



# COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO'S Employer Reference Group

## CNO News to Use March 2023

### Regulatory changes

#### Proposed Expansion of Nursing Scope of Practice

The Ontario government is reviewing proposed changes under the *Nursing Act, 1991* to expand the scope of practice for all nurses (RPNs and RNs). The purpose is to increase the access to timely health care services for patients, as well as reduce barriers to patient care. If approved by government, these changes will:

- Allow RPNs, who have the competence, to independently initiate and perform specific controlled acts without an order. While nurses may have access to perform or initiate controlled acts, they may not be able to do so in certain practice settings without an order because of legislation or facility policies (e.g., hospital setting).
- Authorize RNs to prescribe medication and communicate diagnoses for the purpose of prescribing. RNs will require board-approved education to be authorized to prescribe. As part of our work to develop the regulation, CNO engaged in a rigorous process to identify the [competencies](#) required for RNs to perform these new controlled acts safely and effectively.

The Ministry of Health is also exploring the expansion of the scope of practice for NPs (e.g., order and apply defibrillation, certify death, order and apply electrocardiograms in all situations, order non-invasive electroencephalograms, order nuclear medicine procedures). If government approves the regulations, CNO will communicate the changes and nurses' professional accountabilities. For more information see [FAQs: Expanding RPN scope of practice and Journey to RN prescribing](#)

#### 'As of Right' Legislation

On Jan. 19, 2023, the Ontario government announced it will introduce new [legislation](#) that, if passed, will allow Canadian health care workers already registered or licensed in another Canadian jurisdiction to practice in Ontario. CNO is continuing to monitor and work with the province to better understand how this would be implemented. In the meantime, we continue to require nurses from outside Ontario to register with CNO if providing care to patients in Ontario.

#### Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)

On Feb. 2, 2023, the Government of Canada introduced legislation to extend the temporary exclusion of eligibility for MAID where a person's sole medical condition is a mental illness

until March 17, 2024 (a one-year extension). They noted this proposed delay will allow more time for the dissemination and uptake of key resources under development (i.e., MAID practice standards and the Canadian MAID Curriculum) by the medical and nursing communities. See the Government of Canada's [news release](#) for further information.

### **Bill 106 (The Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness Act)**

In April 2022, the Ontario government passed Bill 106 (the *Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness Act*) which resulted in changes to the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA). The changes to the RHPA relates to registration and includes new regulation-making powers:

- prohibiting regulatory bodies from requiring Canadian experience as a qualification for registration (which isn't something that CNO requires)
- accepting four new language proficiency tests that are approved under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (two in English, two in French) – in addition to other options to demonstrate language proficiency. CNO already accepts two of these tests, meaning that two new language proficiency tests will be added once benchmarking for acceptable scores are complete.
- having specific registration timelines. Under this regulation, CNO is required to acknowledge registration submissions from applicants within 15 days, such as confirming that we have received an application, or that we need outstanding information. Once the application is complete, CNO has 30 days to grant a certificate of registration or to refer the applicant to the Registration Committee.
- creating an Emergency Class with specific expectations for regulatory requirements such as the circumstances that would cause the class to open – CNO already has a comparable class and is proposing reg changes to align with new government expectations.

In order to fulfill our mandate to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practice, CNO is seeking [feedback](#) on proposed changes to regulations under the *Nursing Act, 1991* that amends the registration requirements of the Emergency Class.

## **Standards modernization update**

### **Code of Conduct**

In December 2022, CNO Council approved the modernized [Code of Conduct](#) to reflect the evolving health care needs of clients and the dynamic nature of the nursing profession. The Code will take effect **June 5, 2023**, to allow the system time to prepare for the change. CNO is currently developing resources to support the application of the Code in practice. Please stay tuned to [cno.org](http://cno.org) for additional resources on the Code of Conduct.

The modernized Code has resulted in duplication of content across multiple practice standards. After a review of all CNO practice standards against the new Code and to meet the objectives of modernizing standards, CNO is proposing the retirement of [Professional Standards](#) and [Ethics](#) and a decision will be made by CNO Council in June. In the meantime, we will be seeking feedback on the development of resources and educational tools to support nurses and employers with this change, if approved.

