



WORKING IN THE **Ngaanyatjarra Lands**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Clinics and Professional Support

CLINICS

Are the clinics computerised?

Yes, the Ngaanyatjarra Health Service (NHS) clinics are fully computerised for patient health records, medication and medical histories. The practice uses software system, Communicare, which is available from a central database, so patient records can be accessed from across the Lands and the head office in Alice Springs.

Do patients attend their consultations?

Many patients attend the clinics on a walk-in basis for acute care needs or for attention to their existing chronic disease/s. Because of this, opportunistic screening and preventative health care checks are carried out whenever possible. Follow-up and return visits are encouraged, however, there are many factors hampering regular attendance at the doctor such as lack of transport, traditional lore/law¹ activities on the Lands at times or observing strict customs following the death of a member of the family (which may be quite extended).

Where appointments are booked in advance, such as for visiting specialists, patients are picked up by clinic transport staff and taken to the clinic for their appointment.

Are there nurses at all the clinics?

Yes, all NHS clinics are primarily staffed by Remote Area Nurses. The NHS has a 'no staff member works alone' policy so there will never be a single-nurse station. There may be two nurses on at any time, or a nurse and an Aboriginal health worker. There may also be other health practitioners or support staff in the clinic/s at any given time.

Is there going to be a language barrier or will there be someone there to translate?

For many of the traditional land owners of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, English is a second or third language, with the primary languages being Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara or Yankunytjatjara. Generally, English is understood well enough to communicate, but all the NHS clinics engage with local Aboriginal staff who can assist with translation and any language barriers.

Shortcuts and some common language 'dos' and 'don'ts' are also listed in the staff common rooms for your reference.



¹ Law and Lore are used interchangeably in Indigenous Australian culture and may refer to 'traditional law'.

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PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Are you usually based in one community or do you work across communities?

Usually, staff will be recruited to fill a specific position at one location, however, given the need to cover so many communities and all staff being employed on fly-in fly-out rosters, the need to be flexible and occasionally work across other communities or be relocated to another community may be necessary.

What is a typical work day like for health staff?

The usual practice opening hours across all the NHS community clinics are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between the hours of 8.00am and 4.00pm.

The clinics are closed for lunch and paperwork catch-up is between the hours of 12.00pm and 2.00pm each day. Wednesdays are reserved for clinic meetings, professional development and specialist clinics.

However, as for any mainstream practice environment, acute presentations will occasionally require clinic staff to work outside of these hours to meet patient needs.

There is an on-call roster for all trained staff covering after hours and weekend shifts.

Will I be buddied with another health professional?

Depending on your role, NHS clinical staff will often be buddied with another health professional in a two or more member team.

If you are based in a smaller community, you will be supported by Aboriginal staff from that community.

Will I have everything I need to do my job?

The NHS clinics are supplied with modern clinical equipment and medicines.

As a new graduate, how will I be supported?

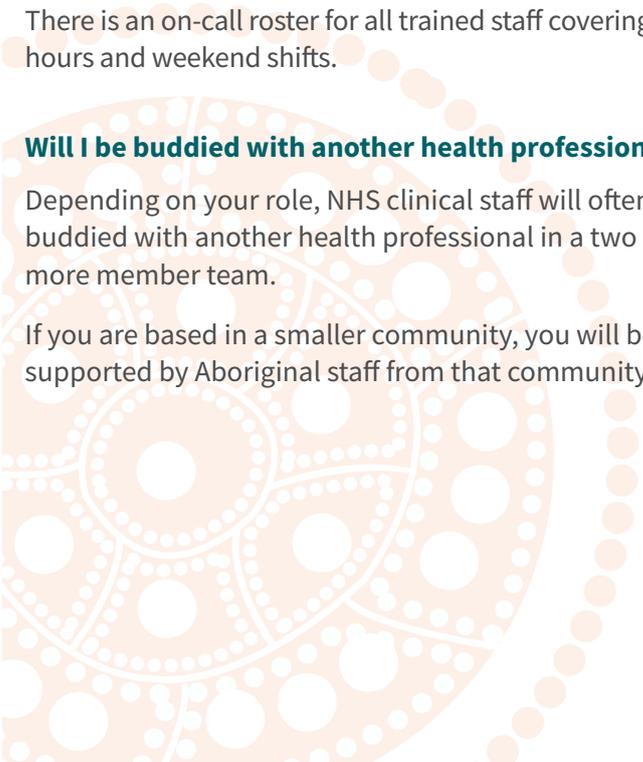
Generally, new graduates are not employed directly into the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. If they are employed then they will be provided with a supported orientation and performance plan.

What other professions are in the community (teachers, police)?

The Ngaanyatjarra Lands include ten communities. Some communities have police based in them including Warburton, Warakurna and Blackstone. Almost all communities have teaching staff. Other professionals are either based in communities or rotated on a regular basis. Many communities also have active art centres.

What links are there to external professional networks?

The NHS maintains strong links to professional networks and associations in order to maintain best practice standards, staff support services and industry leadership. Professional networks include the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (of which NHS is an affiliate of in Western Australia and the Northern Territory), the Council of Remote Area Nurses Australia (CRANApus) as well as other professional networks such as Rural Health West and the Primary Health Networks in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.



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How do I access Continuing Professional Development?

The NHS values and supports its staff to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

During your employment at the NHS, many CPD opportunities will be made available – on the Lands, in Alice Springs or online. The main source of CPD for our clinical teams is CRANAPlus, but from time to time other providers will deliver CPD in our training facility in Warakurna.

Additional CPD, paid for by the NHS, will be available after 12 months of employment upon approval by your line manager.

Can I take sick/personal leave when I am on the Lands?

Yes, sick and personal leave are available.

How do I get someone admitted to hospital?

Referral to a clinical GP and, in cases of emergencies, through the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Is there any palliative care?

Yes, there is a nursing home and palliative care at Wanarn community.

What flexibility is there with rosters?

There is some flexibility with rosters, however, having back-to-back coverage is important for the community.

What costs are covered or reimbursed by NHS?

This will depend on the agency, but generally taxi, plane fares and living-away-from-home allowance are covered. Living-away-from-home allowance is generally \$50 per day on the Lands and \$90 per day in Alice Springs.

Is travel time paid?

Yes, when you travel to the Lands your travel time is paid. Often you will travel out to the Lands on a Monday or Tuesday.

Is there professional indemnity insurance?

Yes, professional indemnity insurance is covered through NHS.

What allowances are paid?

This will depend on the role, contract and Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. However, generally there is a living-away-from-home allowance when travelling, a zone allowance and a laundry and uniform allowance.

What are the referral pathways for patients and self?

The normal referral pathways are available including the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme.



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