

**Clinical Advancement Program
For Registered Nurses
Scotland Health Care System**

I. Purpose

Scotland Health Care System has established a system to provide registered nurses with opportunities for professional growth, personal satisfaction, recognition, and economic reward based on professional contributions to quality patient care. This system is known as the Clinical Advancement Program (CAP) and is based on the possession of critically required knowledge and skills at specified levels of the ladder. Specific objectives of the Clinical Ladder are:

- To recognize and reward clinical competence and professionalism.
- To attract and retain nurses who are committed to deliver quality care required by a variety of patient needs.
- To provide high-quality, cost-effective patient care through effective utilization of qualified nursing personnel.
- To provide career advancement opportunities with related pay increases.
- To promote empowerment by holding professional nurses responsible and accountable for practice.

The responsibility and accountability for professional practice mentioned above is operationalized by the CAP Committee. The CAP Committee is responsible for the design, revision and management of the clinical ladder. The ladder enables nurses to advance on a clinical track.

II. Eligibility

All full-time and part-time A registered nurses who's primary job responsibility is providing direct patient care will be enrolled in the Clinical Advancement Program ladder.

Clin I (Novice)

Novice nurses are encouraged to progress to a greater level of increased knowledge, clinical competency, teamwork skills, and hospital and community involvement.

All new hire RNs are automatically enrolled as a Clin I.

For RNs with less than 12 months experience, unit specific orientation requirements must be completed within 180 days. Satisfactory preceptor evaluations must be provided within the 90 day evaluation period. To maintain clinical advancement requirements, a total of 150 points must be obtained and presented during annual performance evaluations. Failure to maintain clinical advancement requirements will result in a 30 day action plan. Clinical ladder associates have the specified time frame based on the

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action plan to complete advancement requirements. Failure to complete requirements may result in termination.

Clin II (Competent)

Competent Nurses demonstrate evidence of the pursuit of increased knowledge, excellence in clinical practice, teamwork, and hospital and community involvement. The competent nurse acts as a role model and mentor in the areas of clinical skills and instructions. A nurse at this level can serve as an agent of change while assisting with implementing evidence based practice guidelines and/or assisting with quality patient care projects.

For RNs with more than 12 months experience, unit specific orientation requirements must be completed within 90 days. Satisfactory preceptor evaluations must be provided within the 90 day evaluation period. Upon successful 90 day evaluation completion, the associate is advanced to a Clin II. To maintain clinical advancement requirements, a total of 250 points must be obtained and presented during annual performance evaluations. Failure to maintain clinical advancement requirements will result in a 30 day action plan. Clinical ladder associates have the specified time frame based on the action plan to complete advancement requirements. Failure to complete requirements may result in termination.

All RNs are required to advance from Clin I to Clin II with the specified timeframes as indicated above. Further advancement to Clin III is strongly encouraged but not mandatory.

III. Clinical III Advancement

Clin III

The nurse who chooses to participate in the Clinical Advancement Program at this level must demonstrate evidence of the pursuit of increased knowledge, the highest standard of professional practice and clinical excellence, the ability to lead others via role modeling and mentoring, teamwork, and hospital and community involvement. At this level, the nurse implements evidence based practice, research development, process improvement, and education of staff.

Progression to this level requires a minimum of 5 years RN experience, or 4 years + BSN or certification, or 3 years + MSN. Total number of points required for initial application and annually is 400 points. Initial verification of points must be submitted in a portfolio along with application, proof of eligibility, Clin III Advisor letter of recommendation, Peer Support Request Forms (3), and Director/Manager Support Form.

Incentive

- Salary per scale for Clin II +
- 5% of the maximum of the RN pay scale
- Recognition letter from the Nursing Leadership Team

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- Name recognized in the Newsletter
- Recognition during the Annual Nurse of Distinction Awards Program
- Pin and/or ID indicating clinical advancement

Department Transfer

Transfers will be under a Grandfather Clause for six months. At the end of the six months, the Clin III must have met unit specific competency requirements. Failure to complete requirements may result in relinquishment of the Clin III status.

