
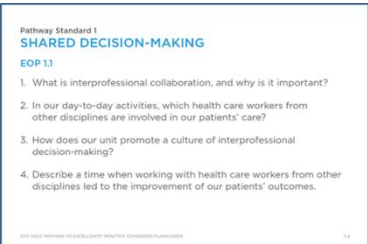



PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE® RESOURCE GUIDE FOR VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (VHA) FACILITIES

Pathway to Excellence Eligibility Criteria	
Healthcare Systems and Campus Definitions	
Pathway to Excellence Requirements	Considerations for VHA Facilities
https://www.nursingworld.org/organizational-programs/pathway/apply/eligibility/ Individual organizations within the system may apply; however, a multi-facility healthcare system cannot apply as a whole.	One Associate Director of Patient Care Services (ADPCS) can have oversight over multiple campuses and apply as one Pathway application.
Campus definition: For Pathway purposes, campuses are remote care sites of an applicant organization. The CNO of the applicant organization is accountable for nursing practice at the remote sites. Campuses typically provide services to augment the full set of services offered at the primary site.	For VA applicants, campuses would include: the community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC), Community Living Centers (CLC), Domiciliary, Polytrauma Rehabilitation Program (PTRP), and Health Care Centers (HCC) - If the ADPCS has accountability for the nursing practice at these remote sites and these campuses rely on the main campus for support. (Contract clinics would not be included as a campus as the main campus does not provide support or staffing for these clinics.)
Chief Nursing Officer (CNO)	
Pathway to Excellence Requirements	Considerations for VHA Facilities
The applicant organization must have a chief nursing officer (CNO) who is ultimately accountable for the standards of nursing practice throughout the organization.	In the VA, the Associate Director, Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive (ADPCS/NE) fulfills the CNO role.
The CNO is responsible for all nursing practice; therefore, all areas and campuses under the CNO's accountability where nursing is present must be included in the application, regardless of reporting relationships.	The focus is whose nursing practice is under the ADPCS' oversight . Depending on the practice of individual VA facilities, Certified Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)s are excluded if their practice is not under the ADPCS's oversight. *Please contact the Pathway office for additional guidance.
The CNO is part of the organization's highest governing, decision- making, and strategic-planning body and is able to advocate for nursing to the Board of Directors.	The highest governing body in the VA is the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the ADPCS must be part of this team.
All requirements must be upheld throughout the appraisal process (application, review and decision) to maintain eligibility; and throughout the 4-year designation term to sustain the Pathway to Excellence credential.	Pathway application can proceed if there is leadership change. However, the Pathway standards must continue to be ingrained in the culture, and the nurse survey speaks to the current ADPCS.
At the time of application, the CNO must hold, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Appointees as interim CNOs and subsequent CNOs must also comply with all requirements.	

Pathway Resources		
	Available to the General Public	Available to Official Applicants and Pre-Intent Members
Free Resources	<p>Resources below can be accessed from the Pathway to Excellence website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Assessment Tool • Narrated PowerPoint • 90-Second Overview Video <p>List of Pathway designated organizations by state and country</p> <p>Pathway Staff</p>	<p>Same resources that are available to the general public.</p> <p>Pathway Learning Community which contains the following resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modules with important information about each application phase • Mentorship Page with a list of volunteer mentors from Pathway designated organizations • Discussion board to communicate with other nurse leaders from applicant and designated organizations • Featured articles from <i>Nursing Management</i>, Pathway's Official Leadership Journal • Latest updates from the Pathway Program Office and ANCC/ANA <p>Open Forums – twice a month calls with the Pathway analysts</p>
For Purchase	<p>https://www.nursingworld.org/continuing-education/ce-subcategories/pathway/</p> <p>Annual Pathway to Excellence® Conference</p> <p>Applicant Workshop / Host a regional Applicant Workshop*</p> <p>Pre-Intent Program *</p> <p>Application Manual (<i>revised every 4 years; date of document submission determines which manual applicants need to use</i>)</p>	<p>Same resources that are available to the general public.</p>  

