

INCLUSION FOR ALL: NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US.

DEI STRATEGY 2024-2027



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

THE STANDARD OF CARE.



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ISBN 978-1-77116-184-8

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Paintings in this document are from artist Mekayla Dionne.



CNO'S LAND OR TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CNO operates on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of many Indigenous communities across Ontario, which continue to be home to Indigenous Peoples.

CNO's office is in Toronto, on land that is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples.

We are honouring these lands as part of our deeper commitment to Indigenous communities in Ontario.

Diversity, equity and inclusion means how we do our work is as important as what we do. When putting together this document, CNO set out to work with diverse artists who are passionate about representing Equity-Deserving Groups, to ensure our design process is as diverse, inclusive and equitable as possible.

INTRODUCTION

The College of Nurses of Ontario's (CNO's) three-year Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy supports our public protection purpose by addressing bias and discrimination in regulatory processes, and helping advance equity in the broader health care system.

Our DEI journey isn't new. We have developed (and will continue to develop) our cultural awareness and fluency to review processes, policies and practices through a DEI lens and to implement changes that enable a DEI culture. As CNO progresses from the journey to a true trajectory, the DEI Strategy moves CNO beyond awareness and compliance, to a tactical and integrated approach of implementation.

We recognize CNO's DEI work needs to be dynamic and move forward with increased momentum. Our DEI Strategy shifts our focus from a journey of discovery to an organization-wide movement, advancing as a collaborative whole with clear objectives to achieve transformational change. This is underscored by four key actions:

Evolve

Educate

Engage

Evaluate

The title of CNO's DEI Strategy, *Inclusion for All: Nothing About Us, Without Us*, references a concept that has been around for hundreds of years, first as the Latin phrase, "Nihil de nobis, sine nobis." It became a motto for people who wanted a say in how they were governed.

The title of our DEI Strategy links back to CNO's guiding principles, which include our commitment to broadly consult and create diverse, equitable and inclusive spaces for all.

At CNO our strategy is rooted in the principle of **broadly consulting**. We honour the example from the Disability community; the principle of full participation applies to all DEI activities. In an inclusive world, we rely deeply on lived experiences.

Our DEI Strategy is supported by an annual work plan. This plan will ensure we apply an effective equity and anti-racist lens to organizational processes, operations, communications and interactions. Reducing risk and potential harm to the public remains a key goal. We will also reinforce our thought leadership as a bridge to improved health outcomes well beyond 2027.



Our purpose is to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practice.

As Ontario's nursing regulator, CNO recognizes our social contract with all Ontarians. **CNO's DEI Strategy** will make health equity a priority by:

- seeking to **understand the perspectives and experiences** of the public, applicants, registrants, CNO employees, external partners and CNO's Council and committees
- implementing **equitable and transparent** policies, practices and processes
- conducting all interactions with **respect and awareness of culture**

OUR APPROACH

CNO’s DEI Strategy is built on a foundation of broadly consulting. This means we reach out to all involved, as well as external interested parties, to understand and reflect the knowledge, perspectives and lived experiences of the internal and external partners who are affected by, and responsible for, the strategy.

We have customized the actions and tactics in our DEI Strategy to our work. The actions are also tailored to the specific constituencies and audiences we serve:

