

Side Letter Agreement
Arrowhead Regional Medical Center
California Nurses Association
Nurses Unit & Per Diem Nurses Unit

Clinical Ladder Program

Effective the pay period following Board approval, the County will implement a Clinical Ladder Program.

Section 1 – Purpose

The purpose of the Nurses Unit and Per Diem Nurses Unit Clinical Ladder Program is to encourage professional development, increase the quality of nursing, promote a healthy work environment, assist in recruitment efforts, and retain nurses.

The Clinical Ladder Program (the Program) will provide an opportunity to earn additional compensation as they progress up the clinical ladder, as they continue to advance, develop their clinical knowledge and skills.

The County shall establish the Program for employees in the Nurses Unit and Per Diem Nurses Unit assigned to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC). Employees assigned to other County locations will not be eligible for the Program.

Participation in the Program is voluntary.

Section 2 – Eligibility

All classifications in the Nurses Unit, in a regular position, and in the Per Diem Nurses Unit at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center are eligible for the Clinical Ladder Program.

In order to receive the Clinical Ladder Program Differential, Nurses must meet the following prerequisites:

- 1) Has worked a minimum of one thousand forty (1,040) hours, at the County as a Nurse, in the prior twenty-six (26) pay periods;
- 2) Most recent WPE reflects “Meets Requirements” or above in all categories, including “Overall Performance”;
- 3) Has completed their mandatory education requirements;
- 4) Does not have an absenteeism corrective action plan – leave restriction, letter of reprimand, or formal discipline, as defined in Discipline and Appeals Article of the MOU for Nurses Unit and Discipline Administrative Appeals Article of the MOU for Per Diem Nurses Unit, in the prior twenty-six (26) pay periods prior to the application period, this includes the application date and the date of presentation; and
- 5) Have an active Registered Nurse license in the State of California.

Section 3 – Levels

The three (3) Clinical Ladder levels are established based on minimum years of nursing experience, minimum educational level, and required annual professional practice points. Under Section 4 – Professional Criteria, Essential Job Duties are excluded from qualifying “Activity” for Clinical Ladder.

	Minimum Nursing Experience	Minimum Educational Level	Required Annual Points
Clinical Ladder Level 1	2 Years	ADN	10
Clinical Ladder Level 2	3 Years	BSN	15
Clinical Ladder Level 3	4 Years	MSN/NP or MSN/NP, Masters in Healthcare, or related field (MHA, MPH)	25

Section 4 – Professional Criteria

The Required Professional Practice Criteria points are earned annually through the following categories:

Service
People
Finance

Growth
Quality

A minimum of one (1) point is needed in each of the Professional Practice Criteria categories.

Service			
	Activity	Criteria	Points
S-1	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for unit or service-line members*	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet. Service line based on reporting structure to Clinical Director.	1
S-2	Nominated for hospital or county award by peers (DAISY, Nurse of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Nurse Leader of the Year, Employee of the Year)	Nomination must be at least one paragraph long and give specifics for activity that warranted nomination.	1
S-3	Nominated for hospital or county award by patient or family (DAISY, Nurse of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Nurse Leader of the Year, Employee of the Year)	Nomination must be at least one paragraph long and give specifics for activity that warranted nomination.	2
S-4	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for hospital members*	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet.	2
S-5	Member of Shared Governance Committee or Divisional Practice Committee	Attendance at a minimum of 75% of the meeting. Credit given to membership for shared or divisional, not both.	2
S-6	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for community members	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet.	3

S-7	Volunteers at a community event promoting education, health, and wellness	Individual is a volunteer. Time must be a minimum of 8 hours. Individual can volunteer for multiple events to achieve 8 hours. Credit given for time, not number of events. Evidence: Signed letter from Program Coordinator validating participation, activity assignment and time spent. Minimum 4 hrs. = 1 point, if 8 hours are not completed.	3
S-8	Assist with development of nursing retention program or initiative	Develop based on exit interviews or other relevant data.	3
S-9	Hospital or county award winner (Quarterly DAISY, Nurse of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Nurse Leader of the Year, Employee of the Year)	Formal nomination and recognition. Points cannot be combined with nomination.	4
S-10	Serves as a clinical instructor or faculty for an accredited nursing degree program	Must be an instructor for a minimum of one semester or quarter based on school system. Evidence: Paystub from accredited school, name appears on class schedule/syllabus.	4
S-11	Coordinates a community event promoting education, health, and wellness	Individual is lead coordinator. Evidence: Planning minutes including sign in sheets, event flyers.	4