Restricted License

- If the associate is a Clin III at the time the restriction is implemented, the associate will be demoted to Clin II.
- The applicant, with approval of the Director/Manager may reapply for Clin III six months after licensure reinstatement.

Written Counseling

If the associate is a Clin III at the time of the written counseling action the associate will be demoted to Clin II.

Clin III Suspended- Steps for reinstatement

- The associate with the approval of their Director/Manager may reapply for Clin III in six months
- Complete and submit portfolio validating 400 points.
- An action plan based on reason for counseling that includes purpose of counseling and innovative strategies to prevent this action in the future.
- Once reinstated, if associate receives another write up they will not be eligible to reapply for one year depending on the discretion of the CAP Committee.

Promotion

Should a Clin III be promoted to a management position active status of Clin III will no longer apply.

A Status Change Form should be completed by the Director/Manager at the time of the change in clinical advancement status and forwarded to HR.

Responsibilities for Clin III Applicants:

- Have a preliminary conference with Director/Manager to inform of interest to apply for Clin III and present eligibility requirements including verification of points in a portfolio to Director/Manager. Receive approval to apply.
- Select and meet with Advisor (current or previous Clin III with a minimum of 2 years of accomplishment).
- Submit portfolio with all requirements to advisor for approval.

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- Submit approved portfolio to Organizational Development by the quarterly due date (January 1, April 1, July 1 or October 1). Late submissions will be forwarded to the upcoming review period.
- If Director/Manager or peers (minimum of 3) do not support applicant then associate can request coaching and/or appeal to the Chair of the Clinical Advancement Program Committee.
- If portfolio is not approved, the associate can meet with the advisor and Director/Manager for remediation and then resubmit as early as the next six months.

Director/Manager Responsibilities:

- Participate in initial meeting with associate for approval to apply (ensure requirements have been met).
- Post and/or email intent along with peer review forms to peers and ask for peer review. Please solicit confidential peer reviews from multiple departments as applicable.
- Allow peers two weeks from the time of the request to respond. Must have at least 3 peer supports.
- Submit confidential peer reviews to Organizational Development.

Advisor Responsibilities:

- Meet with the Clin III applicant to ensure eligibility requirements and verification of points are met.
- Assist and provide feedback/guidance as needed.
- Provide a letter of recommendation for Clin III applicant.

Record Keeper- Organizational Development Responsibilities:

- Receive peer reviews from Directors/Managers and applications from Clin III applicants no later than the quarterly deadline.
- Arrange meeting for CAP Committee for application reviews
- Arrange and notify qualified applicants of interview
- Notify applicant(s) of CAP Committee's decision and attach copy of decision to associate's application. Forward applications to Directors/Managers.
- For approved applicants, forward approval letter to HR. For denied applicants, a confidential declination letter with reasons for denial will be provided to the applicant and a copy forwarded to the Director/Manager.

IV: Clinical Ladder Criterion Tool: Categories and Explanations

A: Clinical Excellence: Quality Improvement

A1: Develop and Implement an Action Plan Based on Chart Review Outcomes

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. The applicant must develop and implement an action plan based on chart review outcomes. Documentation of chart reviews, deficiencies, plan development, and implementation is needed. (Must have supporting documentation)

50 points for each action plan

A2: Case Study or Exemplar (Age specific, Patient Safety, Cultural Diversity)

Must be a minimum of two typed pages (double spaced). The applicant must demonstrate an evidence based practice nursing process through documentation of patient care. The nurse must illustrate assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation using evidence based practice. The exemplar must be based on Benner's Novice to Expert Theory. (Must have supporting documentation)

Limit 2 separate case studies (20 points for each case study)

A3: Risk Reduction Initiative

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. A summary of the completed project must be submitted. (Must have supporting documentation) (Examples: Pressure Ulcer, Fall Prevention, Catheter Associated Infection)

50 points for risk reduction initiative

A4: Unit Change Project

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. A summary of the completed project must be submitted. (Example: Improving/changing a system or workflow in your unit). (Must have supporting documentation).

