

POLICY

Hammond-Henry Hospital will promote the professional development of its employees, and support career advancement within the organization through the Supporting Professionals through Accountability, Resources, and Knowledge Program, "SPARK".

OBJECTIVE

- To ensure an effective staffing plan by offering financial assistance in a fair and consistent manner to current and prospective employees who wish to pursue higher education.
 - Accepting applicants for the following positions
 - RN
 - MLT
 - MLS
 - Athletic Trainer

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

All Hammond-Henry Hospital employees.

PROCEDURE

General Guidelines

1. Eligibility Criteria:

- a. Participants must be at least 18 years of age.
- b. Participant displays qualities toward our mission statement. "To improve the quality of life in our communities through excellence in healthcare."
- c. Personal letter of intent- including career goals and why applicant should be approved for this program.
- d. Two (2) letters of recommendation from employers, teachers, or other approved persons, dated within the last 12 months and including contact details.

2. Application Process:

- a. Participants must request initial participation in program by completing the required application form two (2) months prior to the start of the related course work.
 - i. See last page of this policy for application.
- b. The application will be submitted along with all supporting documentation to the education nurse to start the approval process.
- c. Participants must disclose any grants, scholarships, or other monetary awards received or anticipated. Such amounts will be subtracted from the award granted. If grants, scholarships, or other monetary awards are received after the application has been submitted and/or approved, participant will disclose such awards to the education nurse.
- d. Number of candidates that will be approved each year may vary.

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3. Approval Process:

- a. After all application requirements are submitted an interview with the SPARK Committee will be arranged for final determination.
- b. If the applicant is an already established employee, the manager of employee will be involved in the approval process with open discussion on applicants performance in current position.

4. Expectation of the participants:

- a. Participant will be hired upon approval of application into a role of employer's choosing. Hiring is contingent on successfully passing a drug screen, background check, and completion of all required immunizations (or exemptions if applicable). The participant is required to work at least 24 hours per month in a department of Hammond-Henry Hospital choosing.
- b. Any disciplinary action while working for Hammond-Henry Hospital may lead to dismissal of further involvement within SPARK and require payback of previously received funds.
- c. Employee must 1) complete the course with a C or 2.75+ grade point average and 2) meet the passing requirements of the academic institution beyond GPA. Otherwise, employee must notify the committee in writing and repay the scholarship amount awarded. Payment arrangements may be discussed but are not guaranteed. All grades must be submitted to the committee at the completion of each course.
- d. Ongoing application forms must be filled out prior to each term with course information and tuition billing statements attached.
- e. Throughout the degree program, the participant will be assigned a department mentor with whom s/he is required to communicate with at least every month. The education nurse may also fill this role.
- f. The participant will obtain licensure/certification within 6 months of graduation.
- g. Upon graduation and, if required, state licensure/certification, the participant will enter a four (4) year full-time work agreement with a degree related department of Hammond-Henry Hospital's choosing.
- h. If the institution allows, all clinical hours are to be completed at Hammond-Henry Hospital.

5. Expectation of the program:

- a. The hospital will provide each approved SPARK participant with up to full tuition, including books and fees related to his/her coursework.
- b. The participant will work within the hired capacity until their last year of the degree program.
- c. In the last year of the degree program the participant will shadow the required 24 hours a month in the department the degree will pertain to and gain hands-on experience, and enhance their critical thinking skills.
- d. If the student's program does not include a pre course for licensure and or certification, and the student wishes to take one, the cost of the approved prep course will be covered.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- If the participant desires more than 24 hours per month, the participant is welcome to fill in available shifts in their own or other departments.
- If the participant is unable to meet the 24 hours per month work requirement the participant can roll over the 24 hours to the following month. Max amount of roll over hours can not exceed 48 hours in one month. Approval of the request will be determined by the SPARK Committee. If the 48

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hours are not completed in the following month participant will be removed from the SPARK Program and be responsible to repay tuition in full.

- If the participant does not complete coursework and/or the employment requirement, Hammond-Henry Hospital will withhold money from the participant's paycheck, including the final paycheck. Balance owed in excess of the withholding must be paid to Hammond-Henry Hospital within 30 days of paycheck withholding. A payment plan may be requested but is not guaranteed. If repayment is not made, legal action will be taken, including turning participant over to a collection agency.
- Participants may continue to shadow for 24 hours a month for up to 6 months from the date of graduation while they work towards passing their licensure/ certification exam.
- The participant is required to pass his/her licensure/certification exam within 6 months of graduation. Multiple attempts are allowed.
- If the participant does not pass the licensure/certification exam within a 6 month time frame the participant will be responsible to repay all education funds received within 30 days. Additional exam fees will be the responsibility of the participant.
- If the applicant does not fulfill the 4 year full time employment requirement following graduation, the full amount of scholarship amount awarded must be repaid at a no proration for time worked.
- Other circumstances not addressed in this policy will be addressed as they arise by the SPARK Committee.
- Policy is subject to change.

OUTCOME

Staffing levels enhanced.

POLICY REVIEW & APPROVAL

Document Owner: Erica Huffer (Clinical Educator)

Approved by: Wyatt Brieser (CEO)

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Last Periodic Review

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