



Building the Future

Annual Report 2023

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Building the Future: 2023 Annual Report

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College of Nurses of Ontario
101 Davenport Road, Toronto ON Canada M5R 3P1

Web cno.org
Email cno@cnomail.org
Tel 416 928-0900
Fax 416 928-6507

Toll-free in Canada
1 800 387-5526

Photography
Patricia Sullivan and Silvie Crawford: Alaa Taher
Joice Matthew: Joice Matthew
Janet Montague: Creative Currency

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We are CNO

We are the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) and we protect the public by promoting safe nursing practice.



What do we do?

- **We set the requirements** for becoming a nurse in Ontario.
- **We inform** nurses of their accountabilities and tell you what you can expect from nurses.
- **We respond** to your concerns about nurses' conduct, competence and health.
- **We ensure** nurses engage in continuous quality improvement throughout their careers.

Nurses registered in 2023



188,461

total number of nurses*

122,007

Registered Nurses (RNs)



59,975

Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs)



5,038

Nurse Practitioners (NPs)



1,441

dual registrants (RN and RPN)



*As of December 31, 2023.



President's message

It is an honour to deliver the 2023 Annual Report commemorating 60 years of regulatory leadership on behalf of CNO's Council.

As both Council President and a Registered Nurse, I understand CNO's vital role in protecting the public through safe nursing practice. Regulating nursing practice is essential, and our ongoing vigilance ensures the safest care for patients.

Meeting that mandate requires Council to determine the overall direction for nursing regulation and affirm nursing accountabilities to respond to the health care system needs.

In 2023, Council supported those accountabilities and needs in several ways. We approved a new *Code of Conduct* standard, *Scope of Practice* standard, education program and a standard for RN prescribing initiatives. These regulatory decisions helped provide CNO with the guidance and approval to make significant progress in achieving key goals outlined in its 2021–26 strategic plan.

Furthermore, Council evaluation feedback was used to enhance governance effectiveness by refining strategic focus and oversight, optimizing data utilization for decision-making, fostering increased engagement from the Council, and actively promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.

I am very proud of CNO's many accomplishments in 2023 and the exceptional efforts made by staff and Council to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practices.

Rooted in a 60-year tradition of diligence, Council pledges to maintain this momentum. It is my privilege and profound responsibility to uphold patient safety in every decision we make. ◀

Patricia Sullivan, RN, BScN, MPA, PMP
Council President (June 2023–Present)

Find out more

- **Find more about your Council:** cno.org/council
- **Read about CNO's committees:** cno.org/committees
- **Find discipline decisions:** [Find a Nurse](#) and cno.org



Registrar/Executive Director and CEO's message

It is humbling and fulfilling to be part of CNO's tradition of regulatory excellence. For 60 years, CNO has protected the public by promoting and upholding safe patient care. As a nurse, it is my privilege to maintain and strengthen this mandate and share that work with you in this year's annual report.

Public safety is a collective responsibility and collaboration remained a priority in 2023. We worked together with health care system partners like the Ministry of Health, associations, nursing schools and many more to advance our goals. This included improving the applicant experience, advancing safe practice and sharing our knowledge, data and insights. The work we do is improved by meaningful consultation and adding the perspectives of many people.

We did so in many ways in 2023, which you can read about in more detail in this report. The Supervised Practice Experience Partnership (SPEP), an initiative in collaboration with Ontario Health and CNO-approved organizations, continues to support thousands of applicants on their journey to become nurses with the knowledge, skill and judgment to practice safely. We consulted with nurses on items like updating the *Code of Conduct*, expanding the scope of practice for RNs and RPNs and making the Jurisprudence Exam more flexible. Through various events, we hosted the Minister of Health, Canada's Chief Nursing Officer, a landmark roundtable to discuss education regulation and reached out to nurses and employers at conferences throughout the year.

All of this work is aligned with our strategic plan, which is our roadmap to achieving our goals to protect and promote patient safety. It enshrines principles that guide both our daily work and larger goals and informs how we learn from and share with our system partners. They are principles in keeping with the proud tradition we have built on over 60 years at CNO.

I am excited to share our accomplishments from our 60th year in this report. I am also committed to continue collaborating with the public, nurses, the Ministry of Health and other health system partners to build on this success.