* Nurse Educators excluded

Growth			
	Activity	Criteria	Points
G-1	Current membership in state or national professional organization	Membership must be for a minimum of 8 months of the application period.	1
G-2	Functions as a charge nurse (Registered Nurse III /Registered Nurse III Specialty Care/ Registered Nurse III Critical Care ineligible)	12 times within application period.	1
G-3	Current enrollment in BSN, MSN, or DNP program	Criteria: Proof of course completion during application year (Max 1 point). Cannot be combined with Activity G-13.	1
G-4	Member and active participant in unit or service line committee to improve patient care or quality	Unit defined as individual unit and service line based on Clinical Director reporting structure. Example: Code Blue Committee, NPCC, UPC. Evidence: Sign in sheet with evidence of at least 75% committee attendance. Max 2 points.	2
G-5	Current and ongoing nursing specialty certification	Active nationally recognized nursing professional certification for a minimum of 9 months in the application year. +1 point for each additional certification.	2
G-6	Member and active participant in a hospital-wide committee	Hospital-wide defined as organizational involving multiple disciplines (Ex.: Falls, Infection Control). Evidence: Sign in sheet with evidence of at least 75% committee attendance.	3
G-7	Develop operational improvement metrics related to data derived from Electronic Health Record	Program must be approved by senior leadership and demonstrate formal use of PDCA cycle.	3

G-8	Present at a professional organization, state, or national conference	Provide copy of presentation and explanation of the purpose of the organization. Evidence: Name is listed on agenda, program.	4
G-9	New nursing specialty certification	New Nationally recognized nursing professional certification within the application year.	4
G-10	Serves as an officer of a local, state, or national professional organization	Office position must be held for a minimum of 6 months in the application year.	4
G-11	Participates in County leadership development or ARMC Future Leaders Program (FLP)	Program must be completed within the application year. Evidence: Certificate of completion.	4
G-12	Published/Submitted in a professional journal	Provide copy of the article from professional journal or submission. Credit based on when the publication was formally accepted by the publisher. Evidence: Letter of acceptance/submission from the publisher/organization.	5
G-13	Completion of higher nursing degree	Completion of degree must be achieved within the application year. Cannot be combined with Activity G-3.	5

People			
	Activity	Criteria	Points
P-1	Serves as a mentor to a newly hired, experienced nurse	Participated in preceptor class. Primary preceptor for entire orientation period (not random days or shifts). Evidence: Name of nurse oriented and evaluation sheets with dates.	1
P-2	Validates competency of staff (hospital-wide or unit specific) for annual skills day, super-user*	Participates in skills day or other similar.	2
P-3	Serves as an instructor for ARMC sponsored trainings (ACLS, BLS, PALS, NRP)*	Provider instructor card and participation in at least 2 hospital-provided courses.	3
P-4	Preceptor for student capstone or leadership experience for nurses in advanced programs (MSN, Doctorate)	Preceptor for at least one student for the period of their required minimum hours.	3
P-5	Serves as a mentor to new grad nurse	Participated in preceptor class. Primary preceptor for entire orientation period (not random days or shifts). Evidence: Name of nurse oriented and evaluation sheets with dates.	3

* Nurse Educators excluded

Quality			
	Activity	Criteria	Points
Q-1	Participated in revision of an existing policy	Provide a copy of the new policy and provide narrative of rationale for new policy and evidence-based research to support.	1
Q-2	Educate on a new skill or product	Evidence of teaching includes objectives, education materials shared and sign-in sheets. Sign in sheet must include a minimum of 40% of the target audience.	2

Q-3	Participates in development of a new policy	Provide a copy of the new policy and provide narrative of rationale for new policy and evidence-based research to support.	2
Q-4	Develop a unit or service line based educational program	Program must be defined by unit need. Evidence of teaching include objectives; educational materials shared and sign-in sheet. Sign-in sheet must include a minimum of 40% of target audience.	2
Q-5	Shared information from literature review research or information obtained from attendance at professional event	Information shared must be through department meeting. Evidence includes sign-in sheet and minutes.	2
Q-6	Develop patient education materials	Program must be defined by unit or hospital need. Evidence: Educational materials developed and supporting research.	2
Q-7	Develop or update nursing orientation toolkit or resource book	Program may be unit or hospital based. Evidence: Document created or revised.	2
Q-8	Develop or reorganize clinical process for improving patient satisfaction or patient safety	Process must be in place for a minimum of 6 months during the application period.	3

Finance			
	Activity	Criteria	Points
F-1	Identify a cost reduction opportunity and/or implement cost saving measure	Collaborate with leadership to identify and/or implement a cost-saving measure. Evidence: Reduction in cost of item, consolidation of supplies, analysis of cost-saving.	2
F-2	Member of nursing value analysis committee	Participation in a minimum of 75% of the meetings.	2

Should the required Professional Practice Criteria need to be modified due to an operational need, the County shall inform the bargaining unit in writing of the modifications and the bargaining unit may request to meet and confer. Any agreed upon modifications to the Professional Practice Criteria shall be incorporated into this side letter as an attachment, signed by the County's Labor Relations Chief and CNA's representative.

Section 5 – Differential

The County shall establish the following differentials:

- (a) Clinical Ladder Level 1 – Nurses who have successfully completed the requirements established under the Clinical Ladder Program as determined by the Committee, shall receive a differential of one dollar (\$1.00) per hour for all paid hours, up to their standard hours per pay period.
- (b) Clinical Ladder Level 2 – Nurses who have successfully completed the requirements established under the Clinical Ladder Program as determined by the Committee, shall receive a differential of two dollars (\$2.00) per hour for all paid hours, up to their standard hours per pay period.
- (c) Clinical Ladder Level 3 – Nurses who have successfully completed the requirements established under the Clinical Ladder Program as determined by the Committee, shall receive a differential of four dollars (\$4.00) per hour for all paid hours, up to their standard hours per pay period.

The differential pay shall be paid for twenty-six (26) pay periods.

Section 6 – Committee

The Review Committee consist of the Associate Chief Nursing Officer as the Chairperson and any combination of five (5) members listed below:

AUM II	Nurse Recruiter	Registered Nurse III
Chair/Co-Chair – Shared Governance Committee	Registered Nurse II	Research Coordinator
Clinical Director		
Nurse Educator	Registered Nurse II Clinic	Unit Manager

Review committee members cannot be active participants of the Clinical Ladder Program.

Section 7 – Application Process

A prospective candidate will need to review the requirements for each level of the Clinical Ladder Program and determine which level they wish to apply for. Once the level has been selected and approved, the level cannot be changed for that application period.

(a) APPLICATION:

- (1) The candidate must meet with their Unit Manager to discuss their desire to apply for the Clinical Ladder Program. The candidate must obtain the Unit Manager’s written approval on the Clinical Ladder Program Application.

- (2) The Candidate must submit a signed Clinical Ladder Program Application to the Clinical Director. Application must be submitted on or before the application due date.

Application Period*	Calendar Year: January - December	Mid-Year: July - June
Application Due Dates	1 st Monday in December of the previous application year	1 st Monday in June of the application year
6-month Review Dates <i>(optional)</i>	3 rd Tuesday in June of the application year	3 rd Tuesday in December of the application year
Final Submission Due to Review Committee Chair	Last Monday in November of the application year	Last Monday in June of the application year
Final Presentation Date to Review Committee	1 st week in December of the application year	1 st week in June of the application year
Review Committee Decision Date	2 nd week in December of the application year	2 nd week in June of the application year
Appeal Submission due to Appeal Committee	Seven (7) calendar days from the issuance of the decision	Seven (7) calendar days from the issuance of the decision
Appeal Response	Seven (7) calendar days from the submission of the Candidate’s written appeal	Seven (7) calendar days from the submission of the Candidate’s written appeal

Incentive Compensation Period	Effective for 26 Pay Periods	Effective for twenty- six (26) Pay Periods
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**Dates are subject to change based on holidays. If date falls on a holiday, the submissions, documents, reviews are due on the following business day.*

(b) COMMITTEE REVIEW:

- (1) A typed submission must be completed and shall be presented in a 3-ring binder with divider separations for each section of the Professional Practice Criteria. Late submissions will not be considered.

A maximum of a twenty-minute presentation based on the information contained in the binder must be presented to the Review Committee. Candidates must be prepared to answer any relevant questions from the Review Committee. Presentation may not exceed twenty minutes.

(c) Program Launch Option:

- (1) One-Time Look Back - A nurse who believes that they have already successfully completed the requirements outlined above, within the past twenty-six (26) pay periods from the effective date of the Side Letter, will be allowed to present their application to the Review Committee for review. All submissions are due eight (8) weeks from the effective date of the Side Letter. If the application is approved, the following twenty-six (26) pay periods will include the incentive pay. Candidates will still be required to submit a Clinical Ladder Program application for the next start date of the program.

Application Period*	One-Time Look Back
Application Due Date	Four (4) weeks from the effective date of the Side Letter
Final Submission Due to Review Committee Chair	Eight (8) weeks from effective date of the Side Letter
Final Presentation Date to Review Committee	Nine (9) weeks from effective date of the Side Letter
Review Committee Decision Date	Ten (10) weeks from the effective date of the Side Letter
Appeal Submission due to Appeal Committee	Seven (7) calendar days from the issuance of the decision
Appeal Response	Seven (7) calendar days from the submission of the Candidate's written appeal
Incentive Compensation Period	Effective for twenty-six (26) Pay Periods

**Dates are subject to change based on the holidays and effective date of the Side Letter. If date falls on a holiday, the submissions, documents, reviews are due on the following business day.*

Section 8 – Appeals

If the Review Committee denies a candidate’s application, the candidate may appeal the decision. If a timely appeal is not submitted, the candidate’s appeal process is waived and the candidate may not appeal using any other procedural appeal method, this includes the bargaining unit’s grievance process.

The Appeal Committee shall consist of the following members:

- 1) Chief Nursing Officer
- 2) ARMC Senior Human Resources Business Partner
- 3) Clinical Director from the applicant’s department

Process:

Step One – The typed appeal is submitted to the Review Committee Chair and the Chief Nursing Officer, via electronic mail, within seven (7) calendar days of the decision. The appeal must include a detailed explanation for the appeal and be based on rationale consistent with the intent of the Clinical Ladder Program.

Step Two – The Appeal Committee will respond with a written determination within seven (7) calendar days of the candidate’s written appeal. The Appeal Committee’s decision shall be final. If there is no response from the Appeal Committee within fourteen (14) days, the appeal will be automatically approved.

