

February 17, 2006

**CONTENT OF VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UTILIZATION OF
REGISTERED NURSES AT NURSE I THROUGH NURSE III**

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive clarifies policy relating to the content of vacancy announcements and the utilization of registered nurses (RNs) in grades Nurse I through Nurse III.

2. BACKGROUND

(a) The Title 38 personnel system is a rank-in-person system for RNs in grades Nurse I through Nurse III. The grades of these employees are based on their professional qualifications rather than the duties and responsibilities of their assignments. Therefore, advertising RN positions (other than Nurse IV and Nurse V) at particular grade levels is inconsistent with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy. Since many facilities are facing challenges related to nurse recruitment, it is essential that nursing staff be appropriately utilized. This involves establishing staffing patterns to minimize the requirements for RNs to perform administrative or support functions, and it involves providing nurses with assignments and opportunities that are consistent with their skills and expertise.

(b) Performance and education requirements for placement at specific grade levels are outlined in the VA Nurse Qualification Standards where the goal is to place suitably qualified candidates for successful performance in positions.

3. POLICY: It is VHA policy that VHA management officials advertise RN vacancies and utilize RN positions in a manner consistent with paragraph 4.

4. ACTION: The facility Director is responsible for ensuring that:

- a. RN positions at Nurse I through Nurse III are not to be advertised at specific grade levels.
- b. Facility management officials take into consideration that Nurse III responsibilities and assignments include leadership in the application of the nursing process to patient care, organizational processes and/or systems, and improving outcomes at the program or service level.
- c. Facility management officials review their position management practices to ensure they are consistent with the preceding.
- d. Facility management officials adopt policies supporting effective utilization of nursing staff.

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES FEBRUARY 28, 2011

VHA DIRECTIVE 2006-012
February 17, 2006

5. REFERENCES

- a. VA Handbook 5005, "Staffing," Part II, Appendix II-06.
- b. VA Handbook 5007, "Pay Administration," Part II, Chapter 2.

6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: The Office of Management Support (10A2) is responsible for the content of this Directive. Questions may be addressed to 202-273-8910.

7. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 2003-029 is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires February 28, 2011.

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