

**NOTICE TO STUDENTS ENROLLING IN COURSES THAT REQUIRE CLINICAL PLACEMENTS IN NSW PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES**

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## NOTICE TO STUDENTS ENROLLING IN COURSES THAT REQUIRE CLINICAL PLACEMENTS IN NSW PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES

Dear Student

NSW Health is committed to providing you with a safe clinical placement and our staff, patients and clients with a safe workplace. To help meet this commitment, all students enrolling in courses that involve clinical placements in NSW Public Health Facilities must undertake criminal record checks and comply with certain other NSW Health policy requirements.

To assist you to meet the NSW Health requirements, they are detailed in this notice.

You are advised to read this notice carefully and ensure that you have understood and complied with its requirements. Failure to do so will result in your clinical placements being delayed.

All the forms, documents and processes referred to in this notice are available through your educational institution as well as from the NSW Department of Health website <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au> (type "clinical placement" in the search area).

### 1 You must obtain a National Police Certificate

You must undergo a National Criminal Record Check either through your state or territory police service or through the Australian Federal Police in order to obtain a National Police Certificate.

You must ensure that the name provided to obtain your National Police Certificate matches the name on your Student ID card. If the name on your National Police Certificate does not match the name on your Student ID card, you will not be allowed to commence your clinical placement within a NSW Public Health Facility.

You should allow 15 working days for the police to provide you with a National Police Certificate. If you have been previously charged or convicted of offences, the process of obtaining your clearance to undertake clinical placements will take longer and you should allow at least 30 working days.

You will not be allowed to commence a clinical placement within a NSW Public Health Facility unless you have a National Police Certificate that shows no criminal offences or you have a clearance document from the NSW Department of Health.

#### 1.1 Obtaining a National Criminal Record Check from NSW Police

You should refer to the NSW Police website for information and an application form at [www.police.nsw.gov.au](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au)

Your educational institution will provide you with an information sheet that provides additional information to assist you to complete the application or you can obtain information from the NSW Department of Health website.

You must contact the NSW Police station nearest to your place of residence or your campus to organise a time and location to submit your application.

**Interstate Students** - refer to your state or territory police service website for information on how to request a National Criminal Record Check, if not applying through the NSW Police.

## 2 Additional Requirements for overseas students

Overseas students may apply for a National Police Certificate before arrival in Australia through the Australian Federal Police. Refer to AFP Police website [www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au) for an application form. In addition to the instructions on the AFP website, students must on the AFP application:

- enter Code Number 37 in section 1 “Purpose of NPC” ;
- tick “No” to the Fingerprint check in section 5

In addition to obtaining a National Police Certificate, overseas students are also required to obtain a Police Certificate (with English translation) from their home country and any country that they have resided in, incorporating any charges the students may have against their name.

If you are unable to provide a Police Certificate from a country that you have resided in, you must complete a Statutory Declaration stating you have no pending criminal charges or previous convictions from that country. If you have such records, your Statutory Declaration must list the charges and convictions, including dates and court outcomes.

## 3 If you have no criminal history

Where the National Police Certificate does not reveal any criminal history, it is accepted as proof of clearance for Clinical Placements within NSW Public Health Facilities.

For overseas students, the National Police Certificate with no offences **plus** your overseas Police Certificate and/or Statutory Declaration with no offences are accepted together as proof of clearance for Clinical Placements within NSW Public Health Facilities.

You must present the original documents to the NSW Public Health Facility prior to, or at the commencement of each placement. Under NSW Health Policy, the NSW Public Health Facility is required to sight the original documentation and keep a copy for their records.

## 4 If you have a criminal history

If your National Police Certificate (or overseas Police Certificates /Statutory Declaration for overseas students) shows any offences or pending charges, you are required to apply to the NSW Department of Health, Corporate Governance and Risk Management, External Relations and Employment Screening Unit (ERESU) for authority to undertake clinical placements within NSW Public Health Facilities.

You must provide the Department of Health with copies of any Police Certificates (i.e. in Australia or overseas), Statutory Declarations, if completed and other relevant documents including the ‘Student Risk Assessment Form’.

Applications should be sent to the NSW Department of Health, Corporate Governance and Risk Management Branch, External Relations and Employment Screening Unit (ERESU), LMB 961, North Sydney NSW 2059.

ERESU will complete a risk assessment and if deemed suitable for placements within NSW Public Health Facilities, you will be issued with a ‘Clinical Placement Authority’ card or a Conditional Letter.

If you get a conditional letter from the NSW Department of Health, you must disclose the conditions to the University Clinical Placement Coordinator / Facilitator, who must then inform the NSW Public Health Facility before any Clinical Placement can be confirmed. The

NSW Public Health Facility must determine whether they can manage your placement in accordance with the conditions. If they are unable to, they may refuse the placement.

At the start of each placement, if you have criminal records, you must present to the NSW Public Health Facility a valid Clinical Placement Authority card or a conditional letter issued by the Department of Health. You should not provide any Police Certificates or Statutory Declarations that show criminal records.

