



Employer Reference Group Terms of Reference

Background

Nurse employers play a critical role in supporting the regulatory functions of the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) and achieving the shared goal of public safety and promoting safe, quality and ethical nursing practice in Ontario. As system partners, employers have accountabilities in overseeing nurses' compliance with the CNO's standards and guidelines, Quality Assurance and the Professional Conduct process. The Employer Reference Group (ERG) was established in 2019 as one of several CNO strategies to enhance professional collaboration, system partner engagement and information sharing on regulatory issues.

Objectives

The main objectives of the ERG are to:

- discuss and collaborate on issues related to patient safety and safe nursing practice of mutual interest
- provide opportunities for education, discussion and consultation related to regulatory issues and accountability
- identify opportunities for collaboration related to regulatory work, practice initiatives and capacity building in the health care system
- identify the impact of policy decisions, health care trends and issues
- propose recommendations for consideration related to regulatory work, as applicable

Scope

The ERG is focused on supporting nursing regulation in Ontario and the resulting impact on nursing employers. The levels of engagement for this reference group will be to inform, consult and involve nurse employers. Issues related to labour relations, staffing and compensation are not within the purview of CNO and would be considered out of scope for the ERG.

Roles and Responsibilities

The ERG will consist of CNO staff and nursing employers (members) in Ontario and will be chaired by a CNO staff member.

The CNO Chair will provide the support to:

- facilitate meetings that promote respectful and inclusive dialogue
- follow-up with membership for issues identified

CNO staff will:

- request agenda items from members approximately 3-4 weeks prior to each meeting
- prepare and distribute meeting agendas, supporting meeting materials (information and briefing material relevant to meeting discussion) and report meeting outcomes
- post ERG 'News to Use' newsletter on CNO website following each meeting and circulate meeting minutes to members
- evaluate meetings formally on an annual basis and informally, as needed

Nursing employers/members are responsible to:

- provide input on agenda items
- prepare for meetings (review agenda and supporting materials)
- identify conflicts of interest, as applicable
- engage in respectful and inclusive dialogue at meetings and participate in meeting evaluation
- disseminate ERG 'News to Use' posted on CNO's website with their colleagues and networks

Membership and Terms of Membership

CNO

Chief Practice Officer / Director, Professional Practice, ad-hoc basis

Manager, Practice Quality

Advanced Practice Consultants, Practice Quality

Employers

The desired number of nursing employers/members is 10-12. Members can identify and inform CNO of one alternate from their organization who may come to meetings in their place. The alternate can attend no more than two (2) meetings per year.

Membership will be a three-year term, with an option for a one-year renewal.

Composition of Group Members

This group is meant to reflect the diversity of the nursing profession, practice settings and unique populations served by the health care system in Ontario. As part of CNO's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, we strive for diverse representation of Ontario's nurses and aim to provide a space where a variety of viewpoints and experiences can be shared related to matters of patient safety and safe nursing practice in Ontario.

Selection Process

Applicants will be required to complete an online application form wherein they may voluntarily self-identify if they belong to an equity-deserving group. This information will assist CNO in ensuring diverse composition of the ERG and diverse representation of Ontario's nurses. If an applicant is a nurse, the member must be in good standing with CNO.

Decision-making

Decision-making by this committee is made by consensus. ERG functions and decisions are accountable to the Chief Practice Officer at CNO.

Evaluation

The Chair will facilitate evaluation and achievement of committee objectives, informally at the end of each meeting, and formally when the Terms of Reference and Committee Membership are reviewed annually.

Meetings/Schedule

ERG will meet quarterly by virtual meeting technology, such as Zoom. Ad hoc and in-person meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Chair.

Minutes

Minutes are circulated directly to members within 14 business days after the meeting.

Other

ERG will annually review the Terms of Reference and update as required. Members of the reference group may establish ad hoc groups to address specific topics or emerging needs.

Last reviewed: September 24, 2024