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March 08, 2024

HRD No.: 23-375

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Governor of Guam

From: Director of Administration

Subject: Updating of 2021 Nurse Pay Plan  
RE: Periodic Wage Market Movement Assessment

*Buenas yan Hafa Adai!* This is to request your approval to update and align the 2021 Nurse Pay Plan salaries with current national mean wages pursuant to the "Nurse and Other Health Care Professional Recruitment and Retention Incentives Act of 1998" which was codified in Title 4GCA, Chapter 6. Due to the nation-wide shortage of healthcare professionals in general, the hiring of positions such as nurses and physicians continue to be challenging. To remain competitive and for purposes of recruitment and retention, it is imperative that the Nurse Pay Plan salary schedule be routinely reviewed and updated.

**Background:**

On June 18, 2021, at the recommendation of the Director of Administration, the Governor of Guam approved the recommendation to update and adjust the 2014 CWA Nurse Pay Plan salary schedule by 15% to include recruitment and retention pay differentials of 10%, 15%, and 25% for registered nurses employed at the Guam Department of Education (GDOE), the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS), the Guam Behavioral and Wellness Center (GBHWC)/Guam Memorial Hospital Authority (GMHA) respectively. The pay adjustments took effect pay period ending August 14, 2021. No additional adjustments to the pay plan have since been authorized.

A review of national mean and median wages from nurse salary surveys in comparison to current government of Guam salaries are described in the Tables A&B below. The information gathered was used to update the attached recommended 2024 Nurse Pay Plan. The current benchmark position is Hospital Staff Nurse III, Clinical Level II at Pay Grade N-N, Step 7. Since the highest pay differential is 25% at GMHA, an additional 25% (see note) is added to the Step 7 salary at PG N-N to determine the base pay adjustment lag from the national mean wages. Based on mean wage comparisons, internal versus external, the market movement pay plan lag ranges from 8% to 18%.

**External Wage Data:**

**Table A: GovGuam Nurse Salaries as of August 15, 2023.**

Position	No. Employees	Lowest Salary	Mean Wage	Highest Salary	Salary Adjustment Lag (% Difference)
GBHWC	11	\$40,123	<b>\$87,312</b>	\$122,490*	1%
GMHA	405	\$38,961	<b>\$76,022</b>	\$158,236	17%
GDOE	46	\$42,796	<b>\$76,609</b>	\$124,648	17%
DPHSS	37	\$36,913	<b>\$67,421</b>	\$134,280	32%
		<b>Weighted Mean Wage</b>	<b>\$75,687</b>	<b>Mean Lag</b>	<b>18%</b>

*\*Note: The contractual salary of a GBHWC Nurse Practitioner at \$208,000 was not included so as not to skew the average mean wage results.*

**External Wage Data:**

**Table B: Nurse National Compensation Surveys. Average Per Annum Salaries.**

Date	Name	National Mean Wage
February 2024	Salary.com	\$87,230
August 2023	U.S. News	\$79,685
February 2024	Indeed.com	\$91,650
August 2023	ZipRecruiter	\$91,520
NOTE:	USDOL – BLS (Registered Nurse)	\$98,134
	<b>Mean Wage</b>	<b>\$89,322</b>

*Note: US DOL-BLS*

*Mean wage was based on a 2022 survey, updated by projection to 2024.*

**Analysis:**

To arrive at the recommended percentage within the market movement percentage range of 8% to 18% derived from the data Tables, it is important to consider the value placed upon the four departments and agencies employing registered nurses as illustrated under Table A above. There is no question that the lower percentage lag from the national mean for incumbent nurses is due to the pay differentials that are authorized in addition to the retention of tenured nurses at GMHA and DPHSS, followed by GDOE and GBHWC. All nurses have the same credentials; however, the department or agency that operates an emergency room or clinic demands more from nurses employed there due to requirements for immediate direct patient safety and care, and a higher workload. All nurse positions are important, but for purposes of recruitment and retention, the more mission critical health care positions working in an emergency room or clinic demand incremental market movement percentage every two to three years for purposes of recruitment and retention. Note that the NPP market movement of 15% was last implemented in August 2021. Please see note below regarding specialty differentials at GMHA.

