



Health Link

Nursing Graduates to Get Their Start at MAHC

Nurses are the heart of the health care system. They provide high quality, skilled, compassionate care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At some point in our lives, most of us have connected with a nurse and have witnessed firsthand the vital and selfless contribution they make to ensuring safe patient care.

Earlier this month, Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) celebrated National Nursing Week and recognized all of our nursing staff who are not only dedicated to their profession, but also are committed to quality education of our nursing students.

Beyond providing care at the bedside, these nurses offer leadership, guidance and mentoring that contribute to the success of future nurses.

Like any other health care organization, MAHC realizes the importance of a sustainable nursing workforce and the need to attract new nurses and retain experienced ones. We know competition for nurses in the workforce continues to be strong, and so too must be the strategies we use to recruit them.

That is why MAHC is proud to participate in the Nursing Graduate Guarantee, an initiative of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care aimed at facilitating employment for new nursing graduates.

The program is administered by Health Force Ontario to ensure that every new nurse graduate (both Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses) who wishes to work full-time in Ontario will have that opportunity.

Thanks to ministry funding, the two hospital sites in Muskoka will be welcoming approximately 15 nurse graduates to work alongside MAHC nursing staff in the Med-Surg, Complex Continuing Care and Emergency care units.

The ministry funds the salaries and benefits associated with these positions for six months in exchange for a guarantee that MAHC will fund an additional six weeks of employment. In the end, the initiative buys a nursing graduate more than six

months to bridge the gap to full-time employment.

MAHC has participated in this initiative for about five years and has mentored many nurse graduates through the program and into the workforce. This year, more than 80 applicants showed interest in this unique and exciting career opportunity. Approximately 25 candidates have been invited to attend the open house on May 29 where they will participate in on-site interviews and learn about the allure of the local area.

For those who are successful, it will mean the guarantee of full-time paid employment with hands-on mentorship throughout the duration of the program.

“Our new graduates have expressed great satisfaction with their experiences at Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare and to date we have retained a number of the eligible new graduates in permanent positions,” said Bev McFarlane, Chief Nursing Executive for MAHC.

She says the program is not only of benefit for MAHC from a recruitment perspective, but also for the new graduates who experience their first nursing opportunity at a health care facility.

“We are so thankful to our own nurses who are trained to volunteer as a mentor and take on the responsibility of shaping the next generation of nurses,” McFarlane says. “Without them, our program couldn’t be successful.”

Health Link is an awareness column brought to you on behalf of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare.