



# Charting a Course: Strategies for Nurse Recruitment and Retention in Primary Care Amidst a Human Resource Crisis

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## Background

- Nurses provide or support a large percentage of interprofessional care in primary care teams
- Ontario has had the lowest RN-to-population ratio for 9 consecutive years (CIHI)
- Wage disparities across sectors has made recruitment and retention of nurses in primary care roles increasingly challenging

## Purpose

Identify strategies for the recruitment and retention of nurses, including new graduates and experienced nurses, into primary care settings based on current evidence.

## Method: Rapid Literature Review

Search of ScholarsPortal, PubMed databases  
**Exclusion:** ‘nurse practitioner’ and studies done outside of the USA/UK/Australia and Canada

After abstract review  
**n= 20**

After full title review  
**n= 16**

## Results and Conclusions

What factors contribute to recruitment and retention of **new graduate** nurses in primary care?

- | Literature Review Themes   |
|--|
| • Clinical placement experiences that are positive and realistic   |
| • Understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Primary Care Nurses through comprehensive education |
| • <b>Orientation, support, and positive preceptor or mentorship experiences</b>                          |
| • <b>Opportunities for learning, career advancement and skill development or maintenance</b>             |
| • <b>Positive employment conditions including fair wages and a welcoming workplace culture</b>           |

What factors contribute to recruitment and retention of **experienced** nurses in primary care?

- |   |
|---|
| • <b>Orientation, support and positive preceptor or mentorship experiences</b>                |
| • <b>Fair, equitable remuneration and financial incentives</b>                                |
| • Ability to maintain work/life balance   |
| • <b>Opportunities for learning, career advancement and working to full scope of practice</b> |
| • Geography and/or location of work, fit with community/location                              |
| • <b>Positive workplace culture</b>   |

## Knowledge Translation to Strategies

### Develop a structured orientation program

- Create an orientation guide with an organizational chart and workflow diagram to help orient new hires
- Facilitate interactive opportunities for team member introductions and interprofessional shadowing opportunities
- Schedule regular check-ins
- Create a feedback loop for new hires to review the orientation process for continuous QI

### Implement preceptorships and ongoing mentorship opportunities

- Conduct a needs assessment interview to connect new hires with the right preceptor
- Support preceptors in their journey so that both can be happy and successful
- Facilitate preceptor movement to mentor role
- Collect feedback for continuous QI

### Create a positive workplace culture

- Make and take time to invest in a positive culture, through building core values, role clarity and psychological safety
- Huddles, regular team meetings, check-ins and debriefs are supportive tools

### Ensure opportunity for skill and career advancement and ongoing learning

- Define and highlight internal career pathways, including opportunities for specialization or cross-functional work
- Create learning opportunities through skills workshops, lunch and learns, collaborative learning and reverse mentoring

**Talk to your approaches in hiring!**

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