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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL

Jeffrey A. Meyers
 Commissioner

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Lori A. Shibinette
 Chief Executive Officer

May 30 2019

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T Sununu
 and the Honorable Council
 State House
 Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to RSA 99:8, Increases for Recruitment Purposes, and in accordance with Personnel Rule 904.01, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Hospital, to implement the twenty percent (20%) increase in the compensation of the Occupational Therapist II position for the new I Unit, effective upon Governor & Council approval through February 21, 2020. Funds are available in the following account: 36% General Funds and 64% Other Funds (provider fees).

05-95-94-940010-8750 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SVCS, HHS: NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, ACUTE PSYCHIATRIC SVCS

Fiscal Year	Class/Object	Class Title	Job Number	Amount Authorized
SFY 2020	010-500103	Personal Services - Perm Class	94053100	\$5749

EXPLANATION

The purpose of this request is to seek a salary enhancement for a newly created Occupational Therapy (OT) position, to assist with the recruitment and retention of OT positions effective upon G&C approval. All other NHH, OT positions are currently approved for this enhancement. The end-date of this requested enhancement coincides with the other OT enhancements at NHH as per the Personnel Rule 904.01, which limits enhancements to 24 months.

The position requested to be added to the 20% enhancement at New Hampshire Hospital is as follows:

Position #	Title
15903	Occupational Therapist II

The request for a salary enhancement was approved at the G&C meetings on 6/19/2013 Item# 137, 8/2/2017 Item#8 and 2/21/2018 Item #9. The purpose of the salary enhancement was to assist the recruitment and retention of these positions, which had been extremely difficult in the competitive healthcare labor market from which the hospital recruits applicants. In addition to the NH Hospital salaries not keeping pace with labor market trends, the field of Occupational Therapy has upgraded the educational requirements to require a Master's degree, in order to qualify for entry-level occupational therapy positions. Consequently, graduates will be carrying more debt and will seek out positions that will enable them to repay loans. Private hospitals not only pay higher salaries, but also will often assist employees with student loans payments as a recruitment tool or may provide a sign on cash bonus.

The enhancements have been instrumental to the retention of the current Occupational Therapist IIs now onboard at NH Hospital. It is for this reason that we respectfully request that the enhancement be extended to this position, in order to retain the ability to facilitate the efficient discharge of patients to the community. Occupational Therapists are essential for discharge planning as they evaluate patients' cognitive ability to live independently for integration into the community. These positions are even more crucial as the US Department of Justice and the Disability Rights Center have filed suit against the NH Department of Health and Human Services, alleging that persons in New Hampshire, who are suffering from mental illness, are hospitalized at higher expense and for longer periods of time due the State's failure to provide sufficient community mental health services. A settlement agreement reached in this matter included a component, which requires NHH Occupational Therapists to prepare patients for community living and create individual plans for patients to promote integration into the community.

The State of NH starting salary for an Occupational Therapist II at NHH without the enhancement is \$43,114.50, at Step 9, which takes 15 years to reach; the salary for the Occupational Therapist II is \$60,469.50. This compares to the mean full time salary of all occupational therapists in New Hampshire, in accordance with the Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2019 data (the most current detail available), of \$85,050; 41% above the top State of NH salary level. This information is consistent with other wage indicators such as Salary.Com, which for April 2019 shows the annual mean wage for occupational therapists to be \$89,254 in New Hampshire; 47.6% above the top state of NH salary level.

This enhancement is necessary to maintain a competitive salary for recruiting and retaining Occupational Therapist related positions. If approved, overall additional cost of this increase would be \$5,749; which would ensure the salary for this position in this classification would be increased by the authorized enhancement percentage. There are sufficient funds in the Hospital's budget to cover this request and funds are anticipated to be available in the next biennium.

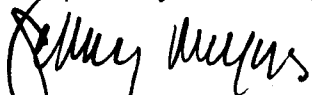
Should Governor and Council determine to deny this request, New Hampshire Hospital would be unable to adequately recruit and retain staff, negatively impacting patient care.

Area served: Statewide.

Source of Funds: 36% General Funds and 64% Other Funds (provider fees).

In the event that other funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this contract.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey A. Meyers
Commissioner

ddf/LAS

Comparative Occupational Therapist II Salary Information, May 24, 2019

U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS)

Job Outlook from BLS (retrieved on 5/24/19, from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm>): Employment of occupational therapists is projected to grow 24 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations.

New Hampshire, Non-metropolitan West Central, Southwest Area Mean Wage, May 2018 Data

Retrieved 5/24/19 from: <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes291122.htm#st>

Nonmetropolitan area	Employment (1)	Employment per thousand jobs	Location quotient (9)	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
<u>West Central-Southwest New Hampshire nonmetropolitan area</u>	170	1.70	1.94	\$40.89	\$85,050

Salary.com

Retrieved 5/24/19 from: <https://www1.salary.com/NH/Concord/Occupational-Therapist-Salary.html#experienceyear>

How much does an Occupational Therapist make in Concord, NH? The average Occupational Therapist salary in Concord, NH is \$89,254 as of April 27, 2019, but the range typically falls between \$81,754 and \$97,239.



Ziprecruiter.com

Retrieved 5/24/19 from: <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/Salaries/How-Much-Does-an-Occupational-Therapist-Make-a-Year--in-New-Hampshire>

Occupational Therapist Salary in New Hampshire

