Rostering Guidelines
Information for Staff
Northern NSW Local Health District
Introduction

Northern New South Wales Local Health District (NNSWLHD) Rostering Guidelines outline the processes that your roster manager undertakes in order to develop and publish the roster. As a staff member, you also have certain obligations in relation to aspects of your roster. The following information is provided to inform you of these obligations and outline the processes that the roster manager will adhere to in the development and publication of your roster.

Your roster manager has a range of responsibilities to ensure that rosters meet the requirements of patient care needs, staff requirements, and organisational needs. Roster periods are to be a minimum of 28 days in length and rosters are to be published for all staff to see at least two weeks prior to the commencement date of the first working period. The roster manager undertakes a review of rosters prior to publication to ensure:

- Staff members have been rostered in compliance with the relevant Award
- The roster meets demand template to ensure service delivery within the approved budgeted FTE
- The applicable skill set is covered by the roster
- The correct number of FTE is rostered on annual leave to achieve the annual leave requirement
- Roster requests have been accommodated wherever possible
- The pattern of shifts rostered and shift length duration is cognisant with minimising and managing work related fatigue (as per GL2007_023 Fatigue - Preventing & Managing Work Related Fatigue: Guidelines for the NSW Public Health System)
- Nursing, appropriate signed documentation has been received and kept on record where the staff member elects to waive their entitlement as per the Public Health System Nurses’ and Midwives’ (State) Award 2011 Clause 4(iv)(a) in relation to breaks between shifts
- Junior Medical Staff rosters are compatible with HETI term requirements and agreements with rotational facilities within training networks

NNSWLHD recommends that all rosters have a level of secondary approval. Secondary approval of rosters is to ensure Rostering Best Practice principles have been applied and that employees contractual requirements have been met. Therefore, it is crucial that your roster requests for specific shifts and other leave requests are submitted in a timely manner.
Roster Requests

Delivering health services is the first consideration in making rostering decisions. However, it is expected that rosters managers will endeavour to meet individual requests where possible; and that staff are also made aware that delivering health services is the first consideration in making rostering decisions, meaning requests may be denied.

Roster request process

Your roster manager is required to document the process for roster requests for your ward / unit / service. This process will include:

- How you make a roster request (e.g. request book, template roster, email or Employee On Line (EOL) when this functionality becomes available.
- The time frame that requests can be made, and when they can no longer be made in relation to the scheduled publication of the roster
- The number of requests that can be made within a roster period is four requests per full time staff member and pro rata for part time staff per 28 day roster cycle
- You must follow the documented roster request process in order for your requests to be considered.

Roster requests pattern

The process for roster requests is to support ad-hoc, one off or special requests that you may need to make. If you need to request a regular day or shift that you can or cannot work every week, then this will not be approved beyond one roster Period. If you need to request a regular day that you can, or cannot work, on an ongoing basis, then you must discuss this with your roster manager and request to enter a Temporary Individual Roster Arrangement.
Reviewing requests

When reviewing roster requests, your roster manager must consider the ability for service delivery demands to be met and the skill set of the staff required to meet the service delivery demand.

When more staff request to work or not to work a particular day / shift than is required for service delivery, the roster manager must consider:

- The reason for the roster request and the circumstances of the staff member
- The number of roster requests that a staff member has made
- The number of roster requests the staff member has had approved / denied in the past

If roster requests are unable to be accommodated, open communication between staff and managers is required. Reasons for non-approval should be recorded by the roster manager.

Shift swaps

Once a roster has been published, and there is a shift that you can no longer work, or had requested not to work and your roster manager was unable to accommodate your request, then it is your responsibility to arrange to swap this shift with a colleague. If you wish to swap a shift you must ensure documentation via the NNSWLHD Shift Swap form and meet the following requirements:

1. Identify an appropriate staff member to swap the shift with, based on the award grade and skill set of the staff member
2. The swap needs to be within the same pay period and the shift length of the same duration
3. The swap should not incur overtime for either party
4. Obtain agreement / approval from the staff member you wish to swap with
5. Obtain approval from the roster manager, who will update the roster once approval is granted
6. Shift Swaps must be managed in-hours by the roster manager.

Out of hours ad hoc shift swaps can only be approved by the After Hours Manager / delegate in emergency situations.
ADOs

Rostering ADOs
As a rule, your roster manager will roster your ADO when it is due.

Accruing ADOs
If you want to accrue your ADO, then you must request prior approval from your roster manager. Your roster manager will keep a record of staff members who have requested to accrue their ADO. Accrual is as stipulated in the relevant associated Award. The maximum accrual for full time staff is three days except those employed under the Skilled Trades Award who may accrue up to five ADOs. There is to be no further accrual. Your roster manager will roster you an ADO to ensure that maximum accrual is not exceeded.

ADO balances
ADO balances are calculated by StaffLink and you can check your ADO balance at any time. Your roster manager will check your ADO balance prior to finalising the roster.

Requesting an ADO
If you want to request your ADO on a specific day, then the process for Roster Requests must be adhered to.

Annual Leave

Planning Annual Leave

All staff are responsible for managing their own annual leave appropriately in accordance with Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service (PD2014_029).

Roster managers will commence leave planning three months prior to the beginning of the financial year. All requests outside this time period should be reasonably requested with the manager and approval will be as per service requirements. Your roster manager will advise you if there is an alternate process / timing for annual leave requests for periods of altered activity (e.g. seasonal fluctuations) or high demand for annual leave (e.g. Christmas / New Year / Easter / School Holidays).

Approval for Annual Leave

You must complete a leave request form and obtain signed approval from your roster manager prior to taking annual leave. In addition, you should not make non-refundable bookings prior to your leave being formally approved. Failure to obtain formal approval prior to making non-refundable bookings is at your own risk.

Reviewing requests for Annual Leave

When more staff request annual leave than is possible in order to meet service delivery, your roster manager will consider:

- The reason that leave is being requested, e.g. personal circumstances
- The amount / frequency of requests that a staff member has made previously
- Whether a staff member has had a request for leave denied previously
- The amount of leave liability that a staff member has (the higher the liability the higher the priority for annual leave)
- The skill set that the staff member has and is rostered to

If a request for Annual Leave is unable to be accommodated open communication between staff and managers is required. Reasons for non-approval should be recorded by the roster manager.
Excessive Annual Leave

Industrial Awards and Leave Matters for NSW Health Service (PD2014_029) provide guidance on the management of annual leave to prevent the accumulation of excessive annual leave. In addition, all LHDs as per the NSW Treasury Circular 14/11 are to make reasonable attempts to reduce their excessive annual leave balances. For financial year 2015-2016, 30 days or more of annual leave is considered to be excessive.

If you have an excessive annual leave balance, you will be required to discuss a plan with your roster manager to reduce your accrued annual leave liability. Wherever possible, annual leave will be scheduled at mutually agreed times between you and your roster manager. However, if you have excessive annual leave, your roster manager may direct you to take annual leave. In these circumstances, your roster manager will provide you with no less than 28 days, and where practicable three months, notice.

If you have just transferred from full time to work part time you will be requested to take any outstanding annual leave that is owing as soon as possible. You must be able to take the leave within 12 months from the date of transfer to the new part time hours. The leave being transferred is to be taken and paid at the full time weekly rate.

Long Service Leave

If you plan to take Long Service Leave (LSL) it is to be taken at a mutually agreeable time with your roster manager and has no priority over annual leave. If you have excessive annual leave this leave must be taken prior to LSL being taken.

Leave Without Pay

Planned leave without pay will not be granted until leave entitlements are reviewed by the manager.
Temporary Individual Roster Arrangements (TIRAs)

When a Temporary Individual Roster Arrangement is required

TIRAs are an agreed rostering arrangement for an individual to work (or not to work) specific shifts or specific days. TIRAs are one of the options under the NSW Public Service Commission’s Flexible Work Practices Policy, (G1995_001) and Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service (PD2014_029). Changes to ordinary working hours to facilitate short term needs should be considered on an individual basis; however, operational requirements to deliver services will be the first consideration in making these decisions.

Entering into a Temporary Individual Roster Arrangement

If you want to request to enter a TIRA, you must discuss the arrangements with your roster manager in the first instance. If your request is for the duration of one individual roster period (28 days), then refer to the process for Roster Requests.

If your request is for longer than one roster period, it needs to be submitted in writing, will require a secondary approval and Human Resources advice. For all staff, the TIRA must be submitted for approval in accordance with the delegation manual. Approved TIRAs should be regularly reviewed by the roster manager.

When you request to enter a TIRA, your roster manager will consider:

- Your reasons for the TIRA
- The number of staff currently on a TIRA
- The implications on service delivery resulting from your TIRA, including your skill set
- Any additional cost to the organisation
Approval for Temporary Individual Roster Arrangement

All TIRAs are to be for a maximum of 12 months and will be formally reviewed on an annual basis. The initial trial period should be a 28 day roster period and regular reviews every three months thereafter.

Reviewing the Temporary Individual Roster Arrangement

If you need to alter the terms of your TIRA prior to the review date, you need to discuss this with your roster manager at the earliest possible time.

The maximum length of time a TIRA can be approved for is 12 months.

In approaching the end date of your TIRA, your roster manager will review and develop a plan with you to return to work your usual contractual work arrangements.
Time in Lieu of Overtime (TIL)

Wherever possible, the use of premium labour should be limited in NNSWLHD. However, it is recognised that situations will arise in which overtime and time in lieu of overtime (TIL) will be necessary.

Overtime and TIL is only to be offered after all attempts to utilise casual staff or additional hours for part time staff have been exhausted. The option of taking TIL may not be possible in all settings and circumstances. Only when it is possible will the following processes apply.

Approval for TIL

All overtime, and subsequently TIL, must be approved prior to it being worked and should be fairly distributed among all staff. In hours, all overtime must be approved by your roster manager / delegate who has authority to approve overtime. After-hours approval is required by the manager as per the delegations manual.

TIL can be accrued for a minimum period of 30 minutes and up to a total maximum accrual of 16 hours.

Consent for TIL instead of overtime payment

The accruing and taking of TIL is conditional on the prior mutual agreement between yourself and your roster manager.

Documentation of TIL

Roster managers are required to keep a record of TIL worked and taken and undertake a review of these balances on a weekly basis in order to monitor and manage your TIL balances.

Taking TIL

You must seek and obtain approval from your roster manager prior to taking any accrued TIL. Your roster manager will consider the impact on service delivery and available staffing resources prior to approving your TIL to be taken. TIL must be taken within three months of it being accrued.
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