



*Study of Registration Practices of the*

# **COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO, 2007**

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Office of the Fairness Commissioner

595 Bay Street, Suite 1201

Toronto ON M7A 2B4

Canada

416 325-9380 or 1 877 727-5365

[ofc@ontario.ca](mailto:ofc@ontario.ca)

[www.fairnesscommissioner.ca](http://www.fairnesscommissioner.ca)

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner is an arm's-length agency of the Ontario government, established under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006. Its mandate is to ensure that certain regulated professions have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

# CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction.....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. Background of the Regulatory Body.....</b>                         | <b>3</b>  |
| A. Legislation.....  | 3         |
| B. Protected Titles .....  | 3         |
| C. Definition of the Profession .....                                    | 4         |
| D. Labour Market/Economic Trends.....                                    | 4         |
| E. New Developments Within the Profession.....                           | 5         |
| F. Staffing .....  | 5         |
| <b>3. Registration Practices .....</b>                                   | <b>6</b>  |
| A. Registration Requirements and Application Process.....                | 6         |
| B. Documentation Required from Internationally Trained Individuals ..... | 8         |
| C. Credential Assessment (Third Party and/or Internal) .....             | 8         |
| D. Academic/Program Requirements .....                                   | 9         |
| E. Work Experience Requirements .....                                    | 10        |
| F. Examinations .....  | 11        |
| G. Language Requirements.....  | 11        |
| H. Fees.....   | 13        |
| I. Third Parties .....   | 14        |
| J. Typical Length of the Registration Process.....                       | 14        |
| K. Accredited Programs .....   | 15        |
| L. Internal Review/Appeal Process.....                                   | 17        |
| <b>4. Bridging Programs.....</b>   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>5. Mutual Recognition Agreements.....</b>                             | <b>20</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>6. Applicants' Interactions With Regulatory Body .....</b> | <b>20</b> |
| A. Nature and Frequency of Communication .....                | 20        |
| B. Backlogs .....   | 20        |
| C. Complaints Regarding the Registration Process .....        | 20        |
| <b>7. Changes Since the 2005 Survey .....</b>                 | <b>20</b> |
| <b>8. Registration Information and Statistics .....</b>       | <b>21</b> |
| <b>9. Sources .....</b>                                       | <b>26</b> |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) undertook a study of registration practices of Ontario’s regulated professions during the fall and winter of 2007–2008. The purpose of the study was to understand each regulated profession’s 2007 registration practices and to establish baseline data and information to enable the OFC to measure progress as it fulfills its mandate under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006.

This report reflects the registration practices of the College of Nurses of Ontario as of December 31, 2007. Information in this report was gathered from:

- face-to-face meetings with registration staff of the regulatory body
- additional documentation provided by the regulatory body
- relevant websites
- career maps for the profession posted on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration’s website (where applicable).

The College of Nurses of Ontario also provided registration information and statistics for 2005, 2006 and 2007 through a standard spreadsheet designed by the OFC.

An analysis and summary of the findings for all of the regulated professions is contained in the OFC’s *Ontario’s Regulated Professions: Report on the 2007 Study of Registration Practices*.

## 2. BACKGROUND OF THE REGULATORY BODY

### A. Legislation

The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) operates in accordance with the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 and the Nursing Act, 1991.

### B. Protected Titles

As the governing body for all registered nurses (RNs) and registered practical nurses (RPNs) in Ontario, the College of Nurses of Ontario has a mission to protect the public’s right to quality nursing services by providing leadership to the nursing profession in self-regulation. To use any of the protected titles (“nurse,” “nurse practitioner,” “registered nurse” and “registered practical nurse”) or perform controlled acts authorized to nursing in Ontario, a person must be a member of CNO and hold a valid certificate of registration.

## C. Definition of the Profession

According to the Nursing Act, 1991, “The practice of nursing is the promotion of health and the assessment of, the provision of care for, and the treatment of health conditions by supportive, preventive, therapeutic, palliative and rehabilitative means in order to attain or maintain optimal function.”