<p>For Purchase</p>	<p>Pathway Standards Flashcards - <i>can be used in daily huddles and other meetings to engage the frontline staff, educate the team about the EOPs, and gather stories of how the Pathway Standards are enculturated throughout the organization.</i></p> <p>Pathway Standards poster templates - <i>ready-made template that can be personalized with the organization's name to increase awareness about the organization's Pathway journey</i></p> <p>"Ask me about Pathway" buttons - <i>for Pathway champions to wear to spark conversations about the organization's investment in their staff and why creating positive practice environments is important</i></p>  <p>* <i>contact Pathway Program Office (PPO) for more information</i></p>	
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Pathway to Excellence Program Fees

Fees apply to all health care organizations and **are subject to change**. Visit ANCC website for current information: Fees: <https://www.nursingworld.org/organizational-programs/pathway/apply/fees/>

A) Applicant Registration Fee

- Fee includes Membership to the Pathway Learning Community (PLC)
- Due with the electronic application. Non-refundable.

B) Appraisal Process Fee – refer to fees link or the table on [ANCC website](#) for current fee structure.

- Appraisal fee is based on the number of licensed or authorized beds, annual number of visits for free standing ambulatory settings, and for additional branches.
- If applicable, additional campus fees will be assessed in addition to above mentioned fees.
- Invoice will be loaded to the Pathway Portal 1 month before document submission is due.
- Invoice payment is due within 30 days of receipt.
- Contact PathwayInfo@ana.org for further information.

C) Extension Fees

- Depending on availability, applicants requesting a Pathway Standards Document extension may choose from the next 2 submission cycles. Applicants requesting to extend beyond 2 submission cycles must reapply.
 - *Prior to 30 days* - **Extension Fee**: Due if/when an organization requests an extension prior to 30 days of the approved document submission date.
 - *Within 30 days* - **Appraisal Preparation Cancellation Fee**: Due if/when an organization requests an extension within 30 days of the approved document submission date.

D) Additional information (AI) Fee

- Additional Information Fee: Due if/when ANCC requests additional information

NOTE: All Fees are payable by check (see website for remit address) or by credit card via the Pathway Application Portal.

VHA Applicant Fees and Payment Tips

The Pathway Program Director (PPD) serves as the organization’s primary contact person. The PPD will coordinate the internal payment process and communicate with the Pathway office. To ensure applicant confidentiality, the Pathway office will only release information to the applicant PPD and/or ADPCS.

To request a quote, the PPD must e-mail a request to the Pathway office at PathwayInfo@ana.org. The PPD should establish a contracting officer and have that person involved in the first conversation with the Pathway office. When preparing a contract, the PPD should consider miscellaneous costs such as application manuals, bookmarks, publications, and other engagement tools.

The following documents are needed for a complete contract:

1. **90-2237 – in Vista** - *Need person who has access to request through fund control point.* Include this statement: “The Price referenced was calculated independently and shall be considered as the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE) “
2. **Security document 6500** - Even though electronic access to VA documents is not granted to ANCC, this form must be included with the contract.



6500 Security
checklist.pdf

3. **Statement of work**



Pathway to
Excellence Quote



Statement of Work-
PTE.doc

4. **Justification - Sole Source**



Justification for
Single Source Award

Applicant Registration

Supporting Documents for Application Registration	
Pathway to Excellence Requirements	Considerations for VHA facilities
CNO/Director of Nursing Curriculum Vitae	ADPCS Curriculum Vitae
Organizational Chart- Nursing Services	Organizational Chart - Nursing Services *Any other Organizational Chart that indicates the ADPCS is a part of the Executive Leadership Team
Operating License / Certificate	In Lieu of Operating License / Certificate – Use the <u>VSSC TripPack</u> indicating total operating and authorized beds at the facility (for VA VISN bed report)
Application fee	Application fee (see Finance algorithm)

On the Journey (OTJ) Resources for Applicants that have completed Applicant Registration

Welcome Letter to include:

