

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### NEW Critical Shift Premium for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners

(April 19, 2024 – October 1, 2024)

**A copy of the original MOA (April 19, 2024) and the Amendment (May 3, 2024), as well as any future updates/amendments are available for all Employees/Managers and will also be published on the Staff Resource Center.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** This FAQ is intended as a guide to assist Employees & Managers in interpreting the MOA and applying the new Critical Shift Premium. The FAQ does not form part of the Collective Agreement between Health PEI-PEINU and does not supersede the terms of the MOA or the Collective Agreement. If any information in this FAQ appears to conflict with or misrepresent the terms of the MOA, or if you have any questions about the application of the MOA, please notify/contact your Human Resources Representatives.

#### 1. What is the “Critical Shift Premium”?

It is additional compensation paid to an *eligible Employee* for working *extra hours (that qualify for the premium)* on a shift that has been designated as a ‘Critical Shift’ in an *eligible unit*, according to the terms of the MOA (as amended May 3, 2024).

The premium is equivalent to **0.5x** the employee’s applicable wage rate listed in Appendix A of the Collective Agreement and is paid in addition to any hourly rate and applicable premiums (e.g. straight time or overtime, weekend premium, etc.).

#### 2. What is a “Critical Shift”?

Critical Shifts are designated at the discretion of the Employer in order to:

- Ensure appropriate staffing levels are in place to provide safe and effective care to patients/residents and to secure a safe working environment for Employees;
- Avoid the reassignment of other employees because of the impacts such reassignment may have to other work units and their staffing levels;
- Eliminate or minimize the need to temporarily reduce services (e.g. limiting the hours or closing the service, closing beds, canceling appointments/clinics, transferring patients, etc.).

#### 3. How will I know if the shift is designated as a Critical Shift?

Critical shifts will be identified by the Nurse Manager (or their delegate) and communicated to Employees and Payroll.

The shifts should be identified using email and employees who are interested in these shifts should be sure to check their emails regularly. In addition to email, other communication methods may be used such as in person announcements, texting, or making phone calls.

#### 4. When does the MOA for the new premium expire?

The MOA for the new premium will expire on October 1, 2024. The Critical Shift Premium will be applied to shifts occurring between April 19<sup>th</sup> – October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**5. Which Units are eligible for the new premium?**

While the list of Eligible Units is subject to change, the units listed below are currently included in the MOA (as amended on May 3, 2024):

<b>Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH)</b>	<b>Prince County Hospital (PCH)</b>
Emergency Department (ED)	Emergency Department (ED)
Intensive Care Unit (ICU)	Progressive Care Unit (PCU)
Progressive Care Unit (PCU)	
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)	
Emergency Department Short Stay Unit (EDSSU)	
<b>Kings County Memorial Hospital (KCMH)</b>	<b>Western Hospital</b>
Emergency Department (ED)	Emergency Department (ED)

**6. Why isn't my unit included in the MOA?**

Health PEI and PEINU are continuing to discuss/negotiate further amendments to the terms of the MOA. Discussions about other Units that may need access to a Critical Shift Premium to fill known vacancies (e.g. to maintain services & achieve appropriate staffing levels) are ongoing.

**7. Are all Employees who work in an "Eligible Unit" entitled to the new premium?**

No, not all Employees are eligible for the new premium. It depends on their Employment Status & Hours Worked. Employees who work less than 0.5 FTE in a pay period would not be eligible.

**8. These incentives were effective on April 19, 2024 but I was not informed of them until after this date, will they be retroactively applied?**

Yes. Employees may request to have the premium applied to shifts that would have been eligible for the premium as of April 19, 2024. In the event of a dispute about the application of the Critical Shift Premium, please contact HR and/or your Local Union Representative. The Employer & Union will review the circumstances on a case-by-case basis and endeavor to resolve disputes in a consistent and fair manner.

**9. Does this premium apply to a "Known Vacancy"?**

Sometimes. When a shift resulting from a "Known Vacancy" is considered by the Employer to be a "Critical Shift", the premium would apply when an eligible employee works the shift. Not all known vacancies will be designated as Critical Shifts.

*Known Vacancies are the vacant shifts on a schedule that are known by the Employer more than 48 hours in advance (e.g. the opposite of the "Unknown shift vacancies" defined in Article 20.25).*

**10. Does the premium apply to an “Unknown Vacancy”?**

No. The Critical Shift Premium cannot be stacked (e.g. duplicated or pyramided) with the Unknown Vacancy Premium referenced in Article 20.25 of the collective agreement.

**11. Are Full-Time RNs & NPs eligible for this premium?**

Yes. Full-Time RNs & NPs who work overtime on a “Critical Shift” are entitled to the premium (in addition to the applicable overtime rate and other premiums that may apply to the shift).

**(a) What if I only work part of a “Critical Shift” and not the entire shift... will I still be paid the premium?**

Yes. You will be paid the premium for any hours that you work to cover a Critical Shift whether you cover all or part of the shift.

**(b) What if I work overtime at the end of my shift (not covering a Critical Shift)... will I still be paid the premium?**

No. Employees would not be eligible for the premium for working overtime beyond the end of their shift if they are not covering a Critical Shift. The premium can only be applied to a designated Critical Shift.

**12. Can eligible Casual RNs & NPs pick up shifts, who typically work in other units, still get the incentive without committing to a 50% line ?**

Yes, but Casual RNs & NPs must work at least fifty-percent (50%) per pay period with Health PEI to be eligible for the premium.

**13. Can eligible Part-Time RN & NP Staff pick up shifts, who typically work in other units, still get the incentive without committing to a 50% line .**

Yes, part-time RNs & NPs must work at least fifty-percent (50%) per pay period with Health PEI to be eligible for the premium.

**(a) If I work 50% or more, do I get the premium for all the shifts designated as Critical Shifts?**

No.

**For Casual Employees & Part-Time Employees who hold a Position with less than a 0.5FTE:** You will be paid the premium for any hours worked on a Critical Shift beyond the minimum 50% FTE threshold (e.g. if a Casual Employee works 0.80 FTE in a pay period and all the shifts were designated as “Critical Shifts”, they would only be paid the premium for 0.30 FTE hours and not the first 0.50 FTE).

**For Full-Time Employees & Part-Time Employees who hold a Position of 0.5 FTE or more:** The premium cannot be applied to your regular hours (Guaranteed FTE).

**14. How should this be coded for tracking purposes?**

This time should be coded as **CCPRE**.

**15. Can the Critical Shift Premium be banked or does it have to be paid out?**

The Critical Shift Premium – *like a Shift Differential, Weekend Premium, or Unknown Vacancy Premium* - cannot be banked as time-in-lieu. It will always be paid out.

The actual hours worked may be banked or paid out according to the terms of the Collective Agreement. *The addition of the Critical Shift Premium does not limit any other terms of the collective agreement Article 21.*

**16. Are other unionized workers entitled to additional premiums during this time period?**

The Critical Shift Premium was established through a Memorandum of Agreement ('MOA') between Health PEI and the PEI Nurses' Union. Accordingly, it only applies to Employees who are included in the PEINU bargaining unit.

**An Example:**

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Anne is a Full-Time Employee and was scheduled to work a 12-hour Day shift on Monday.

The Night shift (coming in after Anne's 12-hour Day) was designated as a Critical Shift.

Unfortunately, no one expressed interest in working the full 12-hour Night shift.

Betty (who is a 0.8 FTE Part-Time Employee) offered to work the last 8-hours of the Night shift if someone else was willing/able to work the first 4-hours of the shift.

The Nurse Manager posted the 4-hour portion of the shift and Anne agreed to stay after her 12-hour Day shift to cover it.

In this case, both Employees are eligible to be paid the Critical Shift Premium:

- Anne will be paid the 0.5x premium for four (4) hours (in addition to the 1.5x overtime rate)
- Betty will be paid the 0.5x premium for (8) hours (in addition to the 1.0x straight time rate)