

## Information relating to Career Planning

Career planning has benefits for everyone. No matter where you are in your career, developing a career plan holds real value in ensuring you get the career and lifestyle outcomes you want.

International evidence suggests that sound career planning processes will benefit both employer and employee. HWNZ believes that it is good practice for all health sector staff to have a career plan.

Good career planning involves looking at both individual aspirations and needs and health sector workforce needs and matching the two. Good career planning processes will:

- Support individual health professionals and staff in their careers
- Provide the basis for DHBs and other employers to recruit, retain, and grow the staff they need to meet service needs
- Deliver the workforce that the health sector requires for the future
- Ensure that training investment is matched to the needs of the health system

Whether you are working in the health sector, or are students undertaking a professional qualification, you may want to know about your future career options or what you need to do to develop a career plan.

### Nurses - Four step career planning process

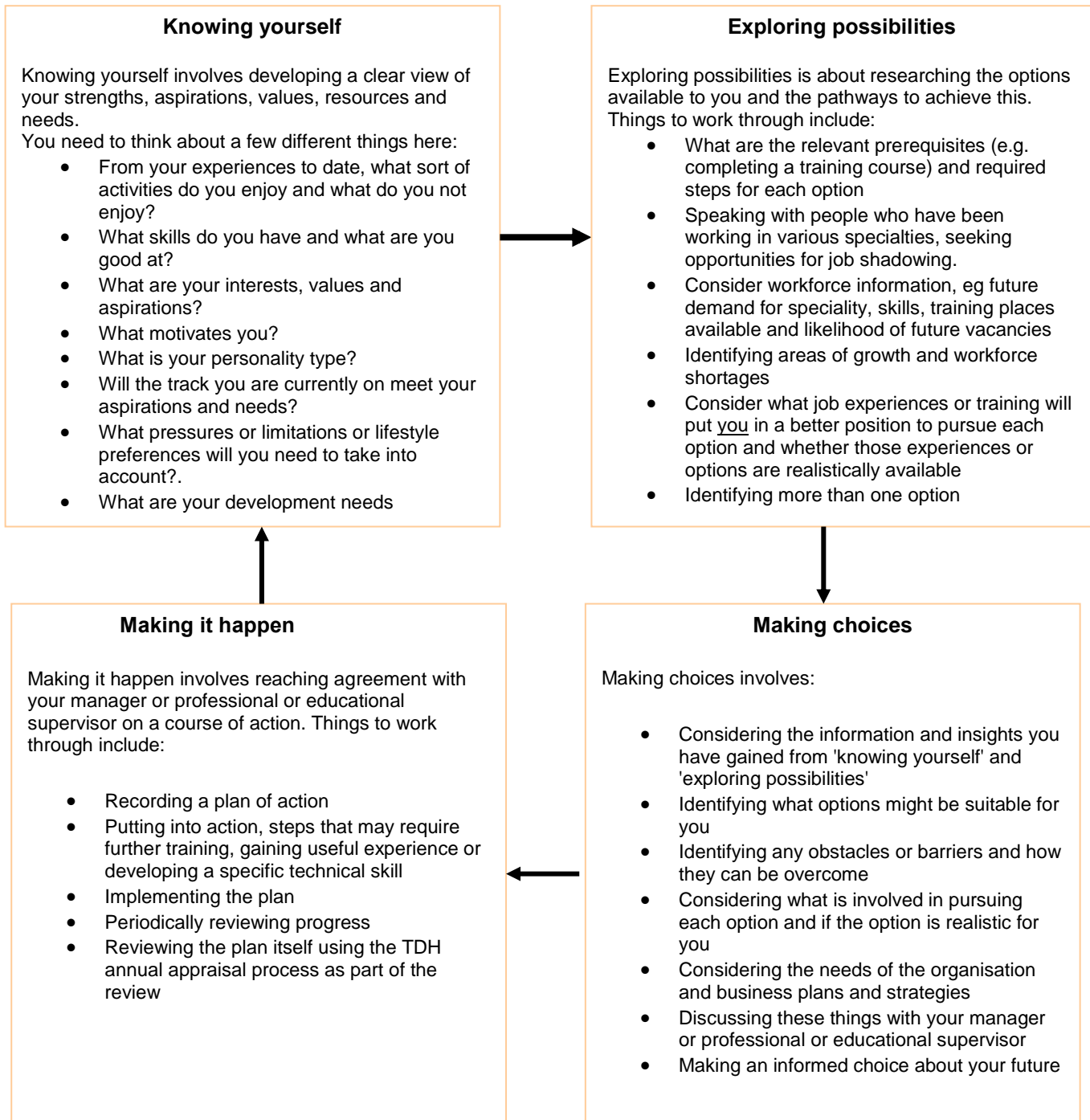
Whether you are looking for a career in general nursing or looking to specialise, a good career plan will help you with your career.

