

NEW GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION FUNDS

Insert in June 2011 *Nurses' Notes*

The funding provided by Yukon Health and Social Services to support Yukon nurses pursuing continuing education has been a very successful initiative. So successful, in fact, that YRNA's Education Fund Management Committee has had to review and revise the policies that govern distribution of funds to ensure the available money is distributed as widely and as consistently as possible among eligible applicants.

What's New?

A funding cap will be applied to all applications. Approved applications will be eligible for 80% reimbursement of approved expenses to a maximum of \$2000. For example, eligible receipts totaling \$500 will be reimbursed in the amount of \$400; \$1500 in receipts will be reimbursed as \$1200; receipts totaling \$2500 or more would result in the maximum reimbursement of \$2000.

This will affect applicants in at least two ways:

- a minimum of 20% of the cost of continuing education endeavours will be borne by the individual;
- applications related to long term educational programs should be submitted in smaller increments to minimize the effect of the '\$2000 per file' cap

Another change is that applicants will be limited to two open files. Applications from individuals with two files in process will not be reviewed until at least one of the existing files has been closed.

Additional changes which have been made, including cancellation of stipend payments, will be fully detailed in revised Guidelines & Criteria which will be included in the next newsletter.

What's the Same?

In keeping with the intent of these funds, courses/ programs most closely related to nursing and deemed to improve practice and health delivery in the territory will be given highest priority. It should be noted that if a course is required by an employer, applicants will be asked to submit proof that the employer has declined to cover the course cost.

Eligible expenses remain unchanged: tuition or registration; books and materials; travel and accommodation directly related to the program. Expenses which are not eligible for reimbursement include: food; wage replacement; travel incidentals; child care, etc.

Other unchanged eligibility criteria include:

- Yukon residency (defined as residing in the territory for at least 6 months of the previous 12);
- current employment with a Yukon employer;
- programs/courses completed within the previous 6 months or starting within the next 6 months

Also unchanged is the requirement that applicants must submit receipts and proof of completion for approved applications within 90 days of program completion or forfeit funding. This requirement will be strictly enforced to ensure all possible funding is available for each review period.

Upcoming Application Deadlines

Applications received by the current May 31st deadline will be reviewed in accordance with the new guidelines. Following this review, the committee will assess the success of the guidelines in meeting the purpose and the need for consistency and conservation of the funds. Minor revisions will be made if necessary. Future application deadlines are August 31st, November 30th, and February 28th.