

NORTHERN ROCKIES

Recruitment & Retention Education & Training Incentive (RRETI) Program

Program Overview

The Recruitment & Retention, Education & Training Incentive (RRETI) program provides financial assistance and incentives to attract, retain and train priority health care professionals to work in the Northern Rockies.

RRETI is open to eligible health care professionals recruited by, and working for, public, private or non-profit sector employers, in addition to secondary school students whose primary residence in the Northern Rockies region, including the Fort Nelson First Nation and Dene Tsa'a Tse K'Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band)

Goals

The goals of the RRETI program are to:

- **Recruit** new health care professionals to the Northern Rockies,
- **Support** local residents who pursue health care careers and who intend to return to the Northern Rockies, and
- **Retain** existing health care professionals who are advancing their education and wish to remain in the Northern Rockies.

Principles

The program reflects the following principles:

- **Flexible** to address the changing needs of local health care employers and a focus on long-standing vacancies that impact patient access to care.
- **Responsive** to eligible applicants by providing incentives and assistance in a timely manner.
- **Effective** in creatively targeting funding and incentives to attract, support and retain health care professionals and create a competitive advantage for the Northern Rockies.
- **Accountable** stewardship, transparent decision-making and reporting of program disbursements including evaluation of program performance.

Definitions

Designated Health Care Training Program: An approved training program offered by a post-secondary institution in a priority health care profession.

Eligible Applicant: a health care professional who meets the eligibility criteria for an incentive under the RRETI program.

Eligible Residents: For the purposes of the health profession training incentives, an eligible resident is anyone living in the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Fort Nelson First Nation, or Dene Tsa'a Tse K'Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band) for at least two consecutive years prior to undertaking training. For the scholarship awards, eligible residents include graduating secondary school students attending Fort Nelson Secondary, Chalo School and Dene Tsa'a School.

Health Science Professional: Health care workers who have completed an approved training program to provide direct patient care and/or applied technical skills including medical technologists, laboratory technologists, laboratory assistants, sonographers (ultrasound technologists), paramedics, social workers, mental health clinicians, respiratory therapists, physiotherapists, and health care assistants.

Incentive: A monetary or non-monetary award provided after-the-fact to a health care professional under this program. Some incentives may have a reward of service component.

Local Health Care Employer: Any public, not for profit or private sector organization that provides direct health care services to residents of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Fort Nelson First Nation and Dene Tsa'a Tse K'Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band).

Professions of Focus: A designation for health care professions where a vacancy may result in a significant strain on, or loss of service in Fort Nelson, where a vacancy is defined as difficult to fill (>90 days vacant) by a health care employer, and/or health care professionals required to establish or re-establish a service.

Region: the geographic region encompassing the jurisdictions of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Fort Nelson First Nation and the Dene Tsa'a Tse K'Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band).

Reward of Service: A progressive incentive that positively supports retention of health professionals in the community. Eligible health care professionals are required to apply annually for the reward of service which is paid at the conclusion of each successive year of service in the Northern Rockies.

Professions of Focus

The NRRM periodically consults with health employers to identify difficult to fill and priority health care positions that can be targeted with RRETI incentives. These professions currently include, but are not limited to,

- Family Physician
- Registered Nurse
- Licensed Practical Nurse
- Pharmacist (Private)
- Medical Laboratory Technologist
- Medical Laboratory Assistant
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographer
- Diagnostic Imaging Assistant
- Social Worker
- Physiotherapist

General Eligibility

The following groups are eligible to apply for RRETI incentives:

- Health care professionals with a valid offer of employment from a local health care employer and who intend to relocate to the Northern Rockies; or
- Family physicians with a valid and accepted letter of offer from Northern Health; or
- Residents of the Northern Rockies, Fort Nelson First Nation or Dene Tsaa Tse K’Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band) who have completed a designated health care training program and who intend to live and work in the region; or
- Existing health care professionals currently employed in the Northern Rockies, who are increasing their skills and qualifications, and who intend to return to work in health care careers in the Northern Rockies upon completion of their training program, or
- Graduates of secondary schools in the region (i.e., Fort Nelson Secondary, Chala School and Dene Tsaa School) pursuing an education in a health-related field.