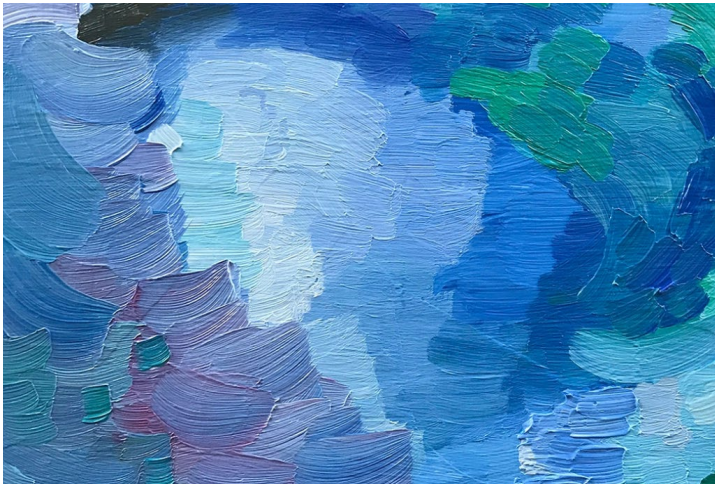


Photo credit: Amanda Soriano



Members of the public who experience health care



Registrants



Applicants



CNO Staff



CNO’s Council (or board) and committees



Relevant External Partners

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As Canada's largest health care regulator, we have a responsibility and an opportunity to bring greater value to our system partnerships, respond to societal changes and prevent harm from occurring. CNO's DEI Strategy is guided by principles that ensure we stay focused on the fundamental ideas and values that guide our DEI work. They support our commitment to broadly consult and create diverse, equitable inclusive spaces for our staff, the public, registrants, applicants, CNO Council members and relevant external partners to contribute and collaborate.

The DEI Strategy is grounded in our core values (innovation, integrity, collaboration and well-being), and informed by:



BROAD-MINDEDNESS

We openly consider new ways regulators can influence change, and how CNO can model inclusive practices as a trusted and effective organization.



STRENGTHS-BASED PLANNING

Our collaborative approach is rooted in leveraging what we are getting right, while adjusting our approach when needed.



EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

We use data from a wide range of sources to inform our decisions.



FORWARD-THINKING

We strategically identify themes, accountabilities and timelines to ensure our approach and actions are fit for the future.



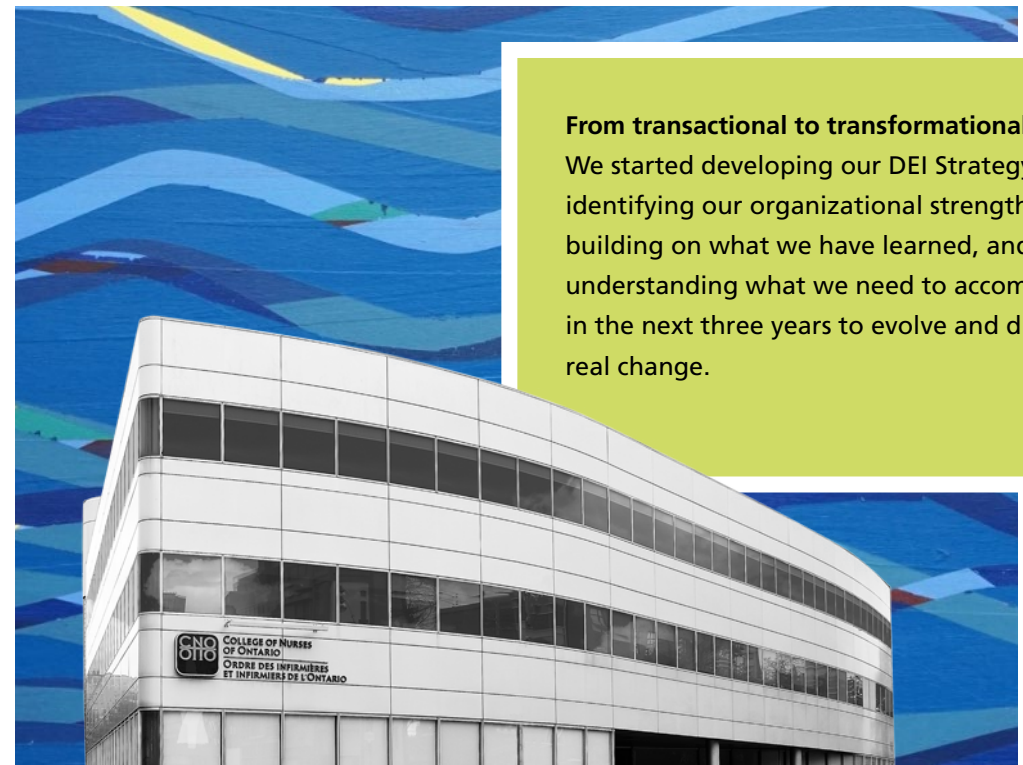
INTENTIONAL ACTION

We are ambitious, aspirational and focused on a clear trajectory that translates vision into action.