A mean wage comparison of 8% (to include 15%) base market movement of the nurse pay plan is illustrated below for the department and agencies that employ registered nurses:

**Table C: 8%-15% Departmental Pay Adjustment Comparison with National Mean Wage (NMW)**

EXTERNAL SURVEY MEAN DATA	NMW	\$87,178	\$87,178	\$89,322
PROPOSED MARKET MOVEMENT	%	8%	15%	18% (Recommended by DOA)
Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center	11	\$94,297	\$100,409	\$103,028
Guam Memorial Hospital Authority	405	\$82,104	\$87,425	\$89,706
Department of Public Health and Social Services	37	\$72,815	\$77,534	\$90,399
Guam Department of Education	46	\$82,738	\$88,100	\$90,399
<i>As a comparison to the policy point of the pay structure, the following estimates are provided below in relation to the National Mean Wage provided above.</i>				
Benchmark Data / Policy Point – Hospital Staff Nurse III, C.L. II (Pay Grade N-N)	STEP 7 + 25%	\$93,368	\$99,419	\$102,012

**2021 Nurse Pay Plan (Benchmark Structure Analysis):**

**Table D: Hospital Staff Nurse III, Clinical Level II, Pay Grade N-N, Step 7 Benchmark Comparison (inclusive of pay differentials) adjusted for employee**

Pay Differentials	Pay Structure Benchmark / Policy Point	Base per Annum x Highest Diff. =	Benchmark Policy Point Salary	Benchmark Policy Point Adjustment Lag
25%	PG N-N, Step 7	\$69,161 (x1.22)	\$84,376	6%
15%	PG N-N, Step 7	\$69,161 (x1.12)	\$77,460	15%
10%	PG N-N, Step 7	\$69,161 (x1.07)	\$74,022	21%

*Note: Differentials were factored to take account of the payment of differentials only for hours worked.*

**GMHA:**

After discussions with GMHA leadership, it was determined that there were issues specific to the hospital that required further consideration when looking at options to address recruitment and retention. Conditions such as high reliance on travel nurses to meet demands in particular areas which required upwards of \$100 per hour being paid to agencies that recruited these nurses had to be considered. The 24-hour operation critical for providing medical care for all the island's residents; and the necessity of nursing staff to keep hospital beds available to all residents was also taken into consideration. Competition with local hospitals exacerbated the issue of nursing staff shortages. It was noted that the other non-military local hospital was the main competitor for local nurses.

The Board of GMH resolved between 2020 and 2023 to pay differential compensation for highly skilled and specialized nurses:

- 15% for nurses in other units assigned to care for adult ICU patients
- 15% for nurses in Emergency Room and Hemodialysis Units.
- 15% - 40% for nurses in PICU and NICU.

While much of the focus centered on nurse recruitment and retention linked to compensation, insights from departing nurses at GMHA presented a distinct perspective. Through discussions, it became evident that various factors beyond compensation influenced their decisions to leave. These included relocation off-island, attrition (including retirements), and pursuit of better opportunities in both government and private sectors. Analysis of this data alongside external market comparisons informed the recommendations outlined below. These recommendations address administrative options in classification and compensation management. Upon approval, the Department of Administration (DOA) can offer guidance to relevant departments and agencies for implementation.

### **Recommendation:**

1. **The recommended NPP base market movement percentage is 18%.** The current pay differentials in place make up for any significant base adjustment lag. The impact was assessed when comparing it to the benchmark / policy point on the structure and applying the differentials to determine the base market movement. The analysis in Table D shows adjusted percentages, which resulted in a recommendation that was proposed to address the issue.
2. The GMHA Human Resources personnel work to immediately conduct a classification study to rationalize the Hospital Staff Nurse I, II, III, Clinical Levels I, II, III; and the Staff Nurse I, II, and III level positions to determine which series of positions is more appropriate for the hospital. This will form the foundation of a career ladder for movement upwards through the series of nursing positions based on the complex duties that a hospital nurse may be called upon to do. DOA will be happy to assist with this study. It is recommended that once the assessment of the positions is completed, that the entry-level nursing positions be aligned in job size. This would require matching at least the job size of a Community Health Nurse I, which has similar qualifications and licensure requirements; and basic duties in either medical environment.
3. It is recommended that the current differentials for GMHA, GBHWC, DPHSS, and GDOE remain in place to address recruitment and retention within those respective agencies.
4. It is recommended that employees who transition into the updated wages scale be slotted on a step-to-step basis.