While the RRETI program is intended to encourage existing residents to pursue or expand their career in the health care field, and to incentivize new residents into roles in health care in the Northern Rockies, all applications are encouraged and will be considered on their own merits based on program goals and principles.

Program Funding

The RRETI program is funded by the Northern Rockies Regional Hospital District (NRRHD) and evaluated annually. The total disbursement of funds available to applicants under this program is subject to annual program funding approved by Regional Council. Some incentives may not be available every year.

Financial Incentives & Eligibility

**Incentive payments or other RRETI benefits may be deemed taxable by the Canada Revenue Agency and applicants subject to a taxation slip (e.g, T4A) for funds or other benefits received.*

Residents Completing Health Care Training

Includes New Career, Continuing Education or Advanced Learning

Eligibility:

- Eligible residents of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Fort Nelson First Nation, Dene Tsa'a Tse K'Nai First Nation (Prophet River Band) will complete the appropriate RRETI application form and submit it to the NRRM by the published deadline with:
 - A copy of their current resume, and
 - Evidence of completion of a designated health professional training program (e.g., certificate, diploma, degree, etc.).
- Preference may be given to applicants who can demonstrate long-term ties to any community in the Northern Rockies geographic region.
- All applications will be reviewed by the NRRM based on program goals, principles and eligibility and recommendations submitted to Regional Council for final decision.
- Financial incentives will be provided directly by the NRRM to the applicant.

Incentives Available:

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Licensed Practical Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A one-time payment of \$3,000 for an LPN who successfully completes the Bridging to an RN/RPN program. • One award per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPNs currently employed and who have lived in the Northern Rockies for at least two years. • Eligible residents must apply for the incentive. • Incentive administered by the NRRM in partnership with the health employer. • The NRRM may consider awarding additional incentives contingent on program funds in a given fiscal year. 	<p>Training incentives are a one-time payment to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.</p>
Health Science Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A one-time payment of \$2,000 for Health Science professionals employed in the Northern Rockies who successfully complete an upgrading program. • Two awards per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants currently working for a health employer, or intending to return to a health employer, in the Northern Rockies. • Must be registered in programs two or more semesters in length. • Eligible residents must apply for the incentive. 	<p>Training incentives are a one-time payment to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.</p>

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds administered by the NRRM in partnership with the health employer. The NRRM may consider awarding additional incentives contingent on program funds in a given fiscal year. 	

Newly Recruited Health Care Professionals

Eligibility:

- Eligible newly recruited health care professionals do not have to apply for the RRETI incentives. Details of these incentives are set out in the tables below.
- The NRRM works closely with local health employers during the recruitment process to identify appropriate incentives that may be offered during the recruitment process, or at time of appointment (employees) and accepted letter of offer (physicians).
- Eligible recruits must meet both RRETI program requirements and satisfy all legal and regulatory requirements of the local health employers.
- One-time and initial Reward for Service payments for newly recruited health providers will be provided within 60 days of their start date or the successful completion of the employer's probationary period, whichever is longer.
- Health care professionals who are not employees of a health employer (i.e., working under contract, self-employed, etc.) will receive their Reward of Service payment after the completion of 12 months continuous service in the community and on that anniversary thereafter.
- Regional Council reserves the right to pro-rate incentives for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE, casual or when a position is shared with another community.

Incentives Available:

Financial Incentives

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Family Physician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total payment of \$25,000 for a Family Physician who establishes a full-time, long-term generalist practice in Fort Nelson. A graduated reward of service paid in three installments in the first five years, with bonus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed letter of offer from Northern Health including appropriate practice privileges at Fort Nelson General Hospital, confirmation of current registration with the Canadian College of Family Physicians and the BC College of Physicians & Surgeons. 	Year 1 - \$3,000 (awarded per criteria) Year 3 - \$5,000 Year 5 - \$7,000 Year 7 - \$5,000