For general nursing, a career planning process might be a fine tuning exercise. You might want to work in particular wards or with particular types of patients. Or you might just need to identify what you need to do to keep up to date with your practice, and then have a plan for making it happen that your employer has agreed to support.

However, you might also be looking for a bit of a change in role or a different focus. You might be considering a change to a leadership or management role, or be interested in doing some teaching, or coaching or mentoring younger nurses or other staff. Or, you may want to consider working in a specialty area. At Tairāwhiti District Health (TDH) reference to and comment relating to career planning are an expectation of the annual appraisal process.

Good career planning involves a four step process. Depending on the point in your career, you may not need to spend much time on some of these steps. Or, you might want to have a complete think about things and do a more comprehensive career planning process. You could use this four step process **below** or, you could use a similar career planning process developed by the International Council of Nurses called '[It's Your Career – Take Charge!](#)'.

There is a range of career planning models and their design features vary. However, most if not all are based on four steps which can be summarised as:



Take your time to work your way through these four steps and don't make any decisions before thinking through 'knowing yourself' and 'exploring possibilities'. Further information can be found on the Health Workforce website <http://www.healthworkforce.govt.nz/health-careers/career-planning>

You will need to have conversations at each step of the process with the person who has the overall responsibility for assisting you with your career. This might be your professional or educational supervisor or your CNM. You might also have conversations with others such as a person who is a year or two ahead of you, a career development specialist or people experienced in a particular field.

While these people can help you with advice and insights, it's your career so you will have to do most of the work on your career plan. Sometimes, your conversations with one or other of these people will be quite brief – just bouncing ideas or getting an insight. Sometimes, however, you might want to have

a more formal or structured conversation - especially when you are wanting to look seriously into your future options, making choices and developing a plan to make things happen.

The career plan template or steps towards pathway template are two documents available to use or adapt when writing your career plan <http://www.taimned.co.nz/HWZNZ/default.asp>

A good comprehensive career plan might record relevant information from 'knowing yourself' and 'exploring possibilities' and will:

**Specify Goals.** *Goals might include one or more of:*

- to focus on a particular sub specialty within your specialty and having workplace experiences which support that
- getting exposure to a range of sub specialties with a view to a decision later
- keeping up to date with the latest developments
- exploring options for a career in management or teaching
- addressing some gaps in your skill set
- getting exposure to new experiences within your current role e.g. working in a different unit, working in an environment where there is more team work
- accommodating your family related or other needs e.g. child rearing, care of an aging relative

**Specify an agreed course of action** *(between you and your supervisor) covering some or all of:*

- skills you need to develop
- qualifications needed
- other learning opportunities to meet agreed goals
- possible 'stepping stone' experiences or other experiences that may be useful
- strategies for overcoming any obstacles
- networks/information/support needed to achieve goals

**Specify who will do what** *to implement the career plan.*

**Specify how to assess the extent** *to which the agreed course of action has achieved the stated goals.*

**Specify when and/or in what** *circumstances progress in implementing the plan, and the plan itself, will be reviewed.*

The training plan that supports a career plan may encompass some or all of 'on the job' experiences, formal education, informal education and mentoring/coaching/support.

Various existing processes might provide a lot of the information and content you need for a career plan. Supervisory processes, professional development plans, performance reviews and other processes will all help in putting together your career plan. In fact, you might merge your career planning process into one or other of these processes.

**Note:**

You will probably work for more than one DHB during or after your training. So, you will need to agree to the transfer of your career plan and other relevant information between employers and others, subject to safeguards for anything you want kept confidential. You should think about this when you are preparing your career plan.