

## PURPOSE

The Nursing Professional Advancement Ladder (NPAL) is a method of recognizing staff nurses who demonstrate professionalism in their practice of nursing.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Employees who wish to participate in the NPAL program must meet the following eligibility requirements in order to be considered:

1. minimum work requirements for Bronson Methodist Hospital must be met
2. no written disciplinary actions against the employee in the last 12 months
3. must be an employee of Bronson Methodist Hospital or Bronson Vicksburg Hospital
4. must be an employee in one of the following:
  - job class 2510 (Registered Nurse)
  - 2512 (Radiology Registered Nurse)
  - 2519 (Cardiovascular Svc. Registered Nurse)
  - 2524 (Registered Nurse – in house transport)
  - 2525 (Registered Nurse OC VIP)
  - 2550 (Charge Nurse – prior to 1/1/96)
  - 2553 (Charge Nurse)
  - 2719 (Registered Nurse – transport).

## APPLICATION PROCESS

In order to advance to Level 2, 3 or 4 on the NPAL, the staff nurse must completely fill out an application form and develop a portfolio demonstrating how required criteria is met for the level in which they are applying. (See the Portfolio Criteria insert for more information.)

Applicants may only advance to the level for which they apply. A person must reapply at the next application period. Applications will be accepted bi-annually in January and June of any given year. Prior to submitting the application and portfolio, it must be reviewed and signed by the applicant's nurse manager. Applications must be submitted between December 26 and January 15, or May 26 and June 15, to the Executive Assistant to the Chief Nurse Executive (CNE) in Bronson Healthcare Group (Box C). Participants in NPAL must demonstrate their performance every other year to maintain their current level.

Applications will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Professional Practice Council. The committee will recommend whether or not a participant should advance to the level applied for. The recommendation will be sent to the CNE for final approval. The committee may ask for participant input or clarification of information submitted.

The committee review document will be shared with the applicant when requested. A letter regarding the level obtained will be sent to the applicant and unit manager to be stored in the employee's file.

## CRITERIA FOR ADVANCEMENT

There are nine categories of criteria for advancement. Four of the categories are mandatory and must be achieved in order to advance to the next level. The other five criteria are elective; however, two out of the five must be met. A detailed explanation of each level in the NPAL program is included in this packet. Activities submitted must have been performed in the previous 15 months.

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## INCENTIVE

Incentives will be awarded as credits to be used for educational and professional advancement purposes according to the following parameters:

- Level 2 status will receive 500 credits per year
- Level 3 status will receive 750 credits per year
- Level 4 status will receive 1,000 credits per year

Additional monetary incentives will be evaluated each year. Resources will be budgeted and allocated as finances allow.

Credits can be carried over for a maximum of two years. Staff advancing on the Nursing Professional Advancement Ladder (NPAL) will submit a Request for Permission to Attend Educational Activity (Form # 9000272) or a Payment Authorization Form (available in the forms section under Human Resources on <http://inside.bronsonhg.org>) to the Executive Assistant to the CNE in BHG to access credits allocated to them.

All nurses eligible to apply to NPAL will be considered Level 1 unless the employee demonstrates that criteria required for advancement to a higher level has been met. The employee's identification badge will reflect the current level achieved on NPAL. If an employee advances to a new level, Bronson will pay for the cost to receive a new name badge. Employees who choose not to maintain an advanced level (2–4) will have a new name badge issued indicating Level 1.

Fees for educational and professional advancement purposes may include (but are not limited to):

- certification review courses
- educational tools
- subscriptions to professional journals
- membership dues to professional organizations
- clinical software for palm pilots
- PDAs (Palm: Palm One Tungsten C or Pocket PC: HP Ipaq 5150/5550)
- inservices, workshops and/or conferences
- medical nurse-ins.

This plan will be reviewed annually by the Divisional Level Nursing Council and the CNE, and will be modified as needed.

For questions about the Nursing Professional Advancement Ladder, please call Nancee Hofmeister at 341-6057.