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
	installments after 7 and 10 years of continuous service in Fort Nelson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physicians recruited under the IMG-BC and PRA-BC Return of Service programs are eligible for this incentive. Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. The initial Reward of Service payment will be made after the completion of 12 months continuous service in the community and on that anniversary thereafter. 	Year 10 - \$5,000
Nurse Practitioner (Employed) Nurse Practitioner (Contracted) Pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total payment of \$10,000 for a Nurse Practitioner who establishes a full time, family practice in Fort Nelson. A total payment of \$10,000 for a Pharmacist working full-time in Fort Nelson. A graduated reward of service paid in three instalments over three years. One incentive per profession per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Nurse Practitioners, a signed letter of offer from a health employer, including appropriate practice privileges at Fort Nelson General Hospital and confirmation of current registration with the BC College of Nurses and Midwives For Pharmacists, a signed letter of offer from an employer, or other confirmation of their practice in Fort Nelson, confirmation of current registration with the BC Pharmacy Association and the College of Pharmacists of BC. Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. 	Year 1 - \$2,000 (awarded per criteria) Year 2 - \$4,000 Year 3 - \$4,000
Registered Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total payment of \$7,500 for a Registered Nurse recruited into a full-time role by a health employer in the Northern Rockies. Up to 2 awards per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed letter of offer from a health employer. Current registration with the BC College of Nurses and Midwives. Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. 	Year 1 - \$3,000 (awarded per criteria) Year 2 - \$4,500
Licensed Practical Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A one-time payment of \$3,000 for a Licensed Practical Nurse recruited into a full-time role by a health employer in the Northern Rockies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed letter of offer from a health employer. Current registration with the BC College of Nurses and Midwives. 	This incentive is a one-time payment to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 2 one-time payment awards per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. 	
Health Science Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A one-time payment of \$2,500 for a Health Sciences professional recruited into a full-time role by a health employer in the Northern Rockies. Up to 2 one-time payment awards per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed letter of offer from a health employer. Current registration with the appropriate regulatory body in BC, where applicable. Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. 	This incentive is a one-time payment to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.
Profession of Focus Premium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A one-time premium of 30% will be added to the incentive awarded to an eligible applicant in any category.¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positions deemed a Profession of Focus may be eligible for this one-time premium. If approved, the premium will be applied automatically to the first incentive payment to the applicant. Based on Regional Council's decision at award, subsequent payments may not attract the premium. Incentives may be pro-rated for positions that are less than 1.0 FTE or when a position is shared with another community. 	This incentive is a one-time payment to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.

Housing Incentives

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Physician	<p>Access to a residential property owned by the NRRM, to assist with settlement in the Northern Rockies, commensurate with needs, may be provided as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 – no charge Year 2 – cost of utilities only Year 3+ – 50% market rent + utilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed letter of offer from Northern Health including appropriate practice privileges at Fort Nelson General Hospital. Housing may be provided prior to commencement of practice. Housing is based on availability and at the discretion of the NRRM. 	Housing incentives are scaled during over a prescribed term to assist the applicant to transition to permanent housing in the community.

¹ The premium percentage is based on the Medical Isolation Point Assessment calculation for Fort Nelson which considers relative professional and community isolation, community size and northern status.

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Nurse Practitioner (Contractor or Employee) Pharmacist Nursing (RN/ LPN) Health Science Professionals	<p>Access to a residential property, to assist with settlement in the Northern Rockies, commensurate with needs for up to one (1) year, provided as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 6 months – no charge, • Second 6 months - 50% market rent + utilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Nurse Practitioners, a signed letter of offer from a health employer, including appropriate practice privileges at Fort Nelson General Hospital. • For Pharmacists, a signed letter of offer from an employer, or other confirmation of their practice in Fort Nelson, confirmation of current registration with the BC Pharmacy Association and the College of Pharmacists of BC. • Housing may be provided prior to commencement of practice. • Housing based on availability and at the discretion of the NRRM. • Housing is generally reserved for full-time or part-time greater than 0.5FTE health professions who intend to reside in the Northern Rockies. 	