5. It is recommended that an annual increase of at least 1% to 2% be approved on either an annual or triannual basis aligned with future budget requests to help keep the compensation structure moving to avoid falling too far behind market. This will be subject to further market analysis.
6. Explore other options within the statutory authority of the Director of Administration to identify and establish any new initiatives that may further help recruitment and retention of nurses in all departments and agencies. It is also highly recommended that issues with working conditions and adequate supplies be addressed.

A starting salary analysis based on the 18% recommendation; to include respective differentials is contained in Attachment #1. It is understood that this recommended increase is to be used in combination with other initiatives with departments and agencies who employ nurses. DOA will monitor stated reasons for attrition and recruitment barriers and address them with the employing agencies.

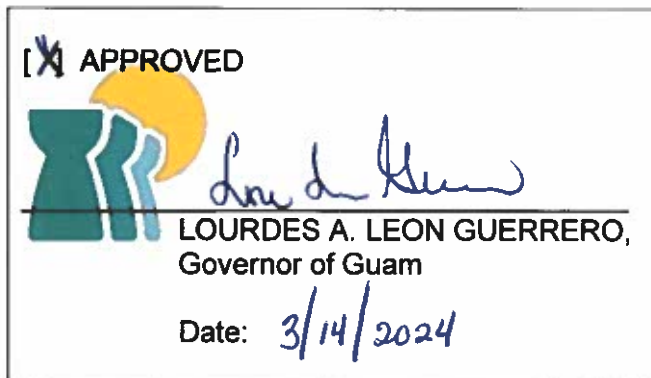
Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. *Dangkolo na Agradesimento!*



Edward M Birn  
Date:2024-03-08  
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EDWARD M. BIRN

Attachments



**Attachment #1: Starting Pay Comparison Tables for GMHA / GBHWC, DPHSS, and GDOE nurses**

*Attachment Table A. Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH) Starting Pay Comparison*

<b>GUAM MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (GMH)</b>				
<b>Positions (NPP)</b>	<b>PG</b>	<b>Current Starting - Step 1 (NPP 2021)</b>	<b>18% Base Pay Adjustment - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)</b>	<b>18% Base Pay w/ Differential (25%) - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)</b>
Administrator Quality, Patient Safety, Regulatory Compliance	N-R	\$79,906	\$94,289	\$117,861
Assistant Administrator, Nursing	N-S	\$86,298	\$101,832	\$127,290
Chief Clinical Nurse Informatics Officer	N-P	\$67,565	\$79,727	\$99,658
Clinical Case Manager	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
Clinical Nurse Informatics Specialist	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
Clinical Nurse Informatics Supervisor	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Clinical Nurse Wound Care Specialist	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
Clinical Nurse Wound Care Supervisor	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Hospital Certified Nurse Assistant I	N-F	\$27,798	\$32,802	\$41,002
Hospital Certified Nurse Assistant II	N-G	\$29,798	\$35,162	\$43,952
Hospital Licensed Practical Nurse I	N-H	\$32,098	\$37,876	\$47,345
Hospital Licensed Practical Nurse II	N-I	\$34,798	\$41,062	\$51,327



Hospital Nurse Quality Improvement Specialist	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282
Hospital Nurse Risk Management Program Officer	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Hospital Nurse Supervisor I	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
Hospital Nurse Supervisor II	N-P	\$67,565	\$79,726	\$99,658
Hospital Nurse Utilization Review Specialist	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282
Hospital Quality Management Administrator	N-P	\$67,565	\$79,726	\$99,658
Hospital Staff Nurse I, Clinical Level I***	N-K (Proposed N-L)	\$41,548	\$53,806	\$62,258
Hospital Staff Nurse I, Clinical Level II***	N-K (Proposed N-L)	\$41,548	\$53,806	\$62,258
Hospital Staff Nurse II, Clinical Level I	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282
Hospital Staff Nurse II, Clinical Level II	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282
Hospital Staff Nurse III, Clinical Level I	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
<b>Hospital Staff Nurse III, Clinical Level II</b>	N-N	<b>\$55,329</b>	\$65,288	\$81,610
Hospital Unit Supervisor	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Infection Control Practitioner	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Patient Safety Officer	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024
Staff Nurse I***	N-K (Proposed N-L)	\$41,548	\$53,806	\$62,258
Staff Nurse II	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282

