



# COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO'S Employer Reference Group

**CNO News to Use**  
October 10, 2024

## Regulatory Changes & Updates

### Nurse Practitioner Regulation Framework Implementation Plan Project (NPR-FIPP) Update

As shared at the June Employer Reference Group (ERG) meeting, CNO is working together with the [Canadian Council for Registered Nurse Regulators](#) (CCRNRR) to set up a proposed national framework for Nurse Practitioners (NPs) to make entry-level education, national entry-level exam and registration requirements consistent across Canada. Recent project activities and updates include

- adding updated national entry-level competencies to programs, starting September 2024
- talking with academics about continuing competence and specialization certificates
- developing a new national exam with an expected launch in 2026
- engaging with NPs and system partners at CNO's first town hall meeting on Sept. 5, 2024. A recording of the town hall will be posted soon.

At CNO's September Council meeting, Council approved proposed amendments to NP regulations under the *Nursing Act, 1991*, to be circulated to registrants and other system partners for 60 days. If the Ministry of Health approves the proposed regulations, the changes would remove the current NP specialty certificates and streamline the registration of NPs into one single classification. This would mean, in future, NPs would have a registration framework similar to Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs), as CNO would no longer require NPs to register based on a specialty. The proposed changes do not affect NPs' accountability to practice within their scope of practice and competencies.

CNO is collecting feedback on draft regulations from Sept. 26, 2024, to Nov. 24, 2024. Visit our [consultation page](#) for more information, including the draft regulation and a summary outlining proposed changes.

For more information on this project, visit CNO's [webpage](#) for key milestones, engagement opportunities and frequently asked questions.

### Personal Support Workers Regulation Change

In 2021, the [Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority Act, 2021](#), was introduced, which set up the [Health and Supportive Care Providers Oversight Authority](#) (HSCPOA), an

independent regulatory body accountable to the ministry. The authority will register and oversee Personal Support Workers (PSWs) and will support public protection.

The HSCPOA has no physical location and will operate and register applicants online. Applicants can begin applying for registration in Fall 2024, with registration of eligible PSWs starting on Dec. 1, 2024.

There are key differences between registration with the HSCPOA and other regulatory bodies formed under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, including

- *voluntary* registration with no initial registration fees
- registration noted with a [visual mark by HSCPOA](#)
- no protected titles
- no defined scope of practice
- no PSWs on the HSCPOA board, only a PSW Advisory Committee

**CNO does not expect any changes to nurses' accountability when working with registered or unregistered PSWs**, as the PSWs would remain accountable to their employer. Employers determine the scope of practice of PSWs working in their organization, including the conditions of employment (for example, if registration with HSCPOA is required).

If you have specific questions about an employer's accountability for PSWs who choose to register with HSCPOA, please [contact](#) HSCPOA to get more information.

### **Regulation of Physician Assistants**

Physician Assistants (PAs) have been working in Ontario as unregulated health care professionals since 2007. In 2019, the ministry began to explore formalizing the regulation of PAs and in June 2021, Bill 283 passed, *Advancing Oversight and Planning in Ontario's Health System Act, 2021*. Schedule 3 of this Bill amended the *Medicine Act, 1991*, to regulate PAs with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO). For PAs to be overseen by CPSO, amendments were made to the regulations. These amendments included requirements for registration, allowing delegation from physicians (under supervision) and setting up a quality assurance (QA) program. Physician Assistants can start registering in early 2025. Individuals who wish to practice as a PA must be registered by April 1, 2025. From that date, only PAs registered with CPSO are permitted to use the title "Physician Assistant" in Ontario. For more information regarding these changes, visit CPSO's [webpage on the regulation of PAs](#).

It is important to note, there is no change to the way PAs practice currently. At present, a PA's scope of practice reflects their supervising physician's scope of practice through delegation, and it is also determined by the PA's knowledge, skill and judgment. This means each PA's scope of practice will vary according to several factors, including the individual's education, training and experience. This will not change under the new regulations.

**CNO does not expect changes to nurses' practice with PAs**, as the delegation framework physicians use with PAs remains unchanged. The CPSO now can hold PAs accountable for quality assurance

requirements and professional misconduct, and nurses, as well as employers should be aware of this change moving forward.

## Workforce Census Update

In February 2024, CNO launched its Workforce Census survey, and the first set of results are now available. The initial report describes the demographic, nursing practice and employment data from over 31,000 respondents. While CNO collects some demographic information from nurses upon initial registration and detailed employment information when they renew their registration each year, the census expands the scope of information collected to give a greater understanding of nurses in Ontario. You can find more information in the [Workforce Census report](#) now on our website.

## New Practice Resources

### RN Prescribing

The [RN Prescribing Medication List](#) has been added for RN prescribers and employers. For more information, visit our [webpage on RN prescribing](#).

### Discontinuing or Declining to Provide Care

The Discontinuing or Declining to Provide Care [webcast](#) is now available and offers an overview of the newest [practice standard](#). If you have a question about this standard and its application to practice, please get in touch with CNO's Practice Quality team by completing the [online form](#).

### New Ask Practice

CNO's Practice Support team receives questions about charging fees for service from nurses working in independent practice. New FAQs on [Fees](#) have been posted to help clarify nurses' accountabilities when setting and charging fees.

## Quality Assurance Program

On Sept. 23, nurses were 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](#). Please remind your nursing staff to keep their email and contact information current. More information about the QA Program, and what nurses are asked to do when selected, is available on our [Quality Assurance Assessment webpage](#). If you have any questions, please email CNO at [QAassessment@CNOMail.org](mailto:QAassessment@CNOMail.org) for added support.

## Council Elections and Committee Appointments

CNO is looking for nurses who want to learn and exercise leadership skills. There are two distinct opportunities available for nurses who want to make a difference: running for Council via an election or volunteering for a statutory committee appointment.

Both opportunities are available as of Oct. 9, and we have further details available on our [website](#). Council elections will be in only three specific electoral districts this year, while committee appointments are available province wide.

It's a wonderful opportunity for nurses looking to grow their careers and apply their skills and lived experiences to supporting nursing regulation in the public interest. We encourage you to share these opportunities with nurses in your organization.

### **Did You Know?**

CNO's Practice Quality team also supports employers with collaborative presentations about the Standards of Practice and applying them to your specific practice setting. Requests can be made through the [online form](#).

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions about this issue of *CNO News to Use* or nursing practice, please contact CNO's Practice Quality team by completing the [online form](#).