

Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner Initiative - Program Guidelines

2025-2026

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Organization Eligibility.....	3-4
3. Nurse Eligibility	4
4. Education Program Eligibility	4
5. Eligible Expenses	4-5
6. Ineligible Expenses.....	5
7. Exclusion Criteria.....	5
8. GYONP Return-of-Service Agreement.....	6-7
9. GYONP Application Process and Funding Decisions	6-7
10. Reporting Requirements	7
11. Frequently Asked Questions	7
12. Additional Support	7

Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner Initiative (GYONP)

Introduction

The Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner (GYONP) Initiative promotes Nurse Practitioner (NP) recruitment by allowing health care organizations with a vacant, government-funded NP position in Ontario the flexibility to repurpose this funding. Funding (or a portion thereof) can be repurposed to sponsor a Registered Nurse (RN) to complete their post-graduate Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner (PHCNP) Education and subsequently fill the vacant position while fulfilling a Return-of-Service agreement.

Eligibility

The organization is responsible for the completing the GYONP application and ensuring it meets the eligibility criteria outlined below.

Organization Eligibility

- The organization receives pre-existing, targeted funding from the Ontario government for an NP–Primary Health Care position.
- The organization has a NP position that has been vacant for a minimum of six consecutive months. This excludes the temporary filling of a vacancy for less than eight weeks in length.

OR

- The organization serves an Indigenous community and/or is in a community with a Rurality Index of Ontario (RIO) Score of 60 or over and has a NP position that has been vacant for a minimum of three consecutive months. This excludes the temporary filling of a vacancy for less than eight weeks in length. To find a community's RIO Score, please visit: [Learn more about the Rurality Index for Ontario score | Northern Health Programs | ontario.ca](https://www.healthforceontario.ca/learn-more-about-the-rurality-index-for-ontario-score/)
- The organization can demonstrate that reasonable recruitment attempts were made to fill the NP position. Reasonable recruitment efforts must include, but are not limited to:
 1. Two or more postings for the NP position on the "HealthForceOntario Jobs" site (<https://hfojobs.healthforceontario.ca/en/>) during the vacancy period

AND

2. Two or more postings for the NP position in one of the following, during the vacancy period:
 - Weekly or periodic newspapers, journals, newsletters, national/regional newspapers, or free local newspapers.
 - Ads in local stores, community resource centres, or local regional employment centres.
 - Recognized Internet job sites.
- The organization would consider facilitating at least one clinical practicum for the RN participating in the GYONP.

- Organizations that can offer the RN a clinical practicum opportunity are encouraged to contact the PHCNP Education Program Site Coordinator in their region. Further information is available at <http://np-education.ca>. Please click on Contacts for a list of the PHCNP Education Program's Site Coordinators.

Nurse Eligibility

The RN considering the GYONP program:

- Must live within 125 km of a vacant NP position or be willing to relocate within 125 km.
- Must voluntarily agree to participate in the GYONP program, including entering into an agreement with the sponsoring organization to provide a Return-of-Service (RoS) to fill the vacant position.
- Agrees to the RoS agreement as outlined in the "[Return of Agreement](#)" section of this document and will enter a RoS agreement with the sponsoring organization. RoS details will be outlined in the agreement between the organization and the government.
- Only [eligible expenses](#), as identified below, will be considered.

Education Program Eligibility

- The organization can identify a RN who is interested in a career as an NP and has been accepted into a College of Nurses (CNO) recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program. For a list of eligible programs, please visit the CNO website for approved NP programs at: [Nurse Practitioner \(NP\) Programs](#).
- In addition to the eligible NP programs listed on the CNO website, the Master of Nursing- NP and Post-Master's Diploma- NP programs at Athabasca University are also eligible for the 2025-26 academic year.
- For eligibility questions about education programs in other Canadian jurisdictions, visit the CNO [Contact Us](#) page to verify equivalency requirements and include the confirmation with your GYONP application.
- **Note:** Students are responsible for verifying the PHCNP Education program's admission requirements, as they may differ by university and pathway.

The GYONP program must be completed during the following time periods:

- After the RN has been accepted as a full-time student in an eligible program (documented proof required).
- OR
- When the RN is entering year two, as a full-time student, in an eligible program (documented proof required).

Expense Eligibility and Exclusion Criteria

Eligible Expenses

During the educational phase the funds may be used to:

- Pay the GYONP RN's salary and benefits (not to exceed 24%), or a portion thereof, subject to budget availability while the GYONP RN attends a post-graduate PHCNP Education Program (proof of current salary required; all overtime is excluded).
- Provide salary reimbursement for GYONP RNs during the mandatory clinical hours of the PHCNP Education Program.

Upon successful completion and registration with the CNO as a NP, the funds may be used to:

- Reimburse a portion, up to the maximum dollar amount, of tuition costs (original receipts required).

Maximum funds cannot exceed the established allocation for a Nurse Practitioner vacancy within the sponsoring organization.