Patient safety requires ongoing vigilance, dedication and progress, and I am proud to work towards this purpose every day. ◀

With thanks,

**Silvie Crawford, RN, BHScN, LLM - Health Law,
Registrar/Executive Director and CEO**

Celebrating 60 years of public safety and nursing excellence

Established in 1963, CNO has evolved significantly, yet our core purpose to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practices has never wavered. As a regulatory authority, we consistently engage with our partners to adapt to the health care sector's evolving needs, ensuring the safety of those we serve.

Our strategic plan is our roadmap, outlining four pivotal areas that influence nursing care on a broader scale, while upholding the values of diversity, inclusion, fairness and accessibility. We strive to

- inform our decisions with essential information and **insights**
- anticipate and proactively adapt to new challenges and requirements with **agility**
- **proactively** carry out preventive actions to avoid potential risks
- collaborate effectively with diverse **partners** in the health care system

In 2023, we focused on refining our application processes and ensuring that nurses were well-versed in and applied CNO's standards for safe practice. We also strengthened our role as a trusted partner, grounding our initiatives in solid data and evidence. ◀



Improving the applicant experience

Over the past five years, CNO has taken significant steps to enhance the application experience. Our commitment to fairness, inclusivity, effectiveness and efficiency has supported a notable increase in the number of nurses joining Ontario's health workforce. Key milestones in 2023 include

- **interprovincial collaboration:** Simplification of the registration process for Canadian nurses has promoted interprovincial mobility, resulting in 672 nurses from other jurisdictions registering in Ontario.
- **Jurisprudence Exam accessibility:** The introduction of a flexible Jurisprudence Exam schedule allows applicants to take the exam at their convenience throughout the year.
- **support for international nurses:** Amendments to the Temporary Class registration have enabled 325 internationally-educated nurses (IENs) to complete their registration process in 2023.
- **supervised practice success:** The Supervised Practice Experience Program (SPEP) continues to be a resounding success, with 2,829 nurses completing the program and obtaining their registration since January 2022.

"I thought that if I do the SPEP program, I can learn more since everything is different than in India – the computer system, documentation, everything. I know how it works now in Canada and my responsibilities. I have more confidence. It was a wonderful experience for me."

Joice Matthew, RN



As we move forward, CNO remains focused on refining our assessment processes and evolving with the health care landscape. Upcoming initiatives include revising educational requirements for registration to align with health human resource demands, while maintaining the high standard of safe and competent nursing care. ◀



THEN: In the 1960s, nursing was divided into two categories: Registered Nurses and Registered Nursing Assistants.

NOW: Nursing roles and education have evolved significantly, leading to the current system with more defined classes and scopes of practice. These categories and classes help organize the nursing profession to ensure that nurses have the appropriate qualifications for their roles: Two categories (RNs and RPNs) and six classes of registration (General, Extended, Non-Practising, Temporary, Special Assignment and Emergency).

Advancing safe practice: Our commitment to nursing standards

In 2023, CNO, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, expanded the scope of practice for RNs and RPNs. This initiative aimed to enhance health care accessibility and reduce system strain, with comprehensive public, nurse and health system partner consultations ensuring public-centric regulation development.

New practice standards and guidelines

To facilitate the integration of these new regulations, we bolstered our support for nurses through the development and revision of various tools and resources:

- **Code of Conduct:** We updated the central practice standard, incorporating a new principle dedicated to inclusive and culturally safe care.
- **Scope of Practice:** A new standard has been established to guide nurses in determining which activities they can perform safely and competently.
- **Prescriptive Authority:** We introduced a standard and approved educational programs for RNs to prescribe certain medications and communicate related diagnoses.



Our commitment to clarity and practical application of these standards is reflected in our direct-level support, such as webinars and in-person presentations, combined with online learning resources.

CNO is continuously updating other practice standards to align with the current practice environment, ensuring relevance across all nursing settings.

...current demands of the health care system, to incorporate reforms, to extend the structure and procedures of the Health Disciplines Act to other professions and groups, and to settle outstanding issues between professions. This



THEN: In 1976, CNO became the first nursing regulator in Canada to establish practice standards for nurses. *Pictured: Members of the Task Force on the Revision of Standards featured in the publication A History of the College of Nurses of Ontario (left photo).*

NOW: CNO continues to modernize standards and guidelines. We currently have eight standards and nine guidelines to support nursing practice and patient safety. *Pictured: cno.org/standards (right photo).*

Quality Assurance (QA) Program enhancements

Each year, CNO continues to evolve our QA program, which is an accountability of all nurses to reflect on their practice and contributes to the goal of safe care provision. In 2023, we launched a new online platform for a more streamlined assessment process and more efficient engagement for nurses completing their annual QA obligations.

