

NURSING+
MIDWIFERY

Pilot Program Unit Manager Flexible Working Arrangement

Guideline and application pack for
Unit Managers



Western Health

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Western Health values the important role of the Unit Manager and other roles, and recognises the constant challenges and demands faced by our nursing and midwifery leaders. This pilot package has been designed to allow our Unit Managers to be able to undertake their roles with flexibility, whilst continuing to meet the organisational and professional requirements.

Preamble

The Unit Manager role has traditionally been a full-time position working ten, eight hour shifts per fortnight with an accrual of one 8-hour ADO every 4 weeks. The *Nurses and Midwives (Victorian Public Health Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement* (the Agreement) has a requirement for 1.0 EFT Unit Manager to be appointed to each ward or unit that is opened for 5 or more days per week, which may be a job-share position.

Within the paradigm of healthcare, Western Health (WH) recognises that the expectations and accountabilities of the Unit Manager and other comparable roles has increased to a level whereby the demands and challenges of undertaking the role may require the incumbents to work longer hours on some days. WH supports a sustainable approach to the Unit Manager role, where the incumbents are able to apply for flexibility within how they undertake their role, ensuring that:

- Work requirements are able to be undertaken to meet organisational requirements, without the need for sustained additional hours or overtime;
- Unit Managers have adequate rest time to avoid fatigue and dissatisfaction;
- Unit Managers can experience and see how their ward/unit operates outside of Monday to Friday day shift hours;
- Out-of-work commitments can be balanced with work commitments; and
- The Unit Manager role is continued to be seen as achievable and rewarding with an aim to continuing to retain and attract Unit Managers

Other intangible benefits include:

- A point of difference in recruitment to Unit Manager positions, supporting WH's position as an employer of choice;
- A decrease in excess accrued days off;
- Increased Unit Manager job satisfaction;
- Increased presence at the point of care during clinical in-charge shifts leading to increased staff satisfaction and connection with the team as the clinical leader of the area; and
- Senior staff presence out of hours

Additionally, with *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* (the Act) allows for specified employees to make a request to the employer for a flexible working arrangement relating to specified circumstances – including parenting and/or carer responsibilities, disability, aged 55 years or older or experiencing domestic violence. In addition, the Agreement allows for any employee or employer to make an individual flexibility arrangement to vary terms of the agreement, including when work is performed.

Western Health has introduced this standardised working arrangement for Unit Managers (UMs) which also confirms the expectations of rostered clinical and management days (previously referred to as Clinical Administration Days (CAD) days), with the option of a nine-day fortnight working pattern, including limited evening and weekend working (excluding public holidays), in accordance with the conditions outlined in this document.

Plan

This pilot Program package enables UMs to balance their working demands, improve work-life balance with a second day rostered off each month and acknowledges there may be instances where longer hours in a day may be beneficial. It also formalises arrangements for the clinical/management day split of rostered days, ensuring equity and fairness based on a calculation which considers the size, complexity and staffing EFT of the ward or unit, to better represent the management time required to operate the clinical area, and outlines the expectations of clinical (point of care) days for each Unit Manager role.

All UMs at WH will be required to undertake clinical shifts at the point of care (usually as the In-charge nurse or midwife) irrespective of whether they request to enter into the flexible working arrangement or not. The number of clinical shifts to be rostered each fortnight are calculated based on the size and complexity of the unit and staffing profile, and the hours of service of the unit, plus additional responsibilities for other teams or areas the UM may hold. The calculator tool and scoring outcomes are included at **Appendix 1**.

WH will advise all UMs and their Divisions of the expectations of rostering for clinical days, and staffing profiles will be adjusted in the Health-e Workforce Solutions (HeWs) platform to accurately reflect the management time and clinical shifts of the UM and the requirements for Associate Unit Manager (AUM) rostering.

Guidelines and Thresholds

Overarching guidelines:

- A Unit Manager must work within an area that provides direct patient care;
- A Unit Manager will not work a public holiday as an ordinary rostered shift. This excludes instances where a Unit Manager has nominated to take the Australia Day holiday on an alternative day.
- Unit Managers contracted to a job share arrangement will not be eligible to opt in to this pilot initiative.
- A Unit Manager may end the individual flexible working arrangement by giving no less than 28 days' notice to Western Health. Additionally, Western Health may end the individual flexible working arrangement by giving no less than 28 days' notice to the participating Unit Manager.
- Any opt-in flexible working arrangement will be put in place for a 12-month period only as part of this pilot. Towards the end of the 12-month period the pilot will be evaluated to assess ongoing viability. Depending on the outcome of this evaluation the Unit Manager may be required to re-apply for the continuance of the flexible working arrangement if they would like it to continue.

UMs are offered the opportunity to work a nine-day fortnight, which includes a limited number of evening and weekend shifts per year. UMs who wish to participate in this flexible work arrangement will be full time employees working in an area that provides direct patient care, and will be required to apply formally to their line manager (usually an Operations Manager). WH will not unreasonably refuse an application.

Where the application is supported, the UM contract will be varied to reflect fortnightly hours of 76 hours across 9 working days (rostered shifts of 8 hour 26 minute duration). The additional day rostered off per fortnight will be taken from the UM management time, not clinical time.

Where the UM qualifies to work either a weekend shift or a late shift the number of said shifts shall be undertaken as per the guidelines; up to 24 evening shifts per annum and 6 full weekend days or part thereof per annum. These shifts shall be worked as clinical shifts at the point of care, not for management or administrative time. This will enable Unit Managers who are employed in a full-time capacity to work in a flexible way if they desire, to ensure that their role is achievable, rewarding and sustainable.