In Ontario, nursing is one profession with two categories of care providers — registered nurses (RNs) and registered practical nurses (RPNs). RPNs are known by various titles in different jurisdictions across North America. In most ways, the two categories are subject to the same regulatory requirements. The general standards of practice, the complaints and discipline process, and the registration process are all the same. The two main areas of difference between RNs and RPNs are educational preparation and limits of practice. Although all nursing students learn from the same basic body of nursing knowledge, RNs study it in greater depth and breadth over a longer period of time in clinical practice, decision-making, critical thinking, leadership, research and resource management and, accordingly, are able to provide care in more complex situations. RPNs study for a shorter period of time, resulting in a more focused body of knowledge in the same areas.

On January 1, 2005, the basic education requirements for registration as an RN or RPN changed. All new RN applicants require a baccalaureate degree from an approved Ontario nursing program or an equivalent. All new RPN applicants require a diploma from an approved Ontario practical nursing program or an equivalent.

## D. Labour Market/Economic Trends

There have been numerous changes in the health care system that continue to impact the supply of nurses and the demand for nursing care:

- Early retirement of nurses and an aging population have resulted in increased demand for nurses.
- Design changes in the health care system have resulted in a greater degree of services being rendered in the community setting. As a result, there is a need for nurses with a broad range of competencies to enable practice in a variety of environments including nursing homes, retirement homes and homes for the aged.
- Advances in science and technology continue to be integrated into nursing practice.
- Increased demand for acute care has expanded employment opportunities for nurses in specialty areas such as critical care, trauma, emergency, neonatology and the operating room.

- The Extended Class of registration is available to registered nurses who have successfully completed nurse practitioner education, and who meet all other registration requirements for that class. A nurse practitioner, or RN(EC), is a registered nurse with additional educational preparation and experience who possesses and demonstrates the competencies to autonomously diagnose, order and interpret diagnostic tests, prescribe pharmaceuticals and perform specific procedures within his or her legislated scope of practice. These skills allow nurse practitioners to work independently in their own practice or a variety of settings, including community health centres, hospitals, nursing homes or rural health centres. There is a demand for nurse practitioners especially in northern, rural and underserved areas in Ontario.
- Unlike RPNs in many other jurisdictions, RPNs in Ontario are independently accountable for their practice; at the same time, collaborative practice with other health care practitioners is expected.

## **E. New Developments Within the Profession**

There are four RN specialties in the Extended Class: NP-Primary Health Care, NP-Adult, NP-Paediatrics and NP-Anaesthesia. CNO obtained the authority to regulate the last three specialties listed above in August 2007; regulation of primary health care nurse practitioners was pre-existing.

The Health System Improvements Act, 2007 (Bill 171) has led to additional reporting obligations for nursing professionals. As of 2009, nurses will have the obligation to report negligence in civil proceedings. In addition, there are numerous other impacts from this legislation, such as changes to the process for handling incapacity reports and complaints, numerous procedural changes related to the reports and complaints processing and the powers of the Registrar, and prescribed content of member information on the register that it is to be available online.

## **F. Staffing**

The CNO staff consists of 178 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees including approximately 20 part-time staff. Of the 178 FTE employees, 28.5 are involved in the registration process. CNO does not have any volunteer staff. Members volunteer for consultations on practice and policy issues.

### 3. REGISTRATION PRACTICES

#### A. Registration Requirements and Application Process

**Definition of applicant.** An applicant is a person who submits an application form and pays the application fee to CNO.

##### i. Basic Requirements for Registration

The requirements for registration are the same for Canadian and internationally trained individuals. To practise as an RN or RPN, applicants must hold a current Certificate of Registration with CNO.