Ineligible Expenses

Funds may not be used to:

- Pay the costs associated with applying to the post-graduate PHCNP Education Program.
- Reimburse tuition costs for education not directly associated with the post-graduate PHCNP Education Program.
- Reimburse the cost of supplies (e.g., stethoscopes, otoscopes, etc.).
- Reimburse the cost of meals, accommodation, and travel.
- Reimburse any associated fees required to be a student (i.e., student membership fees, etc.).
- Reimburse the cost of any materials required by the post-graduate PHCNP Education Program (e.g., books, etc.).
- Reimburse the cost of any materials not required by the post-graduate PHCNP Education Program (e.g., books, etc.).
- Reimburse the cost of any Information Technology equipment.
- Reimburse the cost associated with writing the Canadian Nurse Practitioner Examination.
- Reimburse the cost associated with registering as a NP with the CNO.
- Reimburse the cost associated with membership with nursing associations.

Exclusion Criteria

- The RN applicant must not receive other sources of government funding similar to the GYONP program, such as the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant or the Tuition Support Program for Nurses.

¹Budget availability refers to the total funding amount that has been approved by the government to be repurposed from the vacant position.

GYONP Return-of-Service Agreement

Table 1 outlines the two Return-of-Service (RoS) models.

Table 1.0 Return-of-Service Requirement

	RN who enrolls in GYONP after being accepted, as a full-time student, in a CNO recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program	RN who enrolls in GYONP when entering year two, as a full-time student, in a CNO recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program
Return-of-Service Requirement	Three years full-time return-of-service is required to the sponsoring organization	One and a half-year's full-time return- of-service is required to the sponsoring organization

Table 2.0 outlines the funding amount to be repaid if the nurse does not complete their RoS requirement.

Table 2.0 Schedule of Repayment for an Incomplete Return-of-Service

	RN who enrolls in GYONP after being accepted, as a full-time student, in a CNO recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program	RN who enrolls in the GYONP when entering year two, as a full-time student, in a CNO recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program
If three years of RoS remain	100% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP	N/A
If two years of RoS remain	66% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP	N/A
If one and a half year of RoS remain	50% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP	100% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP
If one year of RoS remain	33% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP	75% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP
If 3/4 year or less of RoS remains	17% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP	50% of funding amount to be repaid by GYONP RN/NP

GYONP Application Process and Funding Decisions

Submission Deadline: June 30th each year at 5:00 pm EST

GYONP Application Process

1. **Determine Eligibility:** The sponsoring organization must ensure it meets all eligibility criteria, including the length of vacancy, and has identified an eligible RN candidate before completing an application.
2. **Complete application:** The sponsoring organization accesses and completes the GYONP [program application](#).
3. **Submit application:**
 - o The sponsoring organization submits a copy of the application to the Ministry of Health (MOH) through the GYONP inbox: GYONP@ontario.ca
4. **MOH Confirmation:**
 - o MOH sends an email confirming receipt of the application.
 - o MOH forwards the application to the appropriate government administrator.

5. Government Review:

- The government program administrator reviews the application and determines its suitability.
- The government program administrator notifies the sponsoring organization and MOH of the outcome.

6. Outcome notification:

- If successful, a letter is sent to the sponsoring organization, and the organization enters into an agreement with the GYONP RN.
- If unsuccessful, an email is sent to the sponsoring organization, and no further action is required.

Reporting Requirements

The organization will be responsible for reporting to the government program administrator during participation in the GYONP program (e.g., detailed accounting, proof of successful completion of the PHCNP Education Program, etc.). Reporting details will be outlined in the agreement between the organization and the government program administrator.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Does the GYONP program provide new or additional funding to health care organizations?

- No, the GYONP program does not offer new or additional funding. It allows organizations with a vacant, government-funded NP position in Ontario to repurpose this funding. For more details, please see the [organization eligibility](#) section.

2. What does “pre-existing funding” mean for a health care organization?

- Pre-existing funding refers to funds available due to a vacant government-funded NP position. For more details, please see the [organization eligibility](#) section.

3. How do I know if my PHCNP Education Program qualifies for the GYONP program?

- To qualify, the RN applicant must meet admission requirements and be accepted into a CNO recognized post-graduate PHCNP Education Program. Please visit the CNO website for eligible NP programs at: [Nurse Practitioner \(NP\) Programs](#).
- The Master of Nursing- NP and Post-Master’s Diploma- NP programs at Athabasca University are eligible for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- For other Canadian jurisdictions, verify equivalency with CNO through their [Contact Us](#) page and include the confirmation with your GYONP application.

4. Can I complete my PHCNP studies part-time for the GYONP program?

- No, the GYONP program requires the RN to be a full-time student in an eligible program, either upon initial acceptance or when entering the second year of a full-time program.

Additional Support

For questions related to completing the application or program eligibility, please email the Nursing and Health Professionals Branch (NHPB) at GYONP@ontario.ca.