Throughout the process, nurses are supported by comprehensive resources to ensure their success. This includes access to a broad range of expertise, including making it easier to use the QA learning management system, alongside guidance and support from Peer Coaches and CNO staff.

“Peer coaches can assist in helping nurses set specific, achievable goals that can help boost the nurses’ confidence by offering reassurance and guidance. Knowing that a colleague supports them can help nurses approach assessments with greater self-assurance, which might reduce stress.”

Janet Montague, RN, QA Peer Coach



Regulatory balance for public safety

As a regulatory body, we maintain a balanced approach between remediation and discipline to uphold nursing standards, ensuring fairness and accountability. In 2023, 76% of investigations into misconduct and/or incompetence led to remedial outcomes, emphasizing our focus on improvement and integration of practice standards. ◀

Being recognized as a trusted partner

CNO has solidified our role as a trusted collaborator within the provincial and Canadian health care landscape through proactive engagement, strategic partnerships and a commitment to transparency. Our shared expertise and resources have been pivotal in addressing challenges and enhancing patient safety.

Fostering collaborative relationships

CNO has hosted pivotal events, uniting health system partners to further nursing regulation and public protection.

A landmark roundtable convened 18 Canadian regulators and distinguished guests, including Dr. Leigh Chapman, Chief Nursing Officer of Canada; Allison Henry, Director, Health Workforce Regulatory Oversight at the Ontario Ministry of Health and Dr. Nancy Spector, Director of Regulatory Innovations at the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) in the U.S., fostering a dialogue on nursing education regulation and establishing a framework for ongoing collaboration.



CNO also hosted Health Minister Sylvia Jones for a significant announcement about RN prescribing.

Promoting safety through connection

As a regulator working in the public interest, enhancing our visibility through various channels and connecting with our partners helps to increase trust in CNO.

We expanded our social media presence to over 94,000 followers, allowing us to directly connect with key partners online. We also began streaming our Council meetings on LinkedIn, besides our other streaming options, offering greater access and enhancing transparency in the organization.

Our media engagements in 2023 elevated our presence, establishing us as a trusted authority on nursing data. Numerous reports and findings produced by CNO, including those highlighting the renewal and employment statistics of nurses and the registration of IENs in Ontario, have informed and shaped key narratives in today's media discussions.

“Nurse regulators play a critical and unique role in each province and territory in Canada. By connecting with other regulators and drawing on CNO's knowledge, I aim to collaborate with regulators to enhance patient safety across the country.”

Dr. Leigh Chapman, Chief Nursing Officer of Canada

Active participation in health care and regulatory conferences enabled us to exchange knowledge and collaborate effectively with nurses, employers and partners. Through presentations on new regulations and standards and direct one-on-one discussions at expo booths, CNO staff members attended multiple conferences, such as the International Council of Nurses, AdvantAge Ontario, Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation, Canadian Network of Agencies of Regulation and nursing associations' annual general meetings. Through these interactions, we reinforced our dedication to regulatory excellence and public safety.



THEN: CNO celebrates its 25th anniversary in 1988. *Pictured: David Suzuki (top left).*

NOW: CNO hosts many notable guests and events. *Pictured: Dr. Leigh Chapman (top right), Dr. Nancy Spector (bottom left) and the Honourable Sylvia Jones (bottom right).*

CNO's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2022-2025

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are part of our core values; they define our identity and are essential to our mission. We believe that fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace is a collective endeavour that enhances our commitment to protecting the public through the promotion of safe, fair and inclusive nursing practices.

In the second phase of our multi-year DEI initiative, we deepened our investment in essential processes and leveraged insights from the Employee Experience Survey to meet our organizational needs. This included appointing a DEI director at the leadership level to champion these values. Notably, we updated our recruitment strategies to attract a broader spectrum of candidates and ensure equitable

hiring practices, while enhancing the job applicant experience. Moreover, we updated our Learning and Development policy to support a variety of learning preferences and broaden educational opportunities for all staff members. ◀

“This is an exciting time, our DEI approach will transform and expand our focus to influence system change and support our purpose to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practice.”

Silvie Crawford, RN, BHScN, LLM - Health Law, Registrar/Executive Director and CEO

Empowering decisions with nursing data

CNO is recognized as the authoritative provincial source for extensive nursing employment and registration data. Our dedication lies in harnessing this data to empower ourselves and our system partners, facilitating decisions that have a profound impact.