Staff Nurse Training Officer	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
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Attachment Table B. Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) Starting Pay Comparison

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES				
Positions (NPP)	PG	Current Starting - Step 1 (NPP 2021)	18% Base Pay Adjustment - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)	18% Base Pay Adjustment w/ Differential (15%) - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)
Community Health & Nursing Services Administrator	N-R	\$79,906	\$94,289	\$108,432
Community Health & Nursing Services Asst. Administrator	N-Q	\$73,646	\$86,902	\$99,938
Community Health Nurse I	N-L	\$45,598	\$53,806	\$61,876
Community Health Nurse II	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$68,340
Community Health Nurse Supervisor I	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$75,081
Community Health Nurse Supervisor II	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$82,822
Deputy Assistant, Nursing Services	N-R	\$79,906	\$94,289	\$108,432
Head Start Health Coordinator	N-L	\$45,598	\$53,806	\$61,876
Licensed Practical Nurse I	N-H	\$32,098	\$37,875	\$43,557
Licensed Practical Nurse II	N-I	\$34,798	\$41,062	\$47,221
Nurse Midwife	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$82,822
Nurse Practitioner	N-P	\$67,565	\$79,726	\$91,686



Attachment Table C. Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness (GBHWC) Starting Pay Comparison

GUAM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER (GBHWC)				
Positions (NPP)	PG	Current Starting - Step 1 (NPP 2021)	18% Base Pay Adjustment - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)	18% Base Pay w/ Differential (25%) - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)
Psychiatric Nurse Administrator	N-Q	\$73,646	\$86,902	\$108,628
Psychiatric Nurse Supervisor	N-P	\$67,565	\$79,726	\$99,658
Psychiatric Nurse I	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$74,282
Psychiatric Nurse II	N-N	\$55,329	\$65,288	\$81,610
Psychiatric Nurse III	N-O	\$61,033	\$72,019	\$90,024

Attachment Table D. Guam Department of Education (GDOE) Starting Pay Comparison

GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (GDOE)				
Positions (NPP)	PG	Current Starting - Step 1 (NPP 2021)	18% Base Pay Adjustment - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)	Base 18% Pay w/ Differential (10%) - Step 1 (DOA Recommended)
School Health Counselor I	N-J	\$38,148	\$45,014	\$49,516
School Health Counselor II	N-L	\$45,598	\$53,806	\$59,186
School Health Counselor III	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$65,369
School Health Program Coordinator	N-M	\$50,361	\$59,426	\$65,369

\*\*\* Indicates that GMHA should amend the Hospital Staff Nurse I, Clinical Level I and II; and Staff Nurse I pay grades to pay grade N-L.