CNO will be:

- **fair and equitable**, and this will be the experience of those who interact with us
- **recognized as a leader**, consciously and deliberately modeling an equity lens in our core work
- **trusted**, benefitting from the public's perception of the regulator as approachable, effective and trustworthy
- **transparent, openly sharing successes and challenges** with partners and offering insights from our DEI trajectory
- **at the table**, hosting and participating in conversations about health services needs in underserved communities. This includes conversations for Indigenous Peoples, and promoting cultural safety and acceptance of Indigenous health and healing models, with a specific lens on the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada health care calls to action



“

This is an important opportunity for CNO to recognize the many ways our system partners' contributions, achievements and lived experiences enrich Ontario's health care system. We will continue to share data-driven insights, experiences and innovations in regulation. These not only enhance our organizational outcomes, but reflect the diverse nature of our communities' lived realities. This DEI Strategy is the blueprint for the type of meaningful action that creates equity, inclusion and societal transformation.

– Silvie Crawford, RN,
Registrar/Executive Director & CEO

”





Photo credit: Faiza Omer



Photo credit: Shelby Lisk | CIRA

The DEI Strategy will ensure CNO continues to evolve by:

- building on previous DEI and organizational work to focus on actions that deliver impact
- being agile, with the ability to respond to change informed by evidence, feedback and shifts in public expectations and the health care environment
- modeling a willingness to grow and broaden our perspectives
- continuing to review and update policies and processes based on the best available information and practices
- sharing insights with partners and interested parties to support system change
- identifying and addressing structural barriers to health equity to build public trust
- encouraging personal ownership and responsibility for DEI in our work and interactions

Enabling a culture of DEI is central to CNO's core values. It is an on-going organizational priority, with experienced leadership and dedicated employees united in our commitment to advance DEI.



Photo: CNO | Staff members cleaning up public spaces

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND FLUENCY

CNO completed two years of internally focused DEI work for employees to build cultural awareness and fluency. Getting our "own house" in order allowed our employees to be part of important, broader conversations about equity.



Photo credit: Amanda Soriano

COMMITMENT TO DEI EDUCATION

Education is a game changer when it comes to DEI. CNO's core values- innovation, integrity, collaboration, well-being- enable a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion supported by continuous learning.



Photo credit: Ally Gonzalo



Photo: CNO

Broadly consulting is our strength; internal and external engagement is a valued CNO practice. We regularly consult on important issues, such as regulation changes, applicant experience, employee experience and the perception of CNO through surveys, focus groups and listening sessions. Broadly consulting also informs this DEI Strategy.

INTERNAL

CNO's Leadership Team completed a Visioning Exercise and Tactics/Action workshop to help them "step into others' shoes" to consider alternative perspectives.



Photo credit: Alaa Taher

Council members participated in a facilitated discussion to identify actions for doing their work through an inclusion lens.

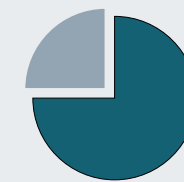


Photo credit: Alaa Taher

Employees were invited to participate in cross-functional team meetings focused on identifying recommendations for integrating DEI into our workplace and achieving our purpose.



Photo: CNO



80%

CNO employees attended a DEI session to provide input

WHAT WE HEARD

- Fairness, equity, transparency and the ability to be authentic at work, but also having a sense of agency, is paramount to a successful work culture.
- Our work will benefit by connecting and building trust with a wider and more diverse group of external partners.
- We should all expect to be heard, valued and play an active role in building a culture of belonging, to enhance CNO's reputation as a trusted and effective organization.

Photo: CNO | Hamlin Grange C.M. presents for Library's Speaker Series



Photo: CNO | Truth and Reconciliation Flag at CNO



The DEI Strategy supports continuous learning to broaden perspectives and support success by:

- seeking and valuing learned and lived experiences, with a focus on resiliency and perseverance
- continuing to identify and offer learning opportunities to develop our cultural fluency, and identify and address bias
- developing leaders to manage a diverse workforce and enable culture
- increasing awareness of societal barriers and changes that affect health care equity and regulation
- bringing subject matter experts, partners and interested parties together to learn from each other through knowledge and experience sharing



CNO's Council members and leaders will participate in an *Intercultural Development Assessment* to measure individual and group progression on the DEI continuum, and to inform development plans.