50 points for each unit change project process or workflow

A5: Process Monitoring

Must be pre-approved and assigned by participant's nurse manager. A summary of the completed project must be submitted. (Example: hand-hygiene monitors, fall risk protocol monitoring, patient ID process monitoring, focus monitoring). Process monitoring should be documented at least on a monthly basis. (Must have supporting documentation).

Limit 2 (15 points for each process monitoring)

A6: Research

Develop, implement, and participate in a research study approved by the Clinical Ladder Committee.

(Must have supporting documentation)

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75 points for developing, implementing, and participating in a research project; 25 points for completing a literature review presented as a research paper

A7: Core Measure Super User

Serves as a resource for core measure quality indicators. Shares information related to core measures with staff and may assist with chart reviews related to core measures. Points for process monitoring are provided separately.

30 points

B. Clinical Excellence: Clinical Achievement

B1: Policy Revision

Must be pre-approved and assigned by participant's nurse manager and/or Nurse Practice Council. Provide final version with review date on typed policy. (Must have supporting documentation)

5 points per policy

B2: Policy Development

Must be pre-approved and approved upon completion by participant's nurse manager and/or Nurse Practice Council. (Must have supporting documentation of the policy developed with evidence based references)

20 points per policy

B3: Advanced Skills

Must be pre-approved and approved upon completion by participant's nurse manager. Attach documentation of current certificate or transcript including expiration date. Examples: ACLS, TNCC, PALS, NRP). (Must have supporting documentation)

25 points for each advanced skill

B4: National Board Certifications

Attach documentation of current certification. Must include expiration date. (Must have supporting documentation).

50 points for each national certification

B5: Committee Participation

Must be hospital sanctioned committee. Must show proof of active participation. Active participation is based on Committee Chair.

25 points for each committee

B6: Professional Organization Membership

Nurse must be a member of a professional Health Care organization. A copy of the membership card must be included as proof of membership. Proof of activities must be provided (Must have supporting documentation)

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25 points for each organization, webinars 10 points each, conferences 50 points each)

B7: Presentation at a Continuing Education Activity

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. Submit flyers, agenda, brochures and/or other supporting documentation for proof of presentation. (Must have supporting documentation and verification that course offers CE Credits)

50 points each

B8: Article in National Journal or Hospital Publication

Submit a copy of the article or letter from the peer-reviewed journal's editor stating intent to publish. Publish date needs to be within a year. (Must have supporting documentation) **(25 points for In-House Publication, 50 points for national publication).**

B9: Continuing Education Credits

Participant must obtain continuing educations credits beyond the licensure requirement. (Must Have Supportive Documentation) A copy of certificate with activity and date must be attached.

Each CE above the annual requirement for NCBON (7.5) is worth 1 point.

C: Clinical Excellence: Education

C1: In-service Presentation

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. Presentations must be a minimum of 10 minutes. (Must have supporting documentation of attending personnel)

15 points per presentation

C2: Precept for Student/New Associate

The applicant may precept students/new associates. Documentation of the specific dates/hours of precepting is required. (Must have supporting documentation).

5 points per shift

C3: Instructor for BLS, ACLS, PALS, NRP, TNCC, ONS Chemotherapy

Must submit copies of rosters including dates for proof of classes taught. (Must have supporting documentation)

Instructor certification is 20 points/classes taught are 20 each

C4: Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Courses

Must obtain at least a "C" in undergraduate courses and a "B" in graduate courses (Must submit final grades as verification).

10 points for each semester hour for undergraduate studies, 15 points for each semester hour for graduate studies. No limit

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C5: Member of Rapid Response Team or Code Team

Participant must be member of RRT for at least one year. (Must have supporting documentation) For proof, copy of RRT schedule or verification letter from Nursing Office Manager must be attached.

10 points for per year served

C6: Technology/Informatics Super User

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. (Must have supporting documentation) Validation by manager to be currently serving as TSU is necessary for each annual submission and rosters of associates taught as applicable.

30 points

C7: Competency Validation Verification

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager or validator serves as a Charge Nurse or Preceptor. Must have supporting documentation from Manager/Director indicating applicant validated a sufficient number of competencies based on departmental needs.