## Scope of Practice Standard

As part of the Standards Modernization project, CNO is developing a new practice standard focused on the legislated scope of nursing practice. With the proposed regulatory changes to expand nursing scope of practice, such as RPN initiation and RN prescribing, this work is being prioritized to reflect these system changes and support safe nursing practice in Ontario. Moving ahead with the development of this standard will ensure readiness when the scope of practice changes come into effect.

Consistent with the overarching principles of the [Standards Modernization project](#), CNO will be reviewing existing standards, guidelines, and resources to reduce duplication and align with the objectives of a modern standard: accessible, relevant, and defensible. As part of this work, relevant content will be integrated from existing standards and guidelines, such as [Decisions about Procedures and Authority](#) standard, [Authorizing Mechanisms](#) guideline, and [RN and RPN Practice: The Client, the Nurse and the Environment](#) guideline. CNO will gather feedback from nurses and stakeholders on the draft standard through a public survey in April. CNO will bring a draft of the new standard for Council approval in June 2023.

## Practice resource updates

### Understanding Scope of Practice and Your Nursing Accountabilities

This [Ask Practice](#) web resource has been updated to assist nurses in understanding their accountabilities when determining whether a procedure or activity is within their scope of practice. This resource walks through details regarding legislative scope of practice (based on the *Nursing Act & Regulated Health Professions Act*), and considerations from employer and practice setting as well as individual competence (knowledge, skill and judgement).

## Ontario Coroner releases new Resident Death Notice reporting tool

The Office of the Chief Coroner (OCC) has changed the electronic death reporting tool for Long Term Care Homes (LTCH). On March 13, 2023, the Resident Death Notice (RDN) will replace the Institutional Patient Death Record in LTCH. The new RDN tool will be available on the [Ontario Central Forms Repository](#). Further information about accessing and completing the RDN, including education modules, will be shared before the March 13, 2023 start date through the OCC. For support on how to complete the form, please visit [OCC link](#)

## Entry-to-Practice update

### New Registrations Record

As of March 2023, the total number of nurses CNO registered in Ontario reached 180,966 — an increase of 3.0% since this time last year. This number includes 12,283 registrations newly available to the health care system. Of these new registrations, 7,021 are international registrations across all nursing categories. To keep up to date on nursing registrations in Ontario, visit [registrations at a glance](#) and [applicant statistics](#). Also, CNO has two new reports available on [cno.org](#) that focus on the number of nurses entering and leaving the health care system, and the employment patterns of new nurses.

## Temporary Class

Temporary Class registrants are permitted to practice nursing (with terms, conditions and limitations) while completing their registration requirements for the General Class.

Applicants applying for a Temporary Class Certificate of Registration must have an offer of employment from an approved organization in Ontario. CNO accepts offers of employment from the following organizations described in Schedule 1 (Ontario Regulation 275/94) of the Nursing Act, 1991. For further information please review our [information for employers](#).

## Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs)

IENs applying to CNO may need further education to meet their learning needs and meet safe nursing practice in Ontario. CNO's [Temporary Class Learning Module](#) provides an overview of nursing regulation in Ontario. It is designed to help applicants better understand the legal and ethical issues, and the professional accountabilities of the nursing profession. Some IEN applicants may be required to complete competency-based gap-filler programs and courses. These programs and courses offer an efficient path towards meeting CNO's Education Requirement. Visit our [website](#) for a complete list of courses.

## Quality Assurance Program

CNO is updating its Quality Assurance (QA) Program to support greater relevance to everyday nursing practice and increase the reach of the program. This includes implementing a new, more user-friendly technology platform and process improvements to better support nurses going through the QA Assessment. Informed by feedback from nurses, we will continue building our supportive approach to QA and further promote CNO's Standards of Practice and peer coaching. More details about the changes to the QA Program will be provided over the next few months.

You can find our QA resources and access our Learning Plan template on [CNO's QA webpage](#). If you have questions about the QA Program, please email us at [QAassessment@CNOmail.org](mailto:QAassessment@CNOmail.org) and we'll be happy to support you.

## Annual Member Renewal Deadline

The deadline for annual member renewal has passed. Nurses who did not renew their membership for 2023 were placed in an administrative suspension on February 16 and are not entitled to practise while suspended.

The [Nurse Renewal Check](#) service is an easy way for employers to confirm if a nurse has renewed their registration and remains entitled to practise. It is ideal for organizations that employ many nurses and is offered free by CNO in 2023. You can also check [Find A Nurse](#) (FAN) which displays members who are not entitled to practise for not having renewed their registration.

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