EXTERNAL

- CNO initiated valuable relationships and consulted with members of **Equity-Deserving Groups** to inform CNO's first Workforce Census of Ontario's nurses.
- We partnered with the **Black Nurses Task Force, Canadian Black Nurses Alliance** and **Pan-Canadian Association of Nurses of African Descent** to develop our first Workforce Census.
- We made important connections with new partners, including the **Indigenous Primary Health Care Council**.
- CNO applied a DEI lens when reaching out to **nurses in remote corners of Ontario** for diverse perspectives on regulation changes.
- CNO joined the **Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion** as an Employer Partner in 2024. Our membership provides CNO with access to CCDI's leading practices, knowledge database, workshops and webinars.
- We engaged with the **Health Professions Regulators of Ontario's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee** to share key learnings.

CNO uses a variety of consultation methods to engage with key partners, including finding out how they engage, then creating targeted engagement plans that meet their specific needs.

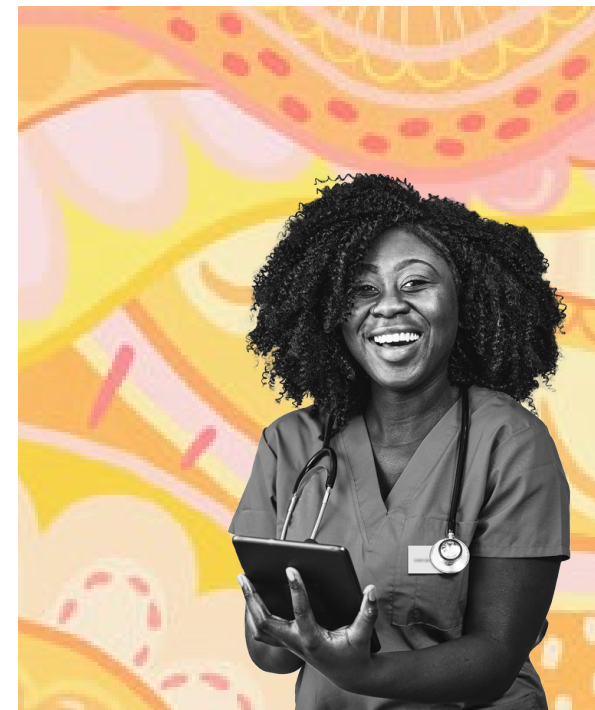


Photo: CNO | Staff members connecting and learning



The DEI Strategy identifies actions that span key areas of our operations and focus on internal and external audiences. Building trust and strong relationships with relevant system and community partners, and fully understanding the public's needs, will enable this strategy's success. CNO is committed to identifying and broadening our engagement with external partners so we can continue to learn and reflect on a broad range of lived experiences. This is just the beginning.

Actions include:

