

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO'S Academic Reference Group

News to Use: February 2025

What is the Academic Reference Group?

The Academic Reference Group is made up of academic partners and representatives of the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) who share information and collaborate on nursing regulatory issues of mutual interest and concern.

The group includes 12 Ontario nursing educators who have volunteered to represent all nursing programs in the province.

The group's goal is to offer an opportunity for discussion and collaboration on regulatory issues of importance to both educators and CNO.

Welcome

Welcome back to a new year! We appreciate your time and thank you for your continued engagement as a member of the Academic Reference Group.

Program Approval

At the December meeting, Council has given preliminary approval to another new French RPN to BScN program, using the Nursing Program Transformation Initiative (NPTI) pathway for admission. They also approved the new Transition to Practice Courses that were designed to meet the new Transition to Practice Requirement, in effect Tuesday, April 1, 2025. The list of [approved nursing programs](#) has been updated based on Council's decisions.

CNO expects to review more new programs throughout 2025-2026. To start the [preliminary approval](#) process, please email [Donna Rawlin](#), Education Team Lead, about your intent to offer a new program(s) at least one year before the program starts.

Registration Exams

CNO has recently shared Q4 2024 REx-PN and NCLEX-RN exam reports. You will receive your program's exam blueprint results for 2024 in the near future. If you have any difficulty accessing these exam reports, please contact [Sean Knight](#).

If you wish to meet with CNO to discuss your exam results, please contact the Education Consultant assigned to your program and/or [Donna Rawlin](#), Education Team Lead.

Regulatory Changes and Updates Education Requirements for Nursing Registration

The Ministry of Health has approved new education requirements for nursing registration. The changes, which will take effect on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, will enhance the CNO registration process, and provide support for internationally educated applicants to become registered in a timely way. For more information, visit [CNO's website](#).

Nurse Practitioner Regulation Framework Implementation Plan Project

CNO is collaborating with the Canadian Council for Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR) to implement a proposed national framework for NPs that aims to create consistency across Canada in entry-level education, national entry-level exam and registration requirements.

System partner and registrant consultation feedback on the proposed amendments to NP regulations will be brought to March Council. If approved by CNO Council and MoH, changes would remove the current NP specialty certificates and streamline

GROUP MEMBERS

We encourage you to share your feedback with any member of the Academic

Reference Group:

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Wendy Ellis
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the registration of NPs into one single classification. The proposed changes do not change an NP's accountability to practice within their scope and competencies.

Recent project activities and updates:

- 2024 Practice Analysis report is now available in [English](#) and [French](#) on the CCRNR website
- NP Exam Blueprint by end of January 2025
- working toward the 2026 new NP national exam timeline

For more information on the Nurse Practitioner Regulation Framework Implementation Plan Project (NPR-FIPP), please visit our CNO [webpage](#) outlining the national work, key milestones, engagement opportunities and frequently asked questions.

Health and Social Support Worker

On December 1, 2024, Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority (HSCPOA) began registering Personal Support Workers (PSWs) to support consistent, quality care. The public, including care recipients in their homes, hospitals, long-term care facilities, retirement homes, or other Ontario health care environments, can expect that registered PSWs will be held accountable for services provided by the HSCPOA. Please visit the [HSCPOA](#) website for more information.

Scope of Practice Changes and Updates

The ministry has made [regulation changes](#) to the scope of practice for Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Registered Nurses (RNs) in Ontario. Starting Tuesday, July 1, 2025, these changes will include the following:

Nurse Practitioners:

- ✓ Authorizing NPs to order and perform additional procedures, such as defibrillation, cardiac pacemaker therapy and electrocoagulation
- ✓ Lifting the current conditions that apply to NPs' authority to certify death, which will enable them to certify death in more circumstances

Registered Nurses:

- ✓ Permitting RNs to certify death in certain circumstances when death is expected

To support carrying out the changes, CNO will be communicating added information, including sharing resources to assist nurses in understanding their professional accountabilities and applying these changes to their practice, where applicable.

Bill 231 and Bill 235 were recently introduced in the Ontario Legislature but have not yet passed into law. With the recent call for an election, these two bills died on the floor. Bill 231, [More Convenient Care Act, 2024](#) proposed changes to the Mandatory Blood Testing Act to allow NPs to complete certain public health forms on behalf of clients who were potentially exposed to infectious disease. Bill 235, [Support for Seniors and Caregivers Act, 2024](#) proposed that NPs be authorized to fill the medical director role in Long-Term Care homes, renaming the position to "clinical director".

RN Prescribing

As a reminder, to become authorized to prescribe medications as an RN in the General Class in Ontario, RNs must complete a [CNO approved prescribing education program](#). To support RN Prescribing, CNO continues to update practice resources with input from key partners, including approved RN prescribing programs. Resources include the [Registered Nurse \(RN\) Prescribing practice standard](#), [Navigating the Medication List](#), as well as [FAQs and relevant links](#). For more information, visit our [webpage on RN prescribing](#).

Quality Assurance

Nurses are chosen for Quality Assurance (QA) Assessment through a random and risk-based selection. If selected for QA Assessment, nurses are contacted by email, using the email on file in [Maintain Your Membership](#). More information about the QA Program, and what nurses are asked to do when selected, is available on our [Quality Assurance Assessment webpage](#).

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy

CNO has released a new three-year diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategy, [Inclusion for All: Nothing About Us, Without Us](#). The strategy supports CNO's public protection purpose by addressing bias and discrimination in regulatory processes and helping advance equity in the broader health care system. It is underscored by four key actions: evolve, educate, engage and evaluate. To learn more, visit [CNO's website](#).

CNO Nursing Statistics Update

On Thursday, November 7, 2024, CNO released its [Nursing Statistics Report 2024](#), which includes key highlights, data and trends from the past year. The main purpose is to share data with CNO's academic and health care system partners to support health human resource planning, decision-making and research. The key highlights and trends from the past year include changes to the overall nursing population, demographic shifts, and changes in employment patterns.

CNO also updated our [Nursing Data Dashboard](#) to include the latest statistics and additional features. The dashboard has information about registration classes (General, Extended and Non-Practising), demographic data and employment data, such as areas of practice and working status. New features include geographic data, allowing users to search employment data by Ontario Health region; filter data by first-time renewal and compare employment trends between first year and previously renewed nurse registrations with CNO.

ARG Membership Recruitment

CNO continues to recruit new members for a three-year term. We are targeting program representatives from diverse areas across the province that are not represented on the ARG committee. Our approach includes the need for diverse membership and equitable representation across Ontario colleges and universities, program type and geographic region. [Learn more](#) about CNO's recruitment for new members.

Council Updates

For more information please check our website: [Council Meeting Minutes](#).

Please share this update with other nursing educators at your school.