

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO'S Academic Reference Group

News to Use: October 2025

Program Approval

At the September meeting, CNO Council approved new baccalaureate entry-level programs, both with and without RN Prescribing, along with a new TTP course. The list of [approved nursing programs](#) can be found on our website. As a reminder, if you are planning any changes to your existing nursing program, or wish to start a new program, please contact us at education@cnomail.org to start [preliminary approval](#) process, at least one year before the program changes start.

Registration Exams

CNO has recently shared the 2025 Q3 reports for REx-PN and NCLEX-RN exams. If you have any difficulty accessing these reports or wish to speak to an Education Consultant about your exam results, please contact us at education@cnomail.org.

Single Classification of Nurse Practitioner Framework

CNO is working closely with the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR) on a national initiative that will result in changes to Ontario's framework for registering Nurse Practitioners (NPs) by removing the population-specific certificates (NP-Primary Health Care, NP-Paediatrics, NP-Adult) and replacing them with one NP classification.

CNO continues to engage with academic partners to support the implementation and change management planning of this project, including the new national exam, *Canadian Nurse Practitioner Licensure Exam (CNPLE)* scheduled to launch in 2026.

Current update:

- CNO by-law changes and new national exam, CNPLE coming to December Council for approval

Stay tuned for more details about a NP Single Classification Webinar January 2026.

Modernizing Standards

In September 2025, CNO Council approved updates to the *Documentation* standard, which **will take effect February 1, 2026**. These revisions are part of a review cycle started in 2023 to keep standards evidence-based and reflective of current nursing practice.

The Documentation standard is widely used by nurses, academic institutions and employers, and supports CNO's regulatory functions. The review involved research, professional conduct data, partner input, and legal consultation.

To facilitate knowledge translation and implementation of the *Documentation* standard, CNO plans to provide a variety of resources, such as webinars, microlearning videos, Practice Support FAQs and updated guidance documents. Communication regarding the new standard will include social media posts, external presentations, participation in conferences and exhibitor booths. CNO will continue to monitor questions and feedback from the nursing community and will develop additional resources, as needed to support the understanding and consistent application of the standards of practice.

Online versions of the *Documentation* Standard are now posted on CNO's [Standards and Guidelines](#) webpage.

RN Prescribing

The [Registered Nurse \(RN\) Prescribing Standard](#) has been revised to reflect recent changes to RN prescribing education. RN prescribing was initially introduced as a post-RN continuing education requirement. At the June 2025 meeting, Council approved that RN prescribing education can be offered either as a standalone course or integrated into a broader baccalaureate education program. The education can be delivered either before or after RN registration. This decision supported the evolution and innovation about how RN prescribing education can be offered in Ontario. Minor edits to this standard were made to reflect this policy shift. No changes to nursing practice accountabilities were made.

RN and RPN Entry-Level Competency Revisions

The Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR) and the Canadian Council of Practical Nurse Regulators (CCPNR) are spearheading the revisions for the current RN and RPN Entry-Level Competencies (ELC). They have engaged with external consultants to coordinate this project. Respective RN and RPN Steering Committees comprised of representatives from the 12 participating nursing regulatory colleges are providing overall guidance and direction, including CNO. Activities completed to date include primary informant interviews, a current ELC survey and secondary informant focus groups. The secondary informant focus group included nursing academics, employers and interest groups. We extend our gratitude to all the individuals who have volunteered their time and effort to support these project activities. There will be additional opportunities to participate in this project. Please stay tuned for further updates.

Quality Assurance

On September 29, 2025, nurses were chosen for Quality Assurance (QA) Assessment through a random and risk-based selection. Nurses will be selected for either [Part A: Knowledge Assessment](#) or [Part B: Practice Assessment](#) and will have 6 weeks to complete their activities.

If selected for QA Assessment, nurses are contacted by email, using the email on file in [Maintain Your Membership](#). Please remind your nursing colleagues to keep their email and contact information current. If needed, support and coaching are available to guide nurses who have been selected, through their QA Assessment activities. More information about the QA program and what nurses are asked to do when selected is available on our [Quality Assurance Assessment](#) webpage.

Learn about nursing trends in Ontario

On July 17, 2025, CNO released its *Nursing Statistics Report 2025* and updated its Nursing Data Dashboard, providing the latest Ontario nursing data available to the public.

New Nursing Statistics Report

The [Nursing Statistics Report 2025](#) highlights data and trends from the past year to help support health human resource planning, decision-making and research. The report reflects format updates we made in 2024 to ensure that system partners have a more comprehensive picture of the trends in nursing health human resources and can easily see the most significant patterns across all CNO data in one report. Key highlights from the report include growth in the overall number of nurses and the number of nurses employed in nursing in Ontario for 2025.

Nursing Data Dashboard Updates

We have also updated our [Nursing Data Dashboard](#) to include the latest 2025 statistics and added additional features. This self-serve portal contains information about registration classes (General, Extended and Non-Practising), as well as demographic and employment data. New for 2025 is the addition of data on new nurses and additional registrations.

You can find links to both the report and the dashboard along with additional data and reports on our [Nursing Statistics webpage](#).

Practice Support Resources

Mental Health Resources for Nurses

CNO recognizes the emotional toll on the nurses' roles in health care. A new *Mental Health Resources for Nurses* page has been developed to compile resources to support nurses who are struggling with their mental health. The webpage is available in both [English](#) and [French](#). We encourage you to share this resource with nurses in your organization.

Did You Know?

CNO's Education team supports academics with presentations about nursing regulation, Standards of nursing practice, and related educational content for students. If your organization would like to arrange a virtual or in-person presentation, please contact the Education team at education@cnomail.org for more information.

Council Updates

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

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