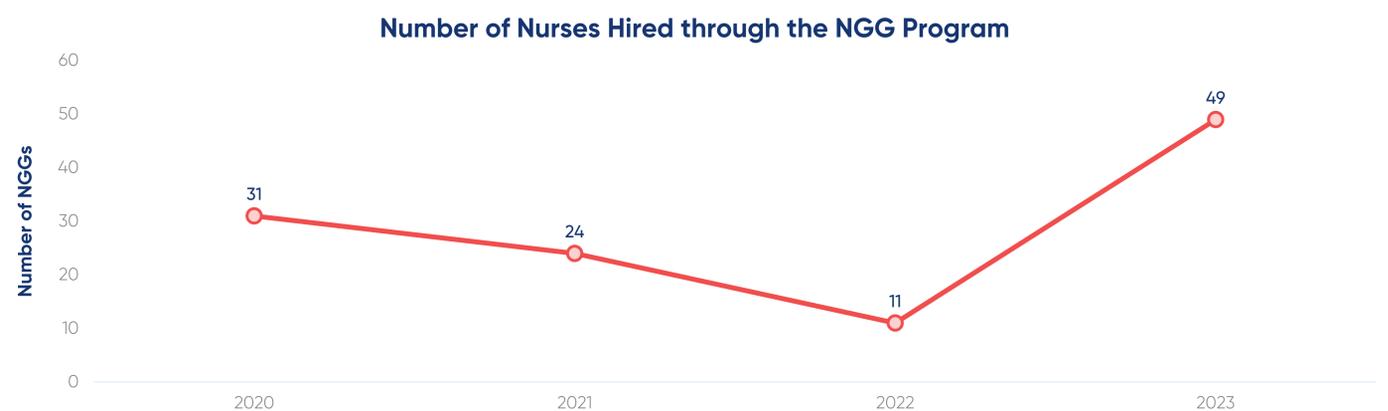


Figure 1.

The introduction of the GNE role in May 2022 role increased the number of nurses recruited at HRH through the NGG program.

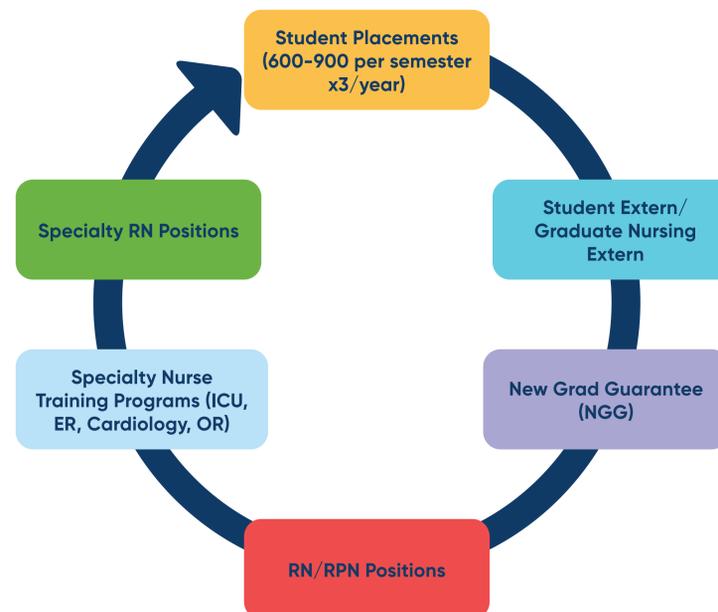


Figure 2.

HRH's Continuous Student Model. After placement completion at HRH, expectant nurses are hired as GNEs until they have registered as new-graduate nurses. The NGG program supports their transition into independent practice, after which Specialty Nurse Training programs offered to facilitate professional development. As nurses continue to mentor new students, this cycle is continued.

Reference: [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/hhrsd/nursing/docs/NGG\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/hhrsd/nursing/docs/NGG_Guidelines.pdf)