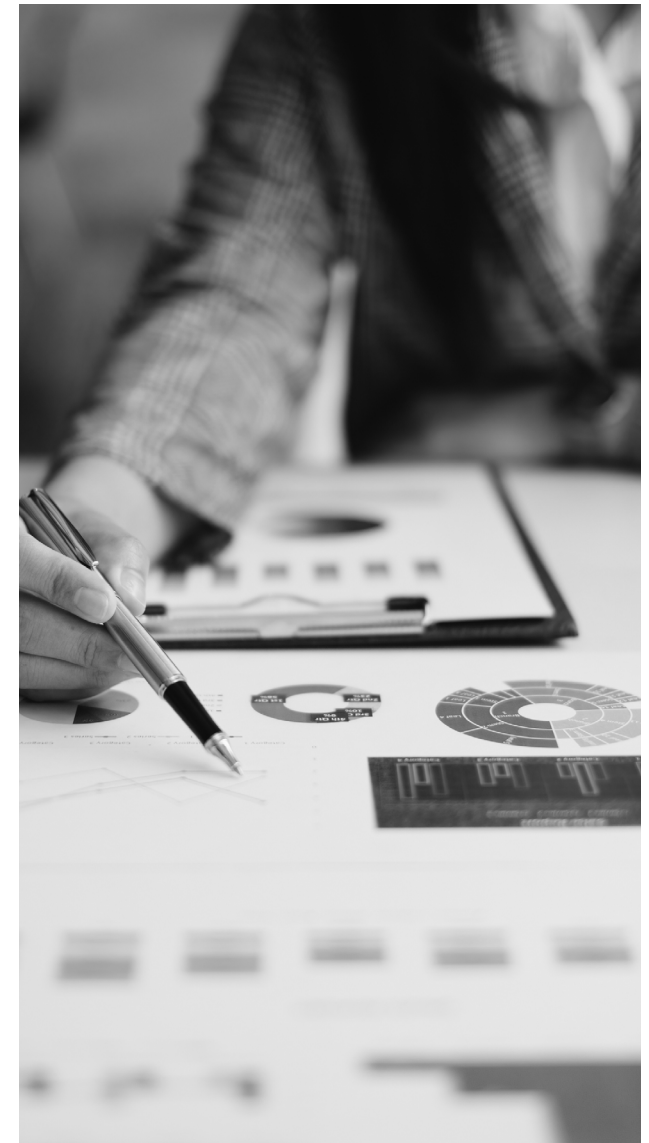
- committing to serve a variety of audiences—public, nurses and students, as well as CNO's employees, Council and committees
- engaging with those who experience health care, as well as with related and interested parties who share our commitment to DEI
- asking "Who is not at the table?" and "Which voices need to be heard?"
- ensuring we engage with external partners from Equity-Deserving Groups
- continuing to engage with employees to gain insights, feedback and input
- providing ongoing opportunities for employees to learn and support our engagement strategy in a psychologically safe way
- understanding how multiple audiences experience CNO and the role of compassionate regulation, to ensure our purpose and values remain core to the work

DATA AND METRICS MATTER

CNO has the most comprehensive information on nurses in the province. Data and metrics support our Strategic Plan to provide insights through a data-driven approach. Primary and secondary data informed the DEI Strategy.

Primary and secondary data informed the DEI Strategy including:

- a fulsome literature review offered important insights and examples
- results of the *DEI Best Practices Survey* provided a deep dive into the strategies of other regulators
- data from CNO's Workforce Census gave us a better understanding of the demographic composition and experiences of nurses in Ontario
- CNO's 2023 Measuring Trust and System Partner Awareness survey data improved our understanding of the ways the public, nurses and employers experience CNO
- CNO's annual Employee Experience Survey data increased our understanding of staff experiences



EVALUATE



The DEI Strategy is informed by many sources of data and supports an evidence-based approach for identifying actions, accountability and measuring progress. For transparency, we will share data insights to bring partners to the table, make it easy to have conversations and identify opportunities for greater collective impact.

To do this we will:

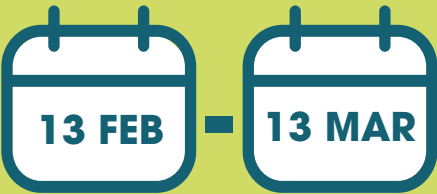
- identify relevant qualitative and quantitative data to collect and support monitoring and evaluation
- consider data we currently collect and new metrics we need to start tracking
- commit to measuring progress year over year, to ensure progression
- ensure each action is grounded in research and critical inquiry
- review or reconsider priorities based on evidence, and adjust as needed
- gather, analyze and interpret data, and disseminate the findings of each evaluation



In 2024, CNO launched the first-ever Workforce Census to approximately 200,000 nurses in Ontario. The results give us a baseline to identify gaps and measure progress for advancing policies that are more equitable and inclusive.