- Applicant Number
- Assigned Senior Analyst
- Documentation Submission Date
- Access to the Pathway Learning Community for up to 25 memberships
- Pathway Portal access

Other resources

- Recorded Webinar Modules
- Open Forum Calls
- Pathway e-newsletter
- Rights to use of the Journey to Pathway to Excellence Logo

On The Journey



Document Submission

- Complete Organizational Demographic Form (ODF)
 - Complete Organizational Overview (OO)
 - Create a Glossary
 - Review all Elements of Performance (EOP) and complete self-assessment early to identify examples, narrative writers, related processes/policies, and gaps where a process may not be in place. In the instance that a process is not in place, this should be a **priority** to bring your organization up to the Pathway Standards. For example, these pose challenges for VAMCs (e.g. EOP 6.2 and EOP 2.9)
 - There are 4 main types of EOPs
 1. **Description**: written response to understand the process
 2. **Documented Evidence**: documents residing within the organization that reflects a process is in place (not created for purpose of responding to EOP)
 - Examples of documented evidence include (but are not limited to): orientation agendas, copy of nurse certification, policy, performance evaluation form, meeting minutes, flyers
 - Note- when an EOP asks for an associated policy, provide the **entire policy pasted into the document, not as a hyperlink of imbedded document.**
 - As applicable, it can be helpful to highlight or make a box around pertinent information on the documented evidence to draw attention
 3. **Example**: reflects living the process
 - Recent examples best reflect the current culture.
 - When an EOP asks for a description of a process, the corresponding example must refer to the process described.
 - All examples must include the month and year they occurred.
 - Note: Unless a more stringent time frame is specified, examples cited within an EOP must have occurred within 36 months; the endpoint to be used for the time frame is the date the Pathway Standards document is due to the Pathway Program Office.
 - Only provide the specific number of examples requested in each EOP. Additional examples **will not be evaluated.**
 4. **Narrative**: reflects living the culture
 - When an EOP requires a narrative, it must be written by an individual in the specific role requested in the EOP (e.g. direct care nurse (DCN), CNO, Nurse Manager, etc.).
 - A DCN, according to the Pathway manual definition, must spend at least 50% of time in direct patient care. Make sure the corresponding nursing role descriptions in the Organizational Overview (OO) are consistent (i.e. the person writing the DCN narrative has their role described as 50% or more time in direct care in the OO).
 - Narrative must be written in first person or include a statement at the end stating “submitted by (name & title).”
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- General Editing Tips:

- There can be an issue of assigning multiple writers per EOP/Standard: Incongruence
- We suggest at least two editing rounds: leader/manager AND outside evaluator (a person who has not been involved with the document preparation or writing)
- Create a list of questions for your internal and external editors/auditors. Some that we suggest:
 - Does the response clearly answer/address each element of the EOP?
 - Is the flow ordinal and easy to follow?
 - Are there any gaps in the response?
 - Do the exhibits submitted best represent your organization and clearly substantiate the response used for the EOP?
 - Is there too much information that clouds the description, example, or narrative?

Pathway (EOP) and Magnet (SOE) Crosswalk

https://www.nursingworld.org/~496a43/globalassets/organizational-programs/pathway-to-excellence/2019-magnet---2020-pathway-criteria-crosswalk_pdf-final.pdf

Pathway Survey

- The nurse survey is an integral part of the appraisal process for organizations applying for Pathway to Excellence designation. The survey invites eligible respondents working at all levels of the organization to share their perceptions of the workplace environment. Results of the survey are a key part in the decision on whether to award Pathway designation.
- Eligibility:
 - See who is eligible to participate <https://www.nursingworld.org/organizational-programs/pathway/overview/faqs/>
 - All Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses, including direct care, non-direct care, full-time, part-time, per diem, or float pool, are eligible to take the survey.
 - Advanced practice nurses (APRNs) and contract/agency nurses may be eligible.
 - Agency/Contracted Nurses are eligible to take the survey if they:
 - are contracted to your organization to work more than half-time AND
 - have worked at your organization (as an agency nurse) for more than 90 days AND
 - The contracted agency nurse is **evaluated** by your organization
 - APRNs include certified registered nurse anesthetists, certified nurse-midwives, clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse practitioners. Eligible APRNs' nursing practice must be under the **CNO's oversight**.
 - All eligible nurses must be invited by the CNO to participate in the Pathway Survey.

