

Advanced Clinical Practice Fellowship: Fact Sheet for Registered Nurses

The *Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario* (RNAO), through funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, has developed an innovative and highly successful initiative aimed at developing and promoting nursing knowledge and expertise, and improving client care and outcomes in Ontario. The Advanced Clinical Practice Fellowship (ACPF) is designed to provide a Registered Nurse (RN) with a focused self-directed learning experience to develop clinical, leadership or best practice guideline implementation knowledge and skills, with support from a mentor(s), the organization where the RN is employed, and the RNAO.

In order to be eligible for the ACPF, the RN must be living and/or working in Ontario, have one year minimum nursing experience, be employed full or part time and be able to dedicate 450 hours to the ACPF learning experience.

The direct impact on nurses who become successful Fellows include enhanced skills, knowledge, professional self-esteem and, in some cases, opportunities for new nursing roles. Many Fellows have found the ACPF learning opportunity to be a precursor to further formal education. Fellows talk about the impact of recognition from peers and their sponsoring organization (employer), in addition to an increased commitment to the workplace and to nursing. Fellows have gone on to mentor others, expressing pleasure in being able to use their new skills to the benefit of their profession. Furthermore, Fellows have created new relationships with other organizations and community-based agencies. Many gain a new appreciation for systems of care that they may not have had before.

Here are some comments from past participants in the ACPF:

- *I've had a nursing "re-charge" ... has made possible lasting networking, colleagues, mentors & peersbest months of my career...*
- *...a lot of doors have opened for me within the profession ...I've been asked to sit on a number of committees and best practice initiatives within the hospital ...I've also started teaching at a community college as a clinical instructor...*
- *...renewed my interest in educational pursuits. I have taken a college course, a university course and am preparing for a CNA specialty certificate exam....*
- *This opportunity has been invaluable to me. It is exciting to see strategies like ACPF for nurses and it is certainly long overdue. The ACPF has made the experience of "learning" attainable for many nurses who may not, for a variety of other commitments, have had such an experience.*
- *I loved the entire experience. I have nothing but positive things to say and I am a constant advocate for ACPF, recommending it to my colleagues.*
- *...this wonderful opportunity has opened doors I did not think I could knock on.*

Additional information can be obtained on the RNAO website <http://www.rnao.ca/acpf>. Application template and RFP document will only be posted during an open RFP period.