If you are deemed an unacceptable risk to NSW Health, or you have not provided the required documentation, the Department of Health may decline your application for authority to undertake clinical placements. You will have an opportunity to discuss this decision before it is finalised and you will be informed in writing. You will be required to inform your educational institution's Clinical Placement Co-ordinator or Facilitator.

*(Student Risk Assessment Form is available at [Appendix 3](#) and on the NSW Health Department website.)*

## **5 How long is the Police Certificate / Clinical Placement Authority / Conditional Letter valid for?**

Under NSW Health Policy, the Australian National Police Certificate is valid for 3 years from the date of issue.

Overseas Police Certificates and Statutory Declarations are valid for the duration of your course.

The Clinical Placement Authority card and the conditional letter will have a 'valid to' date on them that has been determined by the NSW Department of Health.

You must ensure that your National Police Certificate, Clinical Placement Authority card or Conditional Letter is valid for the entire period of your clinical placement – e.g. a clearance document expiring on 31 July 2010 cannot be valid for placement period from 15 June 2010 to 17 September 2010. You will not be allowed to start a clinical placement if your clearance document is not valid.

It is your responsibility to re-apply for the National Police Certificate or the clinical placement authority card / conditional letter before the document expires. You should allow at least 15 working days for the police to provide a National Police Certificate and a further 15 working days for the NSW Department of Health to process a risk assessment on any charges or convictions.

## **6 You should keep the original documents at a safe place**

You should keep your original documentation (i.e. National Police Certificate, overseas Police Certificates, Statutory declarations, Clinical Placement Authority card, Conditional Letter) in a safe place for the duration of your course for appropriate presentation at each new placement. If you lose or damage any of these documents, you will be required to replace them before any further clinical placements can commence, and you will be charged a replacement fee.

The clinical placement cannot commence until the NSW Health Facility has sighted and verified your original documents.

## **7 What happens if I don't have the police certificates or other required clearance documents?**

You will not be allowed to commence your clinical placement within a NSW Public Health Facility unless you have a National Police Certificate that shows no criminal offences or a clearance document from the NSW Department of Health.

You must keep your original documentation for presentation in accordance with these requirements.

## **8 You must sign a Student Undertaking**

As part of the enrolment process with the Tertiary Institution you will be required to read and sign the NSW Health Student Undertaking.

The NSW Health Student Undertaking requires you to notify the NSW Department of Health, Corporate Governance and Risk Management Branch, External Relations and Employment Screening Unit if you are charged or convicted of a criminal offence after the date of issue of your National Police Certificate or during the completion of your course.

Your educational institution will provide you with a copy of the NSW Health Student Undertaking form, which you must sign and return to the educational institution.

## **9 You must read and sign the NSW Health Code of Conduct**

Before commencing each clinical placement, you are required to have read the NSW Health Code of Conduct and signed a form confirming that you have read, understood and will comply with the NSW Health Code of Conduct. The signed agreement must be given to the NSW Public Health Facility at the commencement of your placement.

You should download and print the NSW Health Code of Conduct and agreement for students undertaking clinical placements from the NSW Health website to take to the placement. You should ensure you have read and understood the NSW Health Code of Conduct before starting your placement.

## **10 You must sign a Commission for Children and Young People Student Declaration**

Under NSW law, any person who has been convicted of a serious sex offence, the murder of a child or a child-related personal violence offence or who is a Registrable Person under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*, is prohibited from working in child-related employment.

Before commencing each clinical placement, you will be required to sign a CCYP Student Declaration form, which you must provide to the NSW Public Health Facility. You should download this form from the NSW Health Website.

## **11 Summary of documents to take to your placement**

At the start of each new placement, you will need to provide the NSW Public Health Facility with:

- Student ID issued by your Tertiary Institution
- A National Police Certificate issued by the Australian Police Service that has been obtained specifically for the purpose of completing the clinical placements and is less

than 3 years old showing no offences **or** a Clinical Placement Authority card /conditional letter (issued by the External Relations and Employment Screening Unit of NSW Department of Health) that is valid for the entire duration of your clinical placement.

- If you are an overseas student, you must have:
  - a valid Australian National Police Certificate that shows no records as well as an overseas Police Certificate or Statutory Declaration showing that have no criminal records or
  - a valid Clinical Placement Authority Card or Conditional Letter from NSW Health
- A signed CCYP Student Declaration form (Appendix 6) and a signed form stating that you have read and understood the NSW Health Code of Conduct (Appendix 7) (Forms available at [www.doh.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.doh.health.nsw.gov.au)).

In addition, before the placement is confirmed with the NSW Public Health Facility, you must inform the Tertiary Institution:

- Of any conditions imposed by the NSW Department of Health or any other authority so that the NSW Public Health Facility can determine if it is able to manage your placement in accordance with the conditions.

If you fail to do so the NSW Public Health Facility may refuse your placement.

If you have any questions or need to access any of the forms, documents or processes referred to in this notice, contact your educational institution or refer to the NSW Department of Health website.

We wish you the best for your clinical placements with NSW Health.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Oong  
**Associate Director**  
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