

Practice Location and Inter-Country Nursing Practice

The purpose of the International Nurse Regulator Collaborative (INRC) is to promote understanding and cooperation in the development of standards to protect the public through the regulatory process of nurse licensure/registration. The INRC affirms that in a consumer protection model, health care practice occurs where the recipient of health care services is located. Furthermore, the INRC recognizes the right to protect its citizens according to the laws and practices in its own jurisdiction.

The public protection mandate through nurse licensure/registration is based on a patient-centered model. Patients have a right to know that their nurse is qualified and practicing safely. Patients also have a right to easily obtain information about a nurse, including the nurse's disciplinary record. Patients who have had perceived or actual harm should be able to readily contact their nurse regulatory body where practice occurred.

The INRC recognizes the increasing mobility of nurses between countries and practice that occurs both physically and virtually through the use of telehealth modalities. As practice occurs across geographic areas, nurse regulatory bodies face the challenge of facilitating inter-country practice while ensuring public protection. Patients deserve the same quality of regulated nursing practice regardless of where the nurse is located.

The INRC acknowledges the importance of increasing access to care and the efficient use of health resources. The INRC also supports the need to facilitate inter-country access to quality health care while at the same time ensuring high standards of public protection.

Public Protection Guiding Principles for Inter-Country Practice:

1. A nurse must be currently licensed/registered in the country where the patient is located unless practicing under a mutual recognition licensure/registration agreement between countries.
2. A nurse must practice in accordance with the nurse practice laws of the country where the patient is located.
3. When practicing between countries, nurses have a responsibility to identify themselves to patients by name, license type, number, and country of licensure/registration.

Who is the INRC?

The INRC is composed of the College of Nurses of Ontario, the Nursing Council of New Zealand, the Singapore Nursing Board, the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia, the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia, the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland, and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

Notes:

- The words **consumer**, **patient**, and **client** are used interchangeably.
- The words **licensure** and **registration** are used interchangeably.

Note: This position statement is only intended to inform nurses about emerging issues in nursing regulation. It is not one of the College's standards of practice. Ontario nurses are accountable for practising according to the College's standards and guidelines.