(25 points)

C8: New Product Super User

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager or validator serves as a Charge Nurse or Preceptor. Must have supporting documentation for in-services provided based on departmental needs.

(30 points, 15 points per product)

C9: EKG, Rhythm, and/or Medication of the Week

Provide submission of EKG, Rhythm and/or Medication of the Week. (Must have supporting documentation).

(1 point per submission)

C10: Case Studies

Provide submission of Case Study. Case studies may be developed by Director, Clinical Educator or designated RN. (Must have supporting documentation).

(10 points per submission, 25 points for development of Case Study)

C11: Education Posters

Review education poster in designated area(s). Attendance/verification of participation is recorded on sign in sheet.

(5 points per review)

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D: Leadership and Team Development

D1: Nurse of Distinction Award, Nurse Excellence Award, or equivalent (Must have supporting documentation) **(50 points, no limit- Previous winner- 30 points).**

Employee of the month, Nominee for Nurse of Distinction, Nominee for Nurse Excellence Award, Nominee for Award of Excellence or equivalent (10 points)

D2: Present In-service on Teamwork or Leadership

Must be pre-approved by the participant's nurse manager. Must be at least 10 minutes in length, summary of presentation and handouts must be submitted (Must have supporting documentation)

20 points each

D3: Develop Bulletin Board on Performance Improvement, Teamwork, or Leadership

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager, A picture or copy of the project must be submitted (Must have supporting documentation)

Limit 2 (15 points each)

D4: Safety Spotter

Nurse must be selected by participant's nurse manager to serve as a Safety Spotter in his/her clinical area. This nurse will receive instruction by his/her Director/Manager or Patient Safety Officer for this role and must fulfill expectations of role for the entire year in order to continue receiving credit (points). He/she will reinforce the use of safety management and error prevention techniques on their respective unit and serve as a resource to peers. (Must have supporting documentation). Proof must be provided that the participant performed required duties.

(50 points)

D5: Shared Governance (Unit Based Council) Representative

Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. Must show proof of active participation. (Committee chair will need to sign off). Active participation is based on Committee Chair's discretion.

(30 points + additional 20 points for officers)

E: Organizational Engagement and Patient Satisfaction

E1: Patient Satisfaction Initiative

Develop an initiative for your unit to improve patient satisfaction. Must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. A brief summary of the project must be provided. (Must have supporting documentation)

No limit (50 points each)

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E2: Associate/Town Hall Forums Attendance

Attend Town Hall Forum. Present information to unit staff for additional points. (Must have supporting documentation).

Attendance 5 points, presentation 10 points (A brief summary of the forum and rosters must be provided).

E3: Service Excellence Commendation

Copy of written commendation from physicians, patients, family members, and peers for going above and beyond expectations of job/role. Participant must be specifically named along with service(s) provided and submissions must be dated. (Must have supporting documentation)

5 points per commendation

E4: Additional Shifts/Special Duty:

This is designed as an extra shift, double shift, and/or taking additional call above department requirements, etc. Back up Charge RN is also considered a special duty. (Must have supporting documentation). Must provide schedule with additional shifts.

Maximum of 100 points (1 point per hour worked)

E5: Actively volunteering and involved in Community Organization

Must provide proof of activity, hours, and duties. An attachment must be signed by the organizer or a member of the organizing team.

A minimum of 20 hours total is required (15 points per 20 hours). Limit 45 points.

F: Well-Run Organization: Fiscal Responsibility and Operational Excellence

F1: Cost Savings Initiatives

All categories must be preapproved by participant's nurse manager. A written summary must be attached. (Must have supporting documentation). Identify a cost saving initiative of at least \$2500 annual savings and implement initiative.

No limit (25 points)

F2: Retention

Nurses employed at Scotland Health Care System will achieve points for the following years of service. (Must have supporting documentation).

(3 years- 15 points, 5 years- 25 points, 8 years- 35 points, 10+ years- 50 points)

F3: Recruitment Effort

Associate must have Human Resources provide verification that the new associate was recruited by the applicant. This recruit only counts one time. This recruit must be a Full Time RN who completed the probationary period before points are awarded. (Must have supporting documentation).

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20 points each RN with no limit

F4: Grant Writing

Grant must be pre-approved by participant's nurse manager. Grant purpose must include improving the health care system. (Must have supporting documentation). A copy of the grant application with grant writer's signature must be attached.

No limit (25 points for each grant application, 50 points for each approved grant)

F5: Serve as a Clin III Advisor

Participant must be approved by nurse manager. The participant assists Clin III applicants with the application and approval process and verifies eligibility. (Must have supporting documentation). A copy of advisor letter of recommendation must be presented.

Limit 3 (15 points per Clin III applicant)

F6: Operational Excellence Participation

RIE participation- **50 points**

Team Leader for RIE- **25 additional points**

Standard Work and/or Projects (Development, training and follow up) - **25 points**

Participate in Report Out- **10 points**

IV: Review of Application

Clin I to Clin II advancement

- The Director/Manager of an Associate will make the decision based on requirements (evaluation, preceptor reports, and points).

Clin II to Clin III advancement

- CAP Committee will review applications for Clin III.
- CAP Committee members will receive a copy of the portfolio(s) submitted for review.
- A review meeting will be held to discuss applications.
- Applicable candidates will be contacted for an interview.
- Following the interview process, the committee will vote to determine if the applicant advances to Clin III level.
- If approved, compensation will be effective the pay date closest to the 1st day of the following month.
- At the end of the CAP Committee meeting, decisions will be forward to Human Resources for further processing.

V. Clin III Maintenance

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Total number of points required annually is 400 points. Verification of points must be submitted by September 30th of each year to the Department Director. Maintenance begins after the first evaluation as a Clin III. Failure to complete requirements may result in relinquishment of the Clin III status.

VI. Benner's Domains of Nursing Practice with Objectives

- A. The Helping Role
- B. The Teaching-Coaching Function
- C. The Diagnostic and Monitoring Function
- D. Effective Management of Rapidly Changing Situations
- E. Administering and Monitoring Therapeutic Interventions and Regimens
- F. Monitoring and Ensuring the Quality of Health Care Practices
- G. Organizational and Work-Role Competencies

VII. Attachments

- 1. Clinical Advancement Program Calendar
- 2. Application
- 3. Peer Support Request Form
- 4. Peer Support Form
- 5. Director/Manager Support Form
- 6. Annual Performance Evaluation: Portfolio Face Sheet
- 7. Clinical Ladder Criterion Quick Reference

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Calendar: Attachment 1

Clinical Advancement Application Due Dates:

January 1st
April 1st
July 1st
October 1st

Late applications will be held until the next review period.

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Clin III Application: Attachment 2

Clinical Advancement Application: Portfolio Face Sheet

Name: _____ Dept: _____

Contact Number: _____

SHCS Current Hire Date: _____ Graduation Date: _____

___ Resume

___ Performance Evaluation

___ Director/Manager Support Form

___ Peer Support Form (3)

___ Letter of Recommendation from Advisor

___ Exemplar of Service Excellence (1-2 pages double spaced that includes the organization's mission, vision, and values). This exemplar does not count toward points

___ Verification of points (400 points)

Peer Support Request Form: Attachment 3

To: _____

(Person to complete the peer interview)

From: _____

(Director/Manager)

Regarding: _____

(Clin III Applicant)

Enclosed you will find a Peer Review Form. Please complete and return to me within 2 weeks _____ (Requested return date).

To ensure confidentiality, please place the Peer Review Form in a sealed envelope with your signature on the back across the envelope flap.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at:

(Director/Manager's contact information)

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Peer Support Form: Attachment 4

_____ is applying for Clin III status. The nurse who chooses to participate in the Clinical Advancement Program at this level must demonstrate evidence of the pursuit of increased knowledge, the highest standard of professional practice and clinical excellence, the ability to lead others via role modeling and mentoring, teamwork, and hospital and community involvement. At this level, the nurse implements evidence based practice, research development, process improvement, and education of staff.

Please indicate if the person has demonstrated the following skills on a consistent basis by circling yes or no:

Yes or No Clinical performance

Yes or No Communication skills

Yes or No Mentoring

Yes or No Teamwork

Yes or No Positive leadership during change

Yes or No Serves as a resource within the department

Yes or No Conflict management and/or resolution

Yes or No Customer service

Comments: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Please remember to return this form to the Director/Manager in a sealed and signed envelope by the specified date.

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Director/Manager Support Form: Attachment 5

I recommend _____ as a Clin III applicant. The nurse who chooses to participate in the Clinical Advancement Program at this level must demonstrate evidence of the pursuit of increased knowledge, the highest standard of professional practice and clinical excellence, the ability to lead others via role modeling and mentoring, teamwork, and hospital and community involvement. At this level, the nurse implements evidence based practice, research development, process improvement, and education of staff.

He/she has demonstrated consistent exceptional performance in all of the following areas.

Yes or No Clinical performance

Yes or No Communication skills

Yes or No Mentoring

Yes or No Teamwork

Yes or No Positive leadership during change

Yes or No Serves as a resource within the department

Yes or No Conflict management and/or resolution

Yes or No Customer service

If no, please comment: _____

Additional comments: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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Evaluation Checklist: Attachment 6

Annual Performance Evaluation: Portfolio Face Sheet

Clinical Ladder Level: 1 2 3 (circle)

Name: _____ Dept: _____

___ Orientation Packet (as applicable)

___ Competency Validation Form

___ Net Learning Transcript for fiscal year (Oct- Sept)

___ Verification of points

Clin I- 150 points required with satisfactory preceptor evaluations

Clin II- 250 points required with satisfactory preceptor evaluations

Clin III- 400 points required with no disciplinary write ups or action plans

Failure to maintain clinical advancement requirements will result in a 30 day action plan. Clinical ladder associates have the specified time frame based on the action plan to complete advancement requirements. Failure to complete requirements may result in termination or relinquishment of the Clin III status.

Director's Signature of Approval

Date

Comments:

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Clinical Ladder Criterion Quick Reference: Attachment 7

A: Quality Improvement	Points
Development & Implement an Action Plan	50
Case Study or Exemplar	20 (limit 2)
Risk Reduction Initiative	50
Unit Change Project	50
Process Monitoring	15 (limit 2)
Research- Project, Paper	75, 25
Core Measure Super User	30
B: Clinical Advancement	Points
Policy Revision	5
Policy Development	20
Advanced Skills	25
National Board Certification	50
Committee Participation	25
Professional Organization Membership	25*, 10, 50
Presentation at CE Activity	50
Article in National Journal, Hospital Publication	50, 25
Continuing Education Credits (Beyond NCBO annual requirement of 7.5)	1/hr
C: Education	Points
In-service Presentation	15
Precept for Student/New Associate	5/shift
Instructor for Advanced Skills, Courses Taught	20, 20
Undergraduate/Graduate Courses	10*, 15

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Member of RRT or Code Team	10
Technology/Informatics Super User	30
Competency Validation Verification	25
New Products Super User	30*, 15
EKG, Rhythm and/or Medication of the Week	1
Case Studies (Submission, Development)	10*, 25
Education Posters	5
D: Leadership and Team Development	Points
Service Excellence Award	50*, 30, 10
Teamwork & Leadership In-Service	20
Teamwork, Leadership, or PI Board	15 (limit 2)
Safety Spotter	50
Unit Department Council	30*, 20
E: Engagement & Patient Satisfaction	Points
Patient Satisfaction Initiative	50
Town Hall Attendance	5*, 10
Service Excellence Commendation	5
Additional Shifts or Special Duties	1/hr (maximum 100 points)
Volunteer	15 (maximum 45 points)
F: Fiscal Responsibility	Points
Cost Saving Initiative	25
Retention	15-50*
Recruitment Effort	20
Grant Writing Application, Approved	25, 50
Clin III Advisor	15 (limit 3)
RIE Participation, Leader	50, 25
Standard Work or Project	25
Report Out	10

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