Innovative data access

This past year marked the launch of the Nursing Data Dashboard, an innovative online tool that grants health care partners and the public access to a wealth of interactive nursing data, including registration details, demographic statistics and employment trends.

Engagement and insight

Our commitment to community engagement through consultations and surveys has provided valuable insights. In 2023, we engaged in 17 such initiatives, garnering nearly 16,000 responses on critical topics, such as RN prescribing, educational regulations and registration renewal fees. These insights are crucial to informing our evidence-based initiatives, with the goals of public protection and the enhancement of nursing standards.

At the close of 2023, we were deeply engaged in launching our inaugural Workforce Census, a concerted effort to understand the systemic issues nurses face and to evaluate findings from



our partner trust and awareness survey. In 2024, we are excited to reveal insights from both and to begin work on our applicant experience model. We will also conduct evaluations of key initiatives, such as SPEP and updates to Temporary Class and reinstatement regulations. Additionally in 2024, we look forward to sharing some significant milestones from the Nursys program, which connects Canadian and U.S. systems, allowing nurses registered in both countries to be identified by a shared unique identifier and enabling cross-border registration and discipline information searches by regulators. ◀

Continuing to build

Since its inception in 1963, CNO has been at the forefront of health care regulation evolution. Our solid foundation positions us to tackle new challenges, seize opportunities and create effective strategies to ensure the continued safety of the public. As we continue to build on our 60-year legacy, we remain committed to advancing public safety and the quality of nursing. ◀

Summary Financial Statements



COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2023

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario

Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023, and the summary statement of operations for the year then ended, and related note, are derived from the audited financial statements of the College of Nurses of Ontario (the "College") for the year ended December 31, 2023.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with the criteria described in the note to the summary financial statements.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the College and the auditor's report thereon.

The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated June 6, 2024.

Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the note to the summary financial statements.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.



Toronto, Ontario
June 6, 2024

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO

Summary Statement of Financial Position

December 31	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	61,639,519	60,754,331
Investments	33,749,551	21,266,239
Amounts receivable	393,552	131,138
Prepaid expenses	1,505,523	1,175,257
	97,288,145	83,326,965
Investments	12,577,848	15,019,079
Capital assets	12,043,856	12,960,269
Intangible assets	292,897	195,975
	24,914,601	28,175,323
	122,202,746	111,502,288
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	14,644,486	14,329,239
Deferred registration fees	60,532,814	46,385,841
	75,177,300	60,715,080
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital and intangible assets	12,336,753	13,156,244
Unrestricted	34,688,693	37,630,964
	47,025,446	50,787,208
	122,202,746	111,502,288

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO

Summary Statement of Operations

Year ended December 31	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenues		
Registration fees	56,467,954	53,558,680
Application, verification and transcript fees	6,762,140	5,591,090
Examinations	835,720	646,840
Investment income	2,800,468	1,166,070
Other	257,409	263,147
	67,123,691	61,225,827
Expenses		
Employee salaries and benefits	50,770,384	40,564,479
Consultants	7,264,430	6,892,689
Legal services	3,345,277	2,149,291
Equipment, operating supplies and other services	6,665,697	5,336,104
Taxes, utilities and amortization	1,971,046	1,902,794
Examination fees	231,597	216,014
Non-staff remuneration and expenses	637,022	550,665
	70,885,453	57,612,036
Excess of revenues over expenses (expenses over revenues) for year	(3,761,762)	3,613,791

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO

Note to Summary Financial Statements

December 31, 2023

1. **Basis of presentation**

These summary financial statements are derived from the audited financial statements of the College of Nurses of Ontario (the "College") for the year ended December 31, 2023, which were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Management prepared these summary financial statements using the following criteria:

- (a) the summary financial statements include a statement for each statement included in the audited financial statements, except for the statements of changes in net assets and cash flows;
- (b) information in the summary financial statements agrees with the related information in the audited financial statements; and
- (c) major subtotals, totals and comparative information from the audited financial statements are included.

The audited financial statements of the College are available to members upon request from the College.

HILBORN

LISTENERS. THINKERS. DOERS.



60 Years
of Nursing
Regulation

BUILDING THE FUTURE



COLLEGE OF NURSES
OF ONTARIO
ORDRE DES INFIRMIÈRES
ET INFIRMIERS DE L'ONTARIO



College of Nurses of Ontario

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