

ACT Health Guideline: Professional Development Leave

Dear Member,

Attached is a draft ACT Health Guideline in relation to Professional Development Leave that has been sent to the HSU for the purposes of consultation.

Member feedback requested

The HSU industrial team is currently reviewing this draft guideline and its impact on members and is seeking feedback, views and comments from members.

Please review the attached document and provide comment and feedback by close of business **Monday 10 September 2018** to HSU Industrial Officer Julie Gordon on julie.gordon@hsu.asn.au with subject line *Feedback re Professional Development Leave*.

Please distribute this newsletter to your work colleagues for their information and comments.

Not a member of the HSU? Now is time to join and have your say! You can join online at www.hsu.asn.au/join or call 1300 HSU NSW and join over the phone.

A union's effectiveness and negotiation power depends upon the strength and density of its membership base. Join your work colleagues today by becoming a member of the Health Services Union and help us continue to protect and improve your working life.

In unity,



Gerard Hayes
Secretary, HSU NSW/ACT/QLD

ACT Health Guideline

Professional Development Leave – Nursing, Midwifery and Health Professionals

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Guideline Statement

The ACT Public Sector Enterprise Agreements for Nursing and Midwifery 2013-2017, and ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017, establish an entitlement for permanent employees of 3 days professional development per year (pro-rata for part-time employees). This may accrue to a maximum of six days over two years (see [Attachment 1 – Enterprise Agreements](#)).

This guideline provides some guidance to managers and staff as to what constitutes professional development for the purpose of these provisions, as opposed to other forms of professional learning. It also provides information about the procedures to be followed by staff when seeking to make use of their provisions.

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Scope

This Guideline applies to all permanent employees covered by the ACT Public Sector Enterprise Agreements for Nursing and Midwifery 2013-2017, and the ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017.

It includes professional development leave (PDL) as encompassed by Section 144 of the Nursing and Midwifery Enterprise Agreement, and Section Q 9 of the Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement.

Not covered are other forms of training detailed in the enterprise agreements, such as programmed professional development time, and forms of study assistance which include an ACT Health-funded component (e.g. Study Assistance Scheme, Nursing Scholarship Scheme, Allied Health Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme).

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Section 1 – What is Professional Development Leave?

PDL supports health professionals to broaden their skills both within and in some cases outside their immediate discipline and work area.

It is available for development activities (e.g. courses, seminars) that are in keeping with the employee's future progression in their profession, or a broadening of their skill base as a health professional.

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Where training or development is directly related to the skills required for the job currently being undertaken, it should be carried out as part of normal job-related training, rather than requiring to be use of PDL.

While it is not possible to specify every instance of training and development and whether or not they fall within the intent of PDL, managers should apply the following ‘threshold test’ when considering an application.

- *Is the activity relevant to the person’s future career development – i.e. developing or maintaining a speciality not directly related to their current work or expanding qualifications into a new or related field?*
If yes, then the application should be considered for PDL.
- *Is the activity essential for the person to do their current job?*
Training essential to performing their job does not require an employee to use PDL.

A number of examples are set out at [Attachment 2 – Scenarios](#) for the guidance of staff and managers.

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Section 2 – How is Professional Development Leave administered?

Any absence on PDL requires prior approval, and as with annual leave applications, approval is subject to operational requirements.

PDL cannot be anticipated, but can be accrued up to six days over two years for permanent full-time staff.

An eligible employee can also access annual leave, long service leave, flex leave, ‘accrued days-off’ (ADOs), etc. for professional development if their PDL entitlement is exhausted.

Staff should

- Identify professional development opportunities for inclusion in their learning and achievement plan;
- Give sufficient notice when applying for leave to minimise the impact on their work area; and
- Apply using the standard ‘Application for Leave’ form (tick ‘Other’ and write in ‘Professional Development Leave’).