WORKFORCE CENSUS

DATA COLLECTION BETWEEN



2024

RESPONSE RATE



15.4%

of nurses who received an email participated

GENDER IDENTITY

91%

Woman

8%

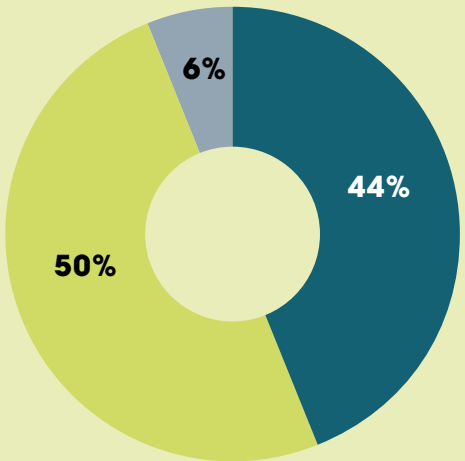
Man

<1%

Another gender

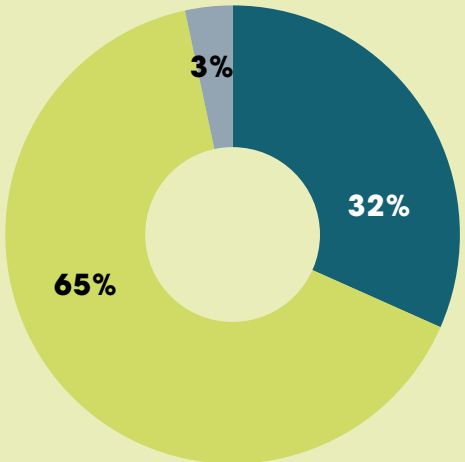
1% of respondents preferred not to answer

ALL SURVEY RESPONDENTS



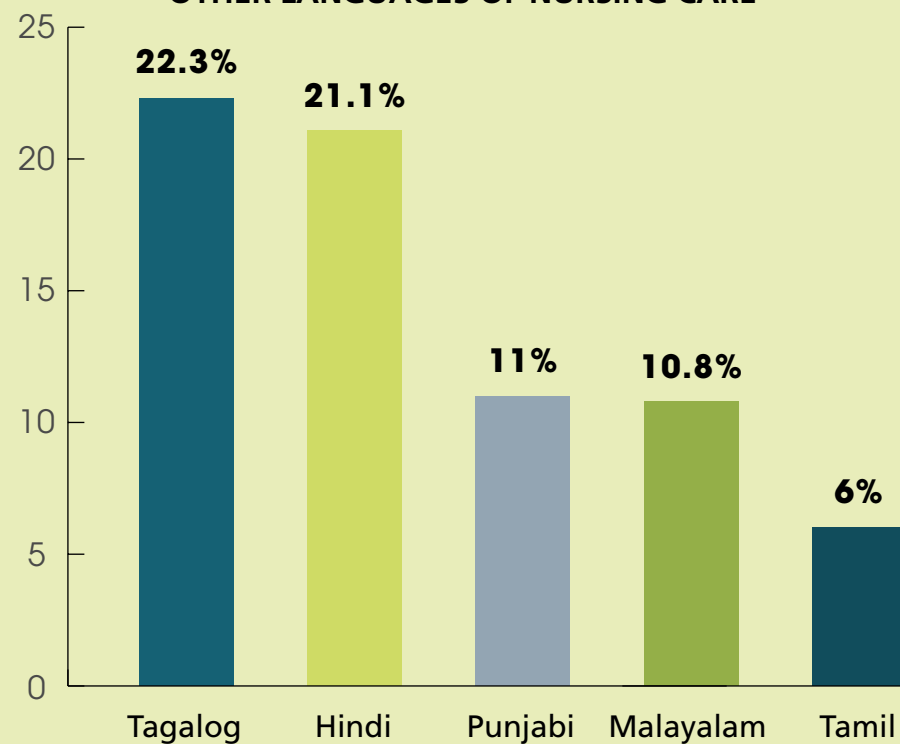
- Equity-deserving groups
- Other respondents
- No demographic data

RACE

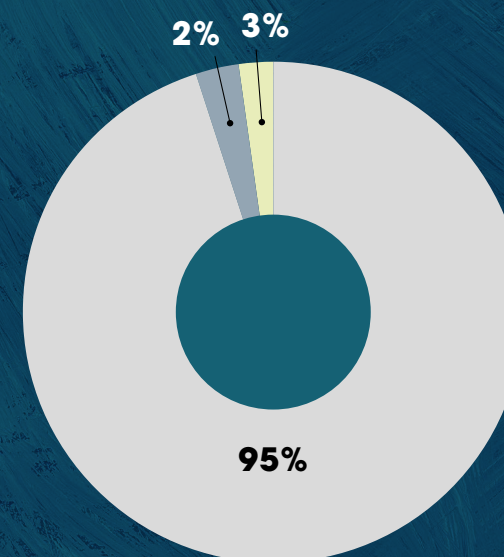


- White
- Racialized
- Prefer not to answer



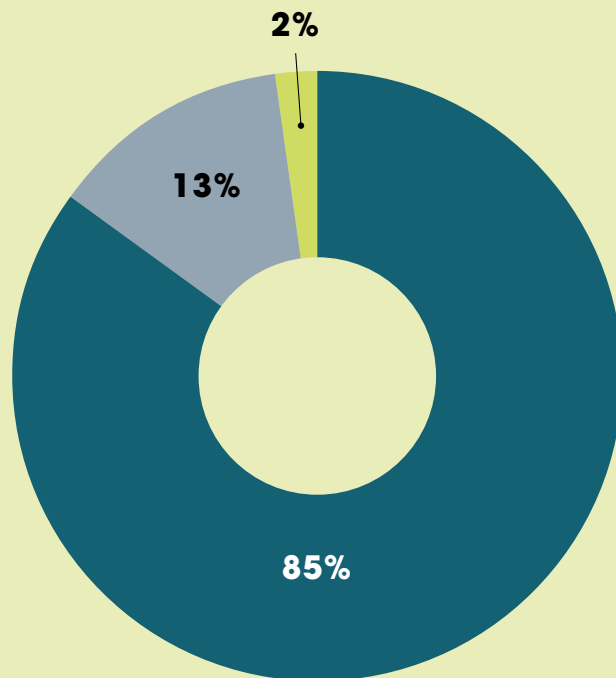
OTHER LANGUAGES OF NURSING CARE

23% of respondents can provide nursing care in another language other than English or French