**Attachment #2: Updated 18% Nurse Pay Plan (NPP) of 2024**

<b>NURSE PAY PLAN 2024 (18%)</b>									
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Step 5</b>	<b>Step 6</b>	<b>Step 7</b>	<b>Step 8</b>	<b>Step 9</b>
N-U	\$117,132	\$121,570	\$126,177	\$130,957	\$135,920	\$141,070	\$146,415	\$151,060	\$155,853
N-T	\$109,469	\$113,617	\$117,922	\$122,390	\$127,027	\$131,840	\$136,836	\$141,177	\$145,657
N-S	\$101,831	\$105,690	\$109,695	\$113,851	\$118,165	\$122,642	\$127,289	\$131,328	\$135,495
N-R	\$94,289	\$97,861	\$101,569	\$105,418	\$109,412	\$113,558	\$117,861	\$121,600	\$125,459
N-Q	\$86,902	\$90,195	\$93,613	\$97,160	\$100,841	\$104,662	\$108,628	\$112,074	\$115,630
N-P	\$79,726	\$82,747	\$85,883	\$89,137	\$92,514	\$96,020	\$99,658	\$102,820	\$106,082
N-O	\$72,019	\$74,748	\$77,580	\$80,519	\$83,570	\$86,737	\$90,023	\$92,880	\$95,827
N-N	\$65,288	\$67,762	\$70,329	\$72,994	\$75,760	\$78,631	\$81,610	\$84,199	\$86,871
N-M	\$59,426	\$61,677	\$64,014	\$66,440	\$68,957	\$71,570	\$74,282	\$76,639	\$79,071
N-L	\$53,806	\$55,844	\$57,960	\$60,156	\$62,436	\$64,802	\$67,257	\$69,391	\$71,593
N-K	\$49,027	\$50,884	\$52,812	\$54,814	\$56,891	\$59,046	\$61,283	\$63,228	\$65,234
N-J	\$45,014	\$46,720	\$48,490	\$50,328	\$52,235	\$54,214	\$56,268	\$58,053	\$59,895
N-I	\$41,062	\$42,618	\$44,232	\$45,908	\$47,648	\$49,453	\$51,327	\$52,956	\$54,636
N-H	\$37,875	\$39,311	\$40,800	\$42,346	\$43,951	\$45,616	\$47,344	\$48,847	\$50,396
N-G	\$35,161	\$36,494	\$37,877	\$39,312	\$40,801	\$42,347	\$43,952	\$45,346	\$46,785
N-F	\$32,801	\$34,044	\$35,334	\$36,673	\$38,063	\$39,505	\$41,002	\$42,303	\$43,645

<b>NURSE PAY PLAN 2024 (18%)</b>									
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Step 10</b>	<b>Step 11</b>	<b>Step 12</b>	<b>Step 13</b>	<b>Step 14</b>	<b>Step 15</b>	<b>Step 16</b>	<b>Step 17</b>	<b>Step 18</b>
N-U	\$160,798	\$165,900	\$171,164	\$176,595	\$182,198	\$187,979	\$193,943	\$200,096	\$206,445
N-T	\$150,278	\$155,046	\$159,966	\$165,041	\$170,278	\$175,680	\$181,254	\$187,005	\$192,938
N-S	\$139,794	\$144,229	\$148,805	\$153,527	\$158,398	\$163,424	\$168,609	\$173,959	\$179,478
N-R	\$129,439	\$133,546	\$137,783	\$142,155	\$146,665	\$151,319	\$156,120	\$161,073	\$166,184
N-Q	\$119,299	\$123,084	\$126,990	\$131,019	\$135,176	\$139,465	\$143,890	\$148,455	\$153,165
N-P	\$109,448	\$112,921	\$116,504	\$120,200	\$124,014	\$127,949	\$132,008	\$136,197	\$140,518
N-O	\$98,867	\$102,004	\$105,240	\$108,579	\$112,024	\$115,579	\$119,246	\$123,029	\$126,933
N-N	\$89,627	\$92,471	\$95,405	\$98,432	\$101,555	\$104,777	\$108,101	\$111,531	\$115,070
N-M	\$81,579	\$84,168	\$86,838	\$89,594	\$92,436	\$95,369	\$98,395	\$101,517	\$104,738
N-L	\$73,864	\$76,208	\$78,626	\$81,120	\$83,694	\$86,350	\$89,089	\$91,916	\$94,832
N-K	\$67,304	\$69,439	\$71,642	\$73,916	\$76,261	\$78,680	\$81,177	\$83,752	\$86,410
N-J	\$61,796	\$63,756	\$65,779	\$67,866	\$70,020	\$72,241	\$74,533	\$76,898	\$79,338
N-I	\$56,369	\$58,158	\$60,003	\$61,907	\$63,871	\$65,898	\$67,989	\$70,146	\$72,371
N-H	\$51,995	\$53,645	\$55,347	\$57,103	\$58,915	\$60,784	\$62,713	\$64,703	\$66,756
N-G	\$48,270	\$49,801	\$51,381	\$53,011	\$54,693	\$56,429	\$58,219	\$60,066	\$61,972
N-F	\$45,030	\$46,458	\$47,932	\$49,453	\$51,022	\$52,641	\$54,311	\$56,035	\$57,812