

## **Staff Scheduling Guidelines**

### **Question and Answers**

Updated February 6, 2014

#### **Q: What are the scheduling guidelines?**

**A:** The scheduling guidelines are a set of procedures and processes for managers, scheduling committees and staff to use when developing unit and vacation schedules. The intent is to help create consistent scheduling practices regardless of whether a unit uses a rotational scheduling model or a self-scheduling model. The scheduling guidelines support high quality patient care, best practices and the NSGEU collective agreement.

#### **Q: Who will use the scheduling guidelines?**

**A:** Managers, scheduling committees and staff will use the scheduling guidelines when developing unit and vacation schedules for nurses and clinical team members in the NSGEU.

#### **Q: Where will the scheduling guidelines be implemented?**

**A:** In the first phase, the scheduling guidelines will be implemented on all units on the QEII that have NSGEU bargaining unit employees, specifically all in-patient, critical care, Perioperative, Rehabilitation Services, veterans services, dialysis and ambulatory care areas across the QEII sites. In later phases, which are to be implemented within 12 to 24 months, similar guidelines will be developed for other areas of Capital Health. The goal is to have district wide, consistent staff scheduling practice for all clinical areas.

#### **Q: When will the scheduling guidelines be implemented?**

**A:** Communication and education about the scheduling guidelines will take place in December 2013. The expectation is that all clinical areas at the QEII staffed with NSGEU bargaining unit employees will:

- As of Wednesday, January 1, 2014, use the new vacation guidelines to submit their annual vacation requests for 2014-2015
- As of Tuesday, April 1, 2014 have fully implemented the new staff scheduling guidelines

#### **Q: Why is Capital Health implementing scheduling guidelines?**

**A:** There are three main reasons for implementing scheduling guidelines. The first is to help managers and scheduling committees ensure schedules meet safe, quality patient care needs on their unit. The second is to help make scheduling practices across units more consistent regardless of whether the unit is using a rotational scheduling model or self-scheduling model. The third is to ensure all unit and vacation schedules comply with the NSGEU collective agreement.

#### **Q: How were the scheduling guidelines developed? Who was involved in developing the guidelines?**

**A:** The scheduling guidelines were developed by an advisory group of managers at the HI and VG Sites, directors and labour and professional practice reps. They are based on best practices in the delivery of safe, high quality

patient care and the NSGEU collective agreement. The scheduling guidelines have been approved by Capital Health's Leadership Executive Team (LET) and are sponsored by Kathy McNeil, VP of People and Paula Bond, VP Acute Care - Patient Centered Care. The implementation of the guidelines is being led by Brian Butt, as director of the Office of Clinical Care Coordination and the advisory group that developed the guidelines.

**Q: Why do the scheduling guidelines state that employees shall not work more than two weekends in a row?**

**A:** Article 14.15 in the NSGEU collective agreement states that the employer shall provide each shift employee one weekend off in three. The guidelines are in accordance with the NSGEU collective agreement and are intended to help managers and scheduling committees ensure schedules meet safe, quality patient care needs on their units; to help make scheduling practices across units more consistent regardless of whether the unit is using a rotational scheduling model or self scheduling model; and to ensure schedules comply with the NSGEU collective agreement.

**Q: Does a "four on, five off" schedule comply with the scheduling guidelines?**

**A:** A "four on, five off" schedule does not allow for staff to be off one weekend in three as per article 14.15 in the NSGEU collective agreement. Schedules must comply with the collective agreement and the staffing guidelines.

**Q. Are the scheduling guidelines meant to promote one type of schedule over another?**

**A.** The scheduling guidelines will be used in all units and areas with NSGEU bargaining unit employees across the QEII campus in the first phase. The intent is to help create consistent scheduling practices across all clinical areas regardless of whether the area uses a rotational scheduling model or a self-scheduling model. The guidelines allow for varied types of schedules that comply with the NSGEU collective agreement.