Applicants need to meet the following seven requirements in order to obtain a Certificate of Registration in the General Class:

- Complete an acceptable nursing or practical nursing program.
- Pass the national nursing registration examination.
- Provide evidence of safe nursing practice within the five years prior to registration.
- Provide evidence of fluency in written and spoken English or French.
- Demonstrate registration or eligibility for registration in the jurisdiction where the applicant completed the nursing program.
- Provide proof of Canadian Citizenship, permanent residency or authorization under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada) to engage in the practice of nursing.
- Demonstrate good character and suitability to practise, including a Canadian Criminal Record Synopsis. To meet this requirement, the applicant must supply information about:
  - whether the applicant’s nursing licence has ever been denied or encumbered
  - whether the applicant has been involved in proceedings regarding professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity
  - any criminal convictions
  - any physical or mental condition or illness that may affect the applicant’s ability to practise.

Applicants must complete a Declaration of Registration Requirements (Form A-5 in the application package). When applicants have met the seven requirements, they will be eligible for registration and can become members of the College of Nurses of Ontario, upon payment of initial registration fees.

##### ii. Classes of Registration

CNO has six classes of registration. Requirements for registration vary by class.

### ***General Class***

This is the most common class of registration held for a member's lifetime. An annual fee is required to maintain a current certificate of registration.

### ***Temporary Class***

Applicants who have met all of the registration requirements except successful completion of the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination (CRNE) or the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination (CPNRE) may be able to practise as registered members. An applicant who is eligible to write the exam, or is waiting for the exam results; who has evidence of recent safe practice for one year up to the date of application; and who has a written offer of employment may apply for temporary registration.

Temporary Class is a non-renewable registration granted for a six-month period and restricts practice to a specific employment setting. If the applicant fails the exam while holding Temporary Class registration, the certificate of registration will be revoked. Applicants are not eligible for Temporary Class registration if they have previously failed the registration examination. Once applicants pass the exam and have met all other requirements for registration, they are eligible for General Class registration.

### ***Special Assignment Class***

This is a short-term, non-renewable registration for individuals, usually from outside Canada, who have an appointment or assignment as an RN or RPN with an approved facility and who do not plan to stay in Ontario for more than one year. Individuals in this class can practise only within the scope of their appointment, and under defined terms, limits and conditions.

### ***Extended Class***

Only RNs who have obtained education in a university program for preparing registered nurses in the Extended Class and who have passed the Extended Class (EC) examination can join this class and use the title "nurse practitioner." RN(EC)s have an expanded scope of practice in the areas of assessment, diagnosis, prescription of tests and treatments, and health promotion.

### ***Retired Class***

The Retired Class is an option for Ontario nurses aged 65 or older who do not intend to practise nursing. This class allows members no longer in active practice to use the title "registered nurse (retired)" or "registered practical nurse (retired)." Nurses in this class cannot practise as a nurse in an employed or volunteer capacity.

### ***Transitional Class***

The Transitional Class allows members of other Canadian nursing regulatory bodies who have registered in their jurisdiction after January 1, 2005, who have applied to CNO after January 1, 2005, and who do not meet the current education requirements in Ontario to be registered and to work in Ontario for a limited period of time while pursuing further nursing studies to meet the current education requirement for entry to practice. Registered nurses have four years to complete the further studies to meet the current entry-to-practice requirement, and registered practical nurses have two years. The Transitional Class is not available to internationally educated nurses.

## **B. Documentation Required from Internationally Trained Individuals**

### **i. Standard Documentation**

Internationally trained nurses are required to have transcripts sent directly from the institution in which they completed a nursing program to CNO. Letters of reference must also be sent to CNO by previous employers as proof of recent safe nursing practice.

### **ii. Options for Applicants with Unavailable/Destroyed Documents**

When documents are not available, CNO will accept a statutory declaration. CNO maintains a database of international nursing credentials that it uses to verify the documentation presented.