Managers should:

- Encourage staff to identify professional development opportunities, and potential leave periods, as part of their performance agreements;

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- Give favourable consideration to development activities that support an individual’s agreed learning and achievement plan;
- Help ensure that staff are aware of the opportunities available through professional development and other forms of training;
- Ensure that the activity to be undertaken is within the scope of the provision set out in the Agreement;
- Consider all applications on a case-by-case basis;
- Consider operational requirements when assessing an application; and
- Discuss with staff alternative opportunities if it is not possible to support an application.

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Implementation

This Procedure will be placed on the ACT Health Policy Register and incorporated in existing orientation/induction plans as necessary.

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Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Legislation

Policies

Interprofessional Learning, Education and Practice

Procedures

Learning and Development (Rehabilitation, Aged and Community Care Division)
Staff Essential Education and Professional Development (Health Infrastructure and Planning)

Frameworks

Learning and Development
Standards of Practice for ACT Health Allied Health Professionals

Legislation

ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement, 2013-2017
ACT Public Sector Nursing and Midwifery Enterprise Agreement, 2013-2017

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Search Terms

Professional; development; studies; study; assistance; training; learning; development; learning; scholarship; education

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Attachments

Attachment 1

Professional Development Leave: Enterprise Agreements

Attachment 2

Professional Development Leave: Scenarios

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Disclaimer: This document has been developed by Health Directorate, Canberra Hospital and Health Services specifically for its own use. Use of this document and any reliance on the information contained therein by any third party is at his or her own risk and Health Directorate assumes no responsibility whatsoever.

Policy Team ONLY to complete the following:

<i>Date Amended</i>	<i>Section Amended</i>	<i>Divisional Approval</i>	<i>Final Approval</i>

This document supersedes the following:

<i>Document Number</i>	<i>Document Name</i>

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Do not refer to a paper based copy of this policy document. The most current version can be found on the ACT Health Policy Register



ATTACHMENT 1

Professional Development Leave – Enterprise Agreements

ACT Public Sector Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017:

- Q9.1 A permanent employee will be entitled to 3 days (22 hours and 3 minutes based on 7 hour 21 minute days) of Professional Development Leave per annum (and pro-rata for part-time employees).
- Q9.2 Professional Development Leave may accrue to a maximum of 6 days (44 hours and 6 minutes) over a two-year period.
- Q9.3 Any absence on Personal Development Leave requires prior approval.

ACT Public Sector Nursing and Midwifery Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017:

- 144.1 A permanent employee will be entitled to 24 hours Professional Development Leave per annum (and pro-rata for part-time employees).
- 144.2 Professional Development Leave may accrue to a maximum of 48 hours over a two-year period.

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ATTACHMENT 2

Professional Development Leave (PDL) –Scenarios

Listed below are some examples of what might be proposed for professional development, with some guidance for staff and managers as to whether each falls within the scope of Section 144 of the Nursing and Midwifery Enterprise Agreement, and Section Q 9 of the Health Professionals Enterprise Agreement.

Example 1

A Registered Nurse requests leave to attend a 2 day mental health first aid course for CPD and to broaden their skills. These skills/qualifications are not specifically required in their current role but are broadly applicable to the profession as a whole.

This proposal is within the scope of the PDL provisions under the Enterprise Agreements.

Example 2

A Physiotherapist working in the acute neurology wards would like to increase their skills in ante-natal physiotherapy. They request to attend a one day training course on the diagnosis and treatment of pelvic pain in pregnancy. They have highlighted this area of skill expansion on their performance plan.

Attendance at this course is within the scope of the PDL provisions under the Enterprise Agreements.

Example 3

An Allied Health Professional requests an afternoon of leave to attend the ACT Health Allied Health Symposium

This would **not** require an application for PDL. Attendance at such an event would be part of an ACT Health Allied Health professional's general professional development, and if approved would be able to attend during normal working hours without the need to use any form of leave entitlement.

Example 4

A nurse working in the Division of Medicine requires training in operating a machine to ensure it is functioning safely and correctly.

This skill is essential to their being able to perform their current duties. Such training does **not** require a leave application, and should be accommodated within normal working hours.

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