Additional qualifying questions for APRN eligibility: Is the nurse employed by the hospital and by Nursing service (not by Medical staff)?

- For more information and answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Nurse Survey, please visit the [FAQ page](#).

Pathway to Excellence® Designation



The Commission on Pathway designates Pathway to Excellence® and Pathway to Excellence in Long Term Care® Designation for a period of four years. To maintain Pathway designation, your organization must remain in compliance with the components and policies of the ANCC Pathway to Excellence Program®. For more information, please review the [ANCC website](#).

- After designation, the organization moves into a monitoring and evaluation phase, that includes the mid-cycle submission of the Organization Demographic Form (ODF) as the Interim Monitoring Report (IMR). Pathway to Excellence and Pathway to Excellence in Long Term Care designated organizations are invoiced a one-time Interim Monitoring Fee with the mid-cycle ODF.
- The Organizational Demographic Form (ODF) is an integral part of the Pathway Standards Document (PSD) that Pathway-applicant organizations are required to submit with the PSD and post designation as an updated mid-cycle ODF to fulfill interim monitoring requirements. You can also find information on the ODF preparation guidelines in Chapter 3 of the 2020 Pathway to Excellence® and Pathway to Excellence® in Long-Term Care Application Manual.
- Written notification of significant changes and events must be forwarded to the Pathway Program Office. *See Chapter 1, Compliance with Pathway Eligibility Requirements and Standards. 2020 Manual? (URL to 2020 Manual)*
- If for any reason an organization is unable to submit the report within the required time frame, the organization must contact the PPO. If the PPO does not receive the required documents by the last day of the organization's PSD submission month and the organization has failed to notify the PPO

regarding its delay, a late fee will be charged. (URL) Failure to submit any required reports or failure to comply with Pathway requirements may be considered voluntary surrender of Pathway designation.

Pathway to Excellence Re-designation Timeline

IF YOUR CURRENT PATHWAY DESIGNATION IS THIS MONTH	Complete <u>Applicant Registration</u> www.ptapplication.org between 8 – 12 months prior to the intended submission cycle	Deadline to <u>submit</u> Pathway Standards Document (PSD) is this Submission Cycle
January	February and June (12-8 months before designation expires)	February 1 st
February	February and June (12-8 months before designation expires)	February 1 st
March	April and August (12-8 months before designation expires)	April 1st
April	April and August (12-8 months before designation expires)	April 1st
May	June and September (12-8 months before designation expires)	June 1st
June	June and September (12-8 months before designation expires)	June 1st
July	August and December (12-8 months before designation expires)	August 1st
August	August and December (12-8 months before designation expires)	August 1st
September	November and March (12-8 months before designation expires)	November 1st
October	November and March (12-8 months before designation expires)	November 1st
November	November and March (12-8 months before designation expires)	November 1st
December	February and June (12-8 months before designation expires)	February 1 st
Example: Designation Month April 2018	Applicant Registration due April 2021 (earliest) -August 2021 (Latest)	Documents Due April 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathway designated organizations whose expiration month does not fall on an established submission cycle, may submit the Pathway Standards Document on the next submission cycle. e.g. For an organization designated in March, designation expires in March, and the Pathway Standards Document may be submitted in April. Once the Pathway Standards Document is submitted in accordance with the above, the current Pathway designation status will remain in good standing while the appraisal process is underway. 		

- [Notify the Pathway office of your intention to apply for redesignation](#) one year before your current designation expires.

Resources:

Pathway to Excellence	Website	#		
VHA ONS Nursing Excellence Collaborative	VHA ONS Nursing Excellence Collaborative SharePoint			