



## Are these examples of sexual abuse? **True or false?**

1

The nurse engages in a sexual relationship with a patient.

2

The nurse kisses the patient and tells the patient not to say anything about the incident.

3

The nurse leans over the bed of an unconscious patient and touches her breast.

4

The nurse takes the patient's hand and puts it between their legs.

5

The nurse says the patient is pretty in a sexually suggestive way.

6

The nurse looks at the patient's body and makes sexually suggestive comments.

7

The nurse becomes sexually intimate with a former patient one week after providing care.

8

The nurse secretly exchanges intimate texts with a patient.

**Sexual abuse by health professionals is defined more broadly than sexual assault under criminal law.**

The *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* defines sexual abuse as:

- Sexual intercourse or physical sexual relations between a nurse and patient
- Touching, of a sexual nature, of the patient by the nurse
- Behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by the nurse towards the patient

Health professionals are accountable for putting the needs of patients first. Safe patient care is the only goal of the nurse-patient relationship. It does not matter if the patient consents.

### **Who is a patient?**

An individual is considered to be a nurse's "patient" for a period of one year after the end of the professional nurse-patient relationship.

▶▶ **All are true!**

These CNO case examples meet the definition of sexual abuse. For more information on preventing sexual abuse, visit [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org).