

Make a choice. Make a difference. Nursing in Victoria.

health

Factsheet 5

The benefits of nursing and midwifery in the Victorian public health sector

There's never been a better time to start nursing in the Victorian public health sector.

- **Great pay**
- **Flexible working conditions**
- **Professional development opportunities**

With more than 110 public health services, hospitals and 190 public aged residential care facilities in Victoria there is plenty of variety when it comes to choosing a place to work.

There is a range of small, medium and large organisations to suit you, whether you prefer the fast pace and variety of acute care or the benefits of living and working in regional or rural Victoria.

Larger hospitals provide a full range of clinical services, meaning you can have variety and the chance to experience working in many specialties. You can change your area of practice without changing your employer.

Working in small rural health services means you will be working in a smaller team so you will draw on skills of versatility and ingenuity.



The financial rewards

A beginning Registered nurse working in the Victorian public sector has a starting base salary of \$50,856 (registered nurse grade 2 year 1). At the top end of clinical practice, a nurse practitioner has a base salary of \$86,500.

There are opportunities to advance your career both professionally and financially.

Plus, when you are rostered for shift work, you're entitled to:

- an extra \$22.70 for each for morning or afternoon shift
- an extra \$52.80 for each night shift
- 100 per cent (minimum) for public holidays (over base).

On top of this you will also receive:

- a 38-hour week with overtime provisions (these vary across the sector)
- a 17.5 per cent annual leave loading
- access to salary packaging arrangements (based on your individual employer's policy on salary packaging)
- a qualifications allowance of between 4 per cent and 7.5 per cent based on the relevant base pay rate
- on-call allowances (these vary).

Flexible workplaces

Looking for a job that can accommodate your lifestyle? Maybe you're studying, have family commitments or want to leave time for hobbies, sports, travel or other interests.

There are now more flexible options for you within the public system including casual working arrangements through your employer's nurse banks, as well as full time or part-time permanent work.

Nurses and midwives in the public sector enjoy flexible benefits such as:

- five weeks' paid annual leave (six weeks for shift workers)
- the option to purchase up to four weeks' additional leave per year
- 10 weeks' paid maternity leave
- adoption leave (as maternity leave)
- one week's paid paternity leave.

Plus, many employers have a range of other benefits for staff including access to gyms, crèches, staff reward programs and meals and entertainment cards, to name a few.

Been gone a while?

If you left the public system a while ago, some things will be familiar but a lot will have changed. Victorian health services offer on-the-job refresher programs so you'll still be paid while you get your skills and knowledge up to date.

You'll also have to ensure your registration with the NMBA is current.

Professional and career development

In the health sector, new technology and equipment, different drugs, and new tests and treatments are being introduced all the time. So staying up to date with your skills and knowledge is really important.

Working in the public sector makes professional development opportunities more accessible in lots of ways. Eligible nurses and midwives can receive:

- three days' paid professional development leave per annum
- two days' paid study/conference/seminar leave
- re-entry and refresher support programs for nurses and midwives who are returning to the profession after a break
- access to new graduate programs
- access to Victorian Government scholarships and grants to extend your career and further education.

Want to know more?

Refer to Fact sheet 4.

To find out more about nursing and midwifery in the public sector go online to

www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing

To find a job in a Victorian health service, go to

www.health.vic.gov.au/jobs

The conditions referred to in this fact sheet relate to nurses employed under the following agreement.

To find out about public sector wages, allowances and benefits, download the *Nurses (Victorian Public Sector) Certified Agreement (EBA) 2007–2011* at

www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing

For information about updating your Nursing registration visit the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia at

www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au