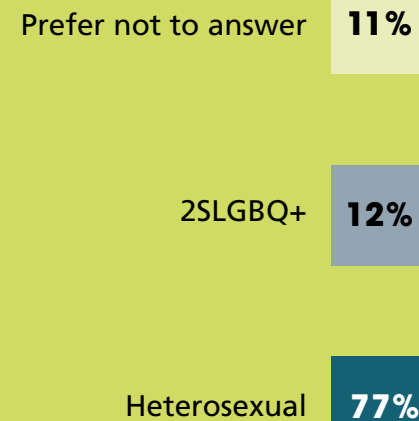
INDIGENOUS

Not Indigenous
First Nations, Inuit or Métis
Prefer not to answer



DISABILITY

- No
- Yes
- Prefer not to say

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

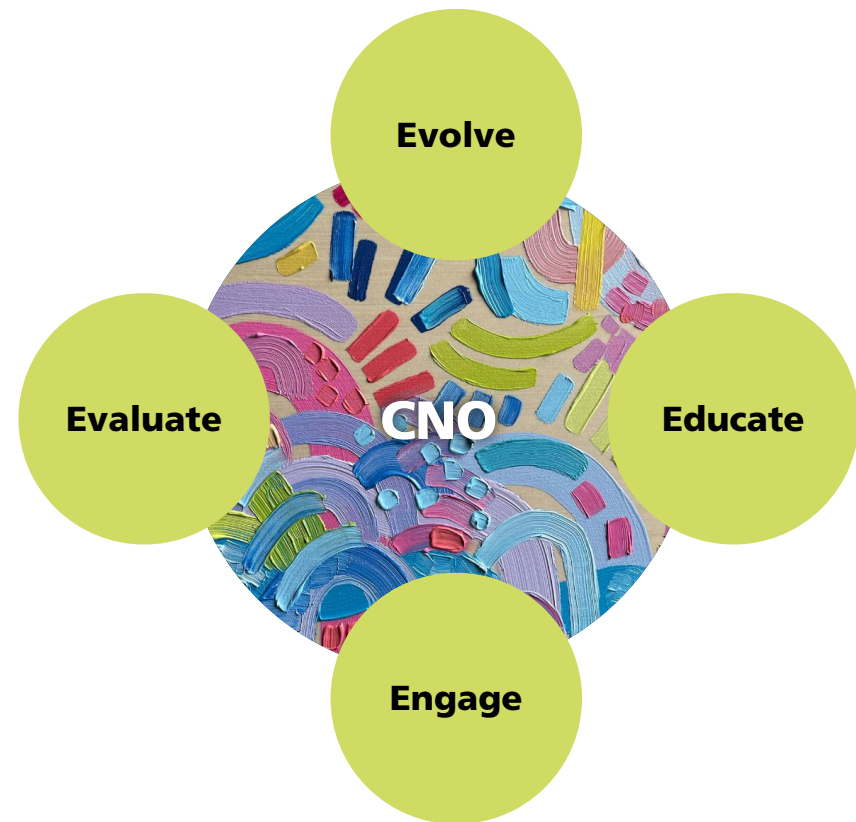
The largest segment of respondents at 6% was a 55-64, White, female, heterosexual, domestically educated, RN, reporting no disabilities



REALIZING THE DEI STRATEGY

The DEI Strategy charts a course for progress by focusing on representation, equitable policies and understanding the changing expectations of the public, to eliminate structural barriers and promote health equity.

Our annual work plan identifies actions by key audiences across CNO and commits to broadly consulting during the next three years to stay focused and relevant.





We will continue seeking to **understand the perspectives and experiences** of applicants, registrants, students, external partners and the public.



CNO will implement **equitable and transparent** policies, practices and processes.



We will continue conducting all interactions with **respect and awareness of culture**.

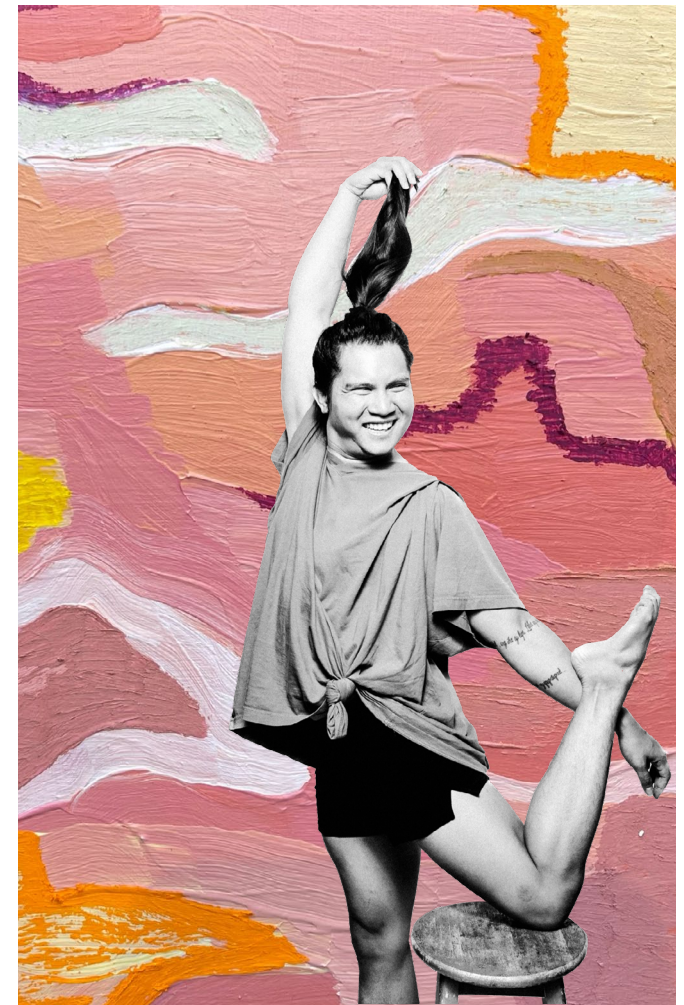


Photo credit: Ally Gonzalo



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