## **C. Credential Assessment (Third Party and/or Internal)**

Applications are received by the customer service team of five people. The team documents receipt of the application and reviews it, with attached documentation, and processes the fee payment. Staff then create a physical file for the documents and send an acknowledgment to the applicant, along with a status report on what documents have been received to date and what documents are outstanding. Any documentation in a language other than English or French must be translated.

The file is then forwarded to the registration team, composed of seven registration assessors, three customer service associates, one coordinator, the Registration Committee administrator and one registration consultant. A registration assessor is assigned to the file and begins assessment of the educational program if information has been received. The assessment of other requirements such as practical experience and exams generally follows assessment of the education programs.

If the applicant's educational program is unique (not previously assessed by CNO) and was completed outside Canada, CNO contacts World Education Services (WES). WES assesses the education level equivalency. CNO absorbs the cost of the WES assessment. CNO then carries out a

paper-based content and competency assessment to determine if the nursing program is comparable to an Ontario nursing program.

If the assessor finds that the education requirement is met, the applicant is ready to apply for the exam. If the applicant does not meet the educational requirement based on the education program alone, the applicant is requested to provide any additional education and/or work experience information to CNO. If an applicant has additional education and/or work experience, the file is referred to a work group of expert nurses to review and make a recommendation on education equivalency. The file and the work group's opinion are sent to the Registration Committee for a decision among these options:

- register the applicant
- register with terms, limitations or conditions imposed on the certificate
- refuse the application
- refer back to staff for further information.

Alternatively, if the applicant has no other education or experience, the file is referred to the Registration Committee for a decision. All files referred to the Registration Committee are reviewed for two factors: to see if the applicant's basic program meets the education requirement, and if it does not, then to see if the applicant's nursing experience and additional education along with the basic nursing program are equivalent to the education requirement.

Since 2006, the Registration Committee has been able to use nursing experience to fill gaps in an applicant's nursing education program to determine equivalency. To date more than 150 applicants have gone through this process.

Individuals who assess credentials at CNO are provided with training, including workshops conducted by WES; in addition, some staff are members of the nursing profession. In-house training may take up to six months for new staff members before they work independently on education program assessments.

#### **D. Academic/Program Requirements**

To be registered with CNO, an applicant must have completed an acceptable nursing or practical nursing program (a four-year baccalaureate degree for registered nurses or a two-year practical nurse diploma program from a community college).

Internationally educated nurses may need to complete additional study to meet the program or practice requirements for registration. Bridging programs for internationally educated nurses are designed to help nurses who have completed their nursing education outside Canada meet registration requirements. In addition, some Ontario community colleges provide continuing education for nurses to update their nursing education if they have not practised for a number of years.

## **E. Work Experience Requirements**

In order for applicants' work experience to be accepted by CNO, the college requires verification of registration directly from the jurisdiction (province, territory or country) where applicants were originally registered as nurses, or are eligible to be registered, licensed or certified. CNO also requires verification of registration from any other jurisdictions where applicants have been, or still are, registered, licensed or certified as nurses.

If the applicant has not worked as a nurse, but he or she graduated from an approved RN or RPN program within the last five years, CNO will accept verification of program completion as proof of recent practice.

If the applicant has worked as a nurse outside Ontario, CNO will need proof of recent safe nursing practice: a reference from the most recent employer verifying that the applicant worked a minimum of 1,125 hours in nursing within the previous five years. Applicants should ask their employer to complete the Verification of Employment and Reference (B-4) form that is included in the application package. The employer must return the form to CNO.

The 1,125 hours of nursing practice does not have to be Canadian experience. In addition, this requirement is flexible, and applicants with less than 1,125 hours of nursing experience will be assessed individually by the Registration Committee.

If CNO receives verification that an applicant does not meet the recent safe practice requirement, the file will be referred to the Registration Committee.

If the applicant's demonstrated five years of safe nursing practice end before he or she passes the registration examination, the applicant may still attempt the exam but will be required to complete additional education before becoming registered.