Date Agreed: 12/12/23

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

CNA



Leo Gonzalez
County Labor Relations Chief



Print and Sign

ARMC Nurses Unit and Per-Diem Nurses Unit Clinical Ladder Program

Icon	Base Pay + Differential	Work Experience	Minimum Annual Hours	Minimum Education Level	Required Annual Points	Professional Practice Criteria - Minimum 1 Point in Each Category				
						Service	Growth	People		
	Base Pay + \$4.00 Differential	4 Years	1040	MSN/NP or Masters in Healthcare-related field (MHA, MPH)	25	Service				
						Activity			Points	Criteria
						S-1	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for unit or service-line members*	1	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet. Service line based on reporting structure to Clinical Director.	
						S-2	Nominated for hospital or county award by peers (DAISY, Nurse of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Nurse Leader of the Year, Employee of the Year)	1	Nomination must be at least one paragraph long and give specifics for activity that warranted nomination.	
						S-3	Nominated for hospital or county award by patient or family (DAISY, Nurse of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Nurse Leader of the Year, Employee of the Year)	2	Nomination must be at least one paragraph long and give specifics for activity that warranted nomination.	
						S-4	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for hospital members*	2	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet.	
						S-5	Member of Shared Governance Committee or Divisional Practice Committee	2	Attendance at a minimum of 75% of the meeting. Credit given to membership for shared or divisional, not both.	
						S-6	Prepares and presents a health-related education program for community members	3	Provides presentation and educational materials including a narrative of the program, description of target audience and sign in sheet.	
						S-7	Volunteers at a community event promoting education, health, and wellness	3	Individual is a volunteer. Time must be a minimum of 8 hours. Individual can volunteer for multiple events to achieve 8 hours. Credit given for time, not number of events. Evidence: Signed letter from Program Coordinator validating participation, activity assignment and time spent. Minimum 4 hrs = 1 point, if 8 hours are not completed.	
						S-8	Assist with development of nursing retention program or initiative	3	Develop based on exit interviews or other relevant data.	
						Growth				
Activity			Points	Criteria						
G-1	Current membership in state or national professional organization	1	Membership must be for a minimum of 8 months of the application period.							
G-2	Functions as a charge nurse (Registered Nurse III /Registered Nurse III Specialty Care/ Registered Nurse III Critical Care ineligible)	1	12 times within application period.							
G-3	Current enrollment in BSN, MSN, or DNP program	1	Criteria: Proof of course completion during application year (Max 1 point). Cannot be combined with Activity G-13.							
G-4	Member and active participant in unit or service line committee to improve patient care or quality	2	Unit defined as individual unit and service line based on Clinical Director reporting structure. Example: Code Blue Committee, NPCC, UPC. Evidence: Sign in sheet with evidence of at least 75% committee attendance. Max 2 points.							
G-5	Current and ongoing nursing specialty certification	2	Active nationally recognized nursing professional certification for a minimum of 9 months in the application year. +1 point for each additional certification.							
G-6	Member and active participant in a hospital-wide committee	3	Hospital-wide defined as organizational involving multiple disciplines (Ex.: Falls, Infection Control). Evidence: Sign in sheet with evidence of at least 75% committee attendance.							
G-7	Develop operational improvement metrics related to data derived from EPIC	3	Program must be approved by senior leadership and demonstrate formal use of PDCA cycle.							
G-8	Present at a professional organization, state, or national conference	4	Provide copy of presentation and explanation of the purpose of the organization. Evidence: Name is listed on agenda, program.							
G-9	New nursing specialty certification	4	New Nationally recognized nursing professional certification within the application year.							
G-10	Serves as an officer of a local, state or national professional organization	4	Office position must be held for a minimum of 6 months in the application year.							
G-11	Participates in County leadership development or ARMC Future Leaders Program (FLP)	4	Program must be completed within the application year. Evidence: Certificate of completion.							
G-12	Published/Submitted in a professional journal	5	Provide copy of the article from professional journal or submission. Credit based on when the publication was formally accepted by the publisher. Evidence: Letter of acceptance/submission from the publisher/organization.							
G-13	Completion of higher nursing degree	5	Completion of degree must be achieved within the application year. Cannot be combined with Activity G-3.							
People										
Activity			Points	Criteria						
P-1	Serves as a mentor to a newly hired, experienced nurse	1	Participated in preceptor class. Primary preceptor for entire orientation period (not random days or shifts). Evidence: Name of nurse oriented and evaluation sheets with dates.							
P-2	Validates competency of staff (hospital-wide or unit specific) for annual skills day, super-user*	2	Participates in skills day or other similar.							
P-3	Serves as an instructor for ARMC sponsored trainings (ACLS, BLS, PALS, NRP)*	3	Provider instructor card and participation in at least 2 hospital-provided courses.							
P-4	Preceptor for student capstone or leadership experience for nurses in advanced programs (MSN, Doctorate)	3	Preceptor for at least one student for the period of their required minimum hours.							
P-5	Serves as a mentor to new grad nurse	3	Participated in preceptor class. Primary preceptor for entire orientation period (not random days or shifts). Evidence: Name of nurse oriented and evaluation sheets with dates.							
Quality										
Activity			Points	Criteria						
Q-1	Participated in revision of an existing policy	1	Provide a copy of the new policy and provide narrative of rationale for new policy and evidence-based research to support.							
Q-2	Educate on a new skill or product	2	Evidence of teaching includes objectives, education materials shared and sign-in sheets. Sign in sheet must include a minimum of 40% of the target audience.							
Q-3	Participates in development of a new policy	2	Provide a copy of the new policy and provide narrative of rationale for new policy and evidence-based research to support.							
Q-4	Develop a unit or service line based educational program	2	Program must be defined by unit need. Evidence of teaching include objectives; educational materials shared and sign-in sheet. Sign-in sheet must include a minimum of 40% of target audience.							
Q-5	Shared information from literature review research or information obtained from attendance at professional event	2	Information shared must be through department meeting. Evidence includes sign-in sheet and minutes.							
Q-6	Develop patient education materials	2	Program must be defined by unit or hospital need. Evidence: Educational materials developed and supporting research.							
Q-7	Develop or update nursing orientation toolkit or resource book	2	Program may be unit or hospital based. Evidence: Document created or revised.							
Q-8	Develop or reorganize clinical process for improving patient satisfaction or patient safety	3	Process must be in place for a minimum of 6 months during the application period.							
Finance										
Activity			Points	Criteria						
F-1	Identify a cost reduction opportunity and/or implement cost saving measure	2	Collaborate with leadership to identify and/or implement a cost-saving measure. Evidence: Reduction in cost of item, consolidation of supplies, analysis of cost-saving.							
F-2	Member of nursing value analysis committee	2	Participation in a minimum of 75% of the meetings.							

For ALL Levels: ◇Work Performance: Must be Overall Meets Standards; No below standards in any category ◇State Credential: Maintain current RN License in State of California ◇Essential Job Duties are excluded from qualifying activities for Clinical Ladder / * - Educators excluded