



005 – The policies and procedures that govern/guide professional development programs, such as tuition reimbursement; access to web-based education; professional nursing certification; and participation in local, regional, national and international meetings

General Professional Development:

[Exhibit OO5.a: Human Resources Policy 301: Educational Assistance](#) outlines the conditions for tuition reimbursement/advances and other centralized funding support for part-time coursework and professional certification-related fees; and departmental options for funding support for many other types of professional development activities.

Tuition Reimbursement:

^{XREF}[Exhibit OO5.a: Human Resources Policy 301: Educational Assistance](#) includes both tuition reimbursement and tuition advance payments in the supported funding options for part-time coursework. This supports both academic and certification review coursework and provides tuition and fees up to \$5,250 per year for employees in “hard to fill” roles, which includes all Registered Nurse, Advanced Practice Nurse and Nurse Manager roles (employees in roles not designated “hard to fill” may receive up to \$2,000 in support).

[Exhibit OO5.b: The PNSO Nursing Scholarship Program](#), a special program co-sponsored annually by Human Resources and the PNSO, distributes approximately \$42,000 per year to selected applicants – non-nurses and nurses seeking a BSN or higher. This centralized HR funding is in addition to the funds available through HR Policy 301, specifically to grow our own nurses. A small panel of nurse leaders, as well as the PNSO President, selects from among the applications; the Chief Nursing Officer reviews and approves the final list of selectees. In some years, the Chief Nursing Officer has provided additional monies from her own budget, to fund additional deserving applicants beyond what the designated \$42,000 could support.

Access to Web-Based Education:

[Medical Center Policy 0202, Internet and Intranet Access and Usage](#) (^{XREF}[Exhibit OO12.t](#)) permits staff to use web-based resources for educational purposes. ^{XREF}[Exhibit OO5.a: Human Resources Policy 301: Educational Assistance](#), section E.1 indicates that online courses are included in the supported funding options.

The Nursing Education Services intranet site ([Exhibit OO5.c: NES Website Screenshot](#)) is one way that staff connect with the educational opportunities they seek.

The UVA Learning Management System (LMS) and nursing’s subscription to CE Direct are two key examples of web-based education in use at UVA Health System.



- The UVA Learning Management System ([Exhibit OO5.d: LMS Info and Screenshot](#)) houses over 400 online courses created by Health System subject-matter experts as well as several thousand courses from various vendors (e.g., SkillSoft, AACN, AHIMA, Precyse and Rosetta Stone). All courses purchased by the institution are available to Health System staff with no cost to them, and many offer CE credits. The LMS also provides a vehicle for staff to enroll in “live,” instructor-led classes offered by Learning & Organizational Development, Nursing Education Services and other departments in the institution. Access to the LMS is via any Medical Center computer using a convenient desktop icon with single sign-on capabilities, or can also be accessed directly from the Internet. The LMS tracks information such as certifications and mandatory requirements, with reminders sent to the employees when re-certifications/renewals are due.
- CE Direct (from Gannett Education) is an online continuing education provider for healthcare educational content. More than 40 nursing certification review courses are offered in addition to individual modules on specific topics. For several years, UVA Health System has subscribed to 1,200 seats in CE Direct, each with unlimited access to their continuing-education and certification-review content. Approximately half of these seats are assigned to nurses on specific units, to support UVA Health System’s priority programs and accreditation such as our Level I Trauma Center status. The remaining half of seats are opportunities available to other Health System nurses through an annual application process brokered by our Nursing Education Services department ([Exhibit OO5.e: CE Direct Seat Application Process and Allocation Rules](#)), to support the PNSO’s overall certification targets and individuals’ professional development goals.

Professional Nursing Certification:

^{XREF} [Exhibit OO15.a: Human Resources Policy 905: Health Care Provider Licensure/Certification Policy](#), outlines the verification process that ensures providers who are *required* to be certified by Virginia law or Medical Center job description have that certification in place before engaging in practice, and maintain an active, current certification.

^{XREF} [Exhibit OO5.a: Human Resources Policy 301: Educational Assistance](#), includes professional certification in its scope for funding assistance.

- Sections E.1-E.3 allow certification review courses to be among the courses eligible, per departmental approval, for up to \$5,250 per year for employees in “hard to fill” roles, which includes all RN, APN and Nurse Manager roles (employees in roles not designated “hard to fill” may receive up to \$2,000 in support);



- Section E.4: “Educational Assistance for Eligible Professional Certification application and/or exam fees is available for up to \$325 per calendar year.” Prior to 2013, this employee benefit applied only to initial certification, with a substantially smaller assistance amount available for certification renewal. Since both obtaining and maintaining certification is a goal in the Nursing Strategic Plan, the PNSO successfully negotiated with Human Resources to expand the \$325 annual total benefit to apply to both initial certification and re-certification circumstances.

Participation in local, regional, state, national and international conferences/meetings:

^{XREF}[Exhibit OO5.a: Human Resources Policy 301: Educational Assistance](#) refers requests for professional development support (e.g., conferences, professional association programs) to departmental funding. Many nurses attend conferences and meetings with support from unit “local funds” as well as dedicated support from “local funds” provided through the CNO office ([Exhibit OO5.f: PCS Policy A11: External Conference Funding](#)). Nurses who present at conferences at any level receive funding assistance, including funds for poster development (through the operational budget of the Office of Nursing Governance Programs / Nursing Research Program), conference fees and travel. [Exhibit OO5.g: Medical Center Policy 0015: Travel Reimbursement](#) outlines the terms for supporting their travel costs, consistent with the rules of the Commonwealth of Virginia, since we are part of a state university. Nurses utilize a standardized knowledge-sharing tool to share their experience with colleagues upon their return.