An applicant who has not worked in nursing in the last five years and completed a nursing program more than five years ago will be required to complete additional education. The length of the study required is based on the number of years that the applicant has not practised.

## **F. Examinations**

All applicants must pass the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination (CRNE), the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination (CPNRE) or an acceptable equivalent to become registered in Ontario. Both the CRNE and the CPNRE are national, standardized exams, and applicants are allowed three attempts to pass, with no time limit. The Canadian Nurses Association develops and maintains the examinations through Assessment Strategies Inc. Both examinations are available in English and French. The exam providers offer a preparation guide, with approximately 100 sample questions, to applicants taking examinations.

The examination requirement is non-exemptible. Candidates are given up to three opportunities to write and pass the examination. However, the Registration Committee has the discretion under extenuating circumstances to nullify an examination attempt.

As of February 2008 and until February 2010, the Canadian CRNE will consist solely of approximately 300 multiple-choice questions. The CPNRE has 260 multiple-choice questions. Questions are designed to measure specific competencies required of entry-level registered nurses or registered practical nurses. The examination is divided into two books administered over the course of one day.

As of May 2008, the provincial exam for Nurse Practitioner (NP) Primary Health Care will become national, and an examination for each of the NP-Adult and NP-Paediatrics specialties will be implemented in early 2008.

## **G. Language Requirements**

Communication skills are important for nurses entering the workplace. There are several routes for applicants to take in order to demonstrate language fluency.

Applicants meet the language fluency requirement if they successfully complete a bridging or upgrading program in English or French. CNO will consider other courses and programs completed in English or French on a case-by-case basis. An official transcript of the course and course description should be submitted.

## English Fluency

Written fluency in English can be demonstrated by successfully completing one of the following:

- The computer-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with minimum scores of:
  - 203 overall (213 minus the standard error of measurement, or SEM, the estimate of how far off a score is from an examinee’s actual proficiency)
  - 19 in listening (21 minus the SEM)
  - 20 in structure/writing (22 minus the SEM)
  - 20 in reading (22 minus the SEM).
- The paper-based TOEFL with minimum scores of:
  - 537 overall (550 minus the SEM)
  - 53 in listening (55 minus the SEM)
  - 53 in structure/writing (55 minus the SEM)
  - 53 in reading (55 minus the SEM).
- The Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (iBT) with minimum scores of:
  - 74 overall
  - 14 in writing
  - 18 in listening
  - 19 in reading
  - 26 in speaking.
- The Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) with a minimum score of 75 (78 minus the SEM).
- The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum score of 6.5. The minimum scores required to demonstrate reasonable fluency in written English on the IELTS are 6.5 in listening, 6.5 in writing and 6.5 in reading.
- The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is accepted for demonstrating reasonable fluency in written English. The minimum scores required are 720 overall, 350 in listening and 350 in reading.
- The Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN). The minimum scores required are 9 in listening, 8 in reading and 7 in writing.

Spoken fluency in English can be demonstrated by successfully completing any one of the following:

- The Test of Spoken English (TSE) with a minimum score of 50.
- The MELAB speaking test with a minimum score of 3.
- The IELTS with a minimum score of 7. (The IELTS includes an integrated speaking test.)
- CELBAN with a minimum score of 8. (CELBAN includes an integrated speaking test.)

### French Fluency

Fluency in French can be demonstrated by successfully completing the Test de français international (TFI) with a minimum overall score of 750.

## H. Fees<sup>1</sup>

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### *Fees to complete registration process<sup>2</sup>*

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Assessment fee for Canadian applicant <sup>3</sup>                     | \$49.07                 |
| Assessment fee for international applicant                             | \$171.73                |
| Initial registration fee (to register with CNO)                        | \$171.73                |
| Canadian Registered Nurse Examinations (CRNE) <sup>4</sup>             | \$ 402.34 (per attempt) |
| Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination (CPNRE) <sup>5</sup> | \$210.98 (per attempt)  |

### *Nurse Practitioner (NP) Examination Fees*

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| NP-Primary Health Care Exam <sup>6</sup>      | \$1,155.00 (per attempt)  |
| NP-Adult and NP-Paediatrics Exam <sup>7</sup> | \$ 1,155.00 (per attempt) |

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<sup>1</sup> Fees are provided in Canadian dollars.