Transportation Incentives

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Physician Nurse Practitioner Pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary access to an intermediate class rental automobile or equivalent, if needed, for a period of 30 days to assist with settlement in the Northern Rockies. • The base vehicle rental cost shall be paid by the NRRM and the candidate shall pay for all additional coverages (collision liability) for damage and cost of usage (e.g., fuel). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Physicians and Nurse Practitioners, a signed letter of offer from Northern Health including appropriate practice privileges at Fort Nelson General Hospital. • For Pharmacists, a signed letter of offer from the appropriate employer, or other confirmation of their practice in Fort Nelson. • Vehicle may be provided prior to commencement of practice. • Vehicle must be returned at the conclusion of the 30-day period. The candidate is liable for all damages. • This incentive subject to availability. 	<p>The Transportation Incentive is a one-time support to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.</p>

Registered Nurse Licensed Practical Nurse Health Science Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary access to an intermediate class automobile or equivalent, if needed, for a period of 14 days to assist with settlement in the Northern Rockies. • The base vehicle rental cost shall be paid by the NRRM and the candidate shall pay for all additional coverages (collision liability) for damage and cost of usage (e.g., fuel). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A signed letter of offer from a health employer. • Vehicle will be provided upon commencement of duties in Fort Nelson. • Vehicle must be returned at the conclusion of the 14-day period. The candidate is liable for all damages. • This incentive subject to availability. 	<p>The Transportation Incentive is a one-time support to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.</p>
--	---	--	---

Northern Rockies Welcome Package

- All newly recruited health professionals to the Northern Rockies are eligible to receive the Welcome Package to help them settle into the community, access services and enjoy local amenities.
- The NRRM will work with local health employers to identify recipients of the Welcome Package. Applicants are not required to apply for the welcome Package.
- Contents of the Welcome Package may vary depending on seasonal availability and other factors.

Profession	Available Amounts	Application Criteria	Reward of Service
Physician Nurse Practitioner Registered Nurse Licensed Practical Nurse Health Science Professional Pharmacist	<p>The NRRM, in collaboration with the Fort Nelson Chamber of Commerce and other community partners, will provide a Welcome Package to each eligible health care professional recruited to the Northern Rockies including but not limited to,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$750 Local Dollars that can be used at any local retailer for groceries, household items, furniture, gym membership, rounds of golf, or any other good or service provided by a local business. • 1 night stay and 3-course meal at Northern Rockies Lodge (valued at \$250). Based on double occupancy. • \$500 Central Mountain Air gift card • Assorted promotional items provided by the Fort Nelson business community (subject to change). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Package contents may change from time to time and without notice, based on availability. • Value is approximately \$1,500 per recruited health care professional, once settled in Fort Nelson for an initial period of 60 days. 	<p>The Community Welcome Package is a one-time gift to the applicant and normally not extended as a reward for service.</p>

Secondary School Scholarships

Eligibility:

- Any student graduating from School District 81, Chalo School (Fort Nelson First Nation) and Prophet River Dene Tsaa School who is pursuing education in a health-related field are encouraged to apply for these scholarships.
- Applications will be adjudicated by the established process in partnership with the NRRM, School District 81 and, depending on applications, include the Fort Nelson First Nation and/or Dene Tsaa Tse K’Nai First Nation (Prophet River First Nation) school programs.

Award Name	Available Amounts	Application Requirements
Dr. Kassa Memorial Annual Health Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One award annually of \$2,000 • Awarded upon commencement of 2nd semester of studies and may be redeemed up to 24 months from graduate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant is entering a post-secondary health related program (science, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, radiology). • Demonstration of positive community involvement. Positive role model in school and in the community. • High academic achievement, sufficient to being accepted into the field of study within two years. • In case of equally qualified recipients, go the applicant with the least awards. • Selection conducted by FNSS and District Scholarship Committee.
Dr. Mostert Annual Health Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One award annually of \$2,000. • Awarded payable upon commencement of 2nd semester of studies and may be redeemed up to 24 months from graduate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant is entering a post-secondary health related program (science, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, radiology). • Demonstration of positive community involvement. Positive role model in school and in the community. • High academic achievement, sufficient to being accepted into the field of study within two years. • In case of equally qualified recipients, go the applicant with the least awards. • Selection conducted by FNSS and District Scholarship Committee.