There are a number of options available to Unit Managers to request, which will be considered. A Unit Manager may request all, or some of these options, or elect to remain on their current roster pattern, with the adjustment of clinical days to meet the requirements set out below.

9-day fortnight:

This change would be undertaken using an **opt-in** approach by the Unit Manager. Each participating Unit Manager will be required to **apply for a nine-day fortnight** and sign a contract which commits them to be rostered in accordance with the conditions and thresholds linked to the 9-day fortnight roster.

Each fortnight the Unit Manager will work in accordance with the following:

- Will be paid for, and work 76 hours per fortnight, rostered over nine, 8-hour 26-minute shifts;
- Must work clinical days in their unit as determined by the Clinical Day Calculator;
- Will not be entitled to an ADO;
- The rostered day off must be taken each fortnight;
- A rostered day off can be attached to either Christmas or Easter (not both) and no more than two other public holidays; and
- One rostered day-off only can be attached to regular days off (weekend) up to a threshold of 13 times per annum, not inclusive of public holidays

The additional day off cannot:

- be accrued;
- be taken to create a 4-day weekend (except in instances where a Public Holiday adjoins a weekend);
- be the same day each week (if this is required a Flexible Workplace Agreement can be applied for); and
- cannot be taken in the place of a clinical shift (i.e., the Unit Manager must work the requisite number of clinical shifts per fortnight)

Working limited weekends:

This change would be undertaken using an **opt-in** approach by the Unit Manager. Each participating Unit Manager **may work up to a threshold of 6 single weekend days per annum** (a UM cannot work both days of weekend, restricted to either a Saturday or a Sunday up to a total of 6 days per annum), these shifts are to be clinical days only. This facilitates contact with staff who work weekends and who otherwise would not connect with the Unit Manager.

This shift replaces the Associate Unit Manager who would normally have been rostered on this shift. An Associate Unit Manager cannot be rostered on the same shift as a Unit Manager who is working a clinical shift.

As per the Agreement, any weekend shift worked by the Unit Manager will be paid the required penalty rates.

This is limited to those Unit Managers who work full time and manage a 7 day a week service, where more than three staff are rostered on each shift.

Working limited evening shifts:

This change would be undertaken using an **opt-in** approach by the Unit Manager.

Each participating Unit Manager **may work 1 evening shift per fortnight** to connect with regular night staff. This is restricted to areas who have an evening shift with more three or more staff rostered on duty for that shift.

As per the Agreement, any evening shift worked by the Unit Manager will be paid the required penalty rates.

Unit Managers may elect to remain on their current roster pattern, noting that clinical time will be an expectation of all UM roles, and roster schedules may change in the future at the discretion of Western Health, or via the Agreement utilising a consultative approach.

Divisional Accountability

- Manage applications via the Unit Manager's line manager (usually an Operations Manager);
- Ensure Unit Managers comply with their contract via their respective Operations Managers' overview, and;
- Ensure Unit Managers work with other Unit Managers across Divisions to ensure the site and/or Division always has Unit Managers on duty Monday to Friday to facilitate escalation and decision making.

Western Health Accountability

- Wherever possible, prioritise the protection of management/administration days for Unit Managers;
- Pay the Unit Managers penalty rates for weekend work as per enterprise agreement requirements, and;
- Pay the Unit Managers allowances for evening shifts when worked as per enterprise agreement requirements.

Unit Manager Accountability

- Abide by the conditions set out in this document;
- Provide to their respective Operations Manager an 8-week roster for approval, identifying when they will be taking their rostered days off duty;
- Clear existing ADO balances and reset ADO liability to zero, and;
- Ensure that no more than one Unit Manager within the group reporting to their Operations Manager is rostered off duty at any given time, excluding weekends and public holidays.

More Information

Any questions or requests for more information should be directed to the relevant Operations Manager.

Unit Manager 9-day fortnight Application Form

Name	
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Employee number	
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Classification	
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Unit/Ward	
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Division	
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I hereby agree to adhere strictly to the requirements as outlined in the Unit Manager Flexibility guidelines and application document and understand that should I breach these I may forfeit my right to continue working this roster.

Signature:	Date: / /
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Approval Line:

Operations Manager Name:	
Signature:	Date: / /

Divisional Director Name:	
Signature:	Date: / /

Appendix 1: Clinical days calculator summary

Points values for each domain;

DOMAIN	CRITERIA	POINTS
FTE	< 6	0
	6-15	4
	16-25	5
	26-100	6
	100 plus	10
Points of Care	0-15	2
	16-32	3
	33-60	3
	60 plus	4
	Additional role responsibility	8
Hours of service	7 days 24 hours	5
	Monday to Friday AM only	1
	Monday to Fri AM and PM only (may have 1-2 staff rostered over a week)	1
	Monday to Saturday AM and PM ONLY	4
	7 days AM and PM only	5

Score	Clinical days pfn
0	6
1	6
2	6
3	6
4	6
5	6
6	6
7	4
8	4
9	4
10	4
11	4
12	4
13	2
14	2
15	0
16	0

DEFINITIONS

Point of Care

A point of care is a place where care is directly delivered to a patient. This may be a bed, chair, trolley, consulting room, procedure room or operating theatre

FTE – Full Time Equivalent (staffing profile)

Total FTE that the Unit Manager is budgeted to manage in HeWs profile

Days of Service

Only include those hours or days that are budgeted to open. Do not include “flexing up” services covered by overtime, recall or ad hoc situations

Additional Role responsibilities

Is applicable to managers who have accountability of services across two or more campuses or have accountability for more than one cost centre/unit/service within a campus