<sup>2</sup> These fees include all taxes and may change in the future.

<sup>3</sup> Graduates writing exams for the first time must pay the examination fee plus the assessment fee. The assessment fee varies according to whether the graduate is Canadian or international. The assessment fees for Canadian and international applicants apply for all examinations (CRNE, CPNRE, NP-Primary Health Care, NP-Adult and NP-Paediatrics).

<sup>4</sup> Same fee for Canadian and international applicants.

<sup>5</sup> Same fee for Canadian and international applicants.

<sup>6</sup> Same fee for Canadian and international applicants.

<sup>7</sup> Same fee for Canadian and international applicants.

### *Additional Fees*

Applicants may be required to pay one or more of the following fees:

- Transcript fee to an official source, such as a nursing school or registration authority, to process the request for a nursing transcript or verification of registration.
- CNO charges a \$94.50 translation fee for documents sent in languages other than English or French. Applicants may be able to avoid this fee by asking official sources to send documents in English or French. All translations must be accompanied by the document in the original language and mailed directly from the official source to CNO.
- Language proficiency testing. The cost of these tests will vary, depending on the service provider.

## **I. Third Parties**

| <b>Name of Third Party</b>  | <b>Relationship to Regulatory Body</b>   |
|---|--|
| World Education Services (WES)  | Provides level of education equivalency assessments.   |
| Assessment Strategies Incorporated/Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)      | Administers the Canadian Registered Nurse Examination, the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Examination and the Nurse Practitioner – Primary Health Care Examination. |
| CARE for Nurses   | Provides exam preparation, education and counselling.  |
| Language testing services (e.g., TOEFL, MELAB, IELTS, TOEIC, CELBAN, TFI) | Administers language fluency tests.  |

## **J. Typical Length of the Registration Process**

Assuming that all documents have been received by CNO, and the applicant has passed the examination, the process will take approximately 15 business days.

## **K. Accredited Programs**

These colleges offer practical nursing programs in Ontario that have been approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities:

- Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology — Woodroffe Campus, Nepean
- Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology, Sudbury
- Canadore College of Applied Arts and Technology, North Bay
- Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology, Toronto
- La Cité Collégiale, Ottawa
- Collège Boréal, Sudbury
- Conestoga College of Applied Arts and Technology — Doon Valley Campus, Kitchener
- Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology, Thunder Bay
- Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology, Oshawa
- Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology, London
- George Brown College of Applied Arts and Technology — St. James Campus, Toronto
- Georgian College of Applied Arts and Technology — Orillia Campus, Barrie Campus, Owen Sound Campus
- Humber College of Applied Arts and Technology, Toronto
- Lambton College of Applied Arts and Technology, Sarnia
- Loyalist College of Applied Arts and Technology, Belleville
- Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology, Hamilton
- Niagara College, Welland
- Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology — South Porcupine Campus, Timmins
- Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology, Sault Ste. Marie
- Seneca College — King Campus, Toronto
- Sheridan College — Davis Campus, Oakville

- Sir Sandford Fleming College of Applied Arts and Technology — Sutherland Campus, Peterborough
- St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology — Thames Campus, Chatham
- St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology — South Campus, Windsor
- St. Lawrence College — Brockville Campus, Cornwall Campus, Kingston Campus

These Ontario universities and colleges offer joint baccalaureate nursing programs:

***Universities***

Brock University, St. Catharines  
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay  
Laurentian University, Sudbury  
McMaster University, Hamilton  
Nipissing University, North Bay  
Queen’s University, Kingston  
Ryerson University, Toronto  
Trent University, Peterborough  
University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Oshawa  
University of Ottawa, Ottawa  
University of Toronto, Toronto  
University of Western Ontario, London  
University of Windsor, Windsor  
York University, Toronto

***Colleges***

Algonquin College, Nepean  
Canadore College, North Bay  
Cambrian College, Sudbury  
Centennial College, Toronto  
La Cité collégiale, Ottawa  
Collège Boréal, Sudbury  
Conestoga College, Kitchener  
Confederation College, Thunder Bay  
Durham College, Oshawa  
Fanshawe College, London  
George Brown College, Toronto

Georgian College, Barrie  
Humber College, Toronto  
Lambton College, Sarnia  
Loyalist College, Belleville  
Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology, Hamilton  
Northern College, Timmins  
Sault College, Sault St. Marie  
Seneca College, Toronto  
Sir Sandford Fleming College, Peterborough  
St. Clair College, Windsor  
St. Lawrence College, Kingston

## **L. Internal Review/Appeal Process**

Assessment staff manage applications from the beginning of the process to the end, for straightforward files. The case management system used by CNO ensures that each application is assigned a file number and an assessor. The assessor's contact information is on correspondence that goes out to the applicant. Once an application meets all registration requirements, the applicant submits the fee and CNO double-checks that all requirements are fulfilled.

Assessors discuss complex files regularly at team meetings. The Registration Consultant, who is a member of the nursing profession, provides ongoing support to assessment staff, reviews all files going for review to the Registration Committee and advises the Registrar of challenging applications.

The Registrar has the discretion to determine when the file should be referred to the Registration Committee. All decisions from the Registration Committee are issued in writing and include reasons for the decision, guidance on how to meet the requirement at issue and information on further appeal opportunities through the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB).

The Registration Committee is composed of four members of the public appointed to CNO Council, three registered nurses and two registered practical nurses. The nurses are nominated from the pool of elected Council members (three of five) and from a pool of elected committee members (two of five), based on a number of criteria including area of practice, experience and committee continuity.

The information about appeals of registration decisions is not currently available on CNO's website. Information is available on HPARB's website.

Applicants can access all the information concerning the decisions with respect to their case.

## 4. BRIDGING PROGRAMS

CNO has encouraged the development of bridging programs that are offered by a number of organizations. Programs listed here meet a broad definition of the term “bridging,” including supportive programs.

### A. CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses

Creating Access to Regulated Employment (CARE) helps nurses set goals, review skills and chart their career paths. Nurses who join CARE can prepare to take the CRNE or the CPNRE. If nurses have already passed the exam, CARE can help them upgrade their skills and plan their career.

Nurses who join CARE can:

- Learn more about the role of nursing in Ontario’s health care system
- Take exam-review courses and participate in study sessions
- Gain experience in health care settings
- Get advice on how to search for work and how to prepare for employment
- Connect, through a supportive network, with other nurses educated outside of Canada
- Learn the nursing terms used in Canada
- Assess their clinical skills and upgrade or review areas in which they need help
- Receive personal guidance on their nursing career.

### B. PLAR Centre — York University, Toronto: Evaluating eligibility for registration through a PLAR process for internationally educated nurses

This project is developing a mechanism to evaluate “BScN equivalency” in knowledge, skill and judgment, based on the College of Nurses of Ontario Entry to Practice Competencies. The project is designed to promote greater access to registration for internationally educated nurses, many of whom arrive with specialized knowledge and skill but not necessarily a paper credential that can be evaluated using traditional methods.

### **C. BScN for Internationally Educated Nurses — York University, Toronto: Assessing knowledge and skills and providing required education and workplace experience**

The BScN for Internationally Educated Nurses Program consists of a four-month qualifying pre-session that leads to admission into a modified post-RN program, which may be completed in four consecutive terms of full-time study. Program elements of the pre-session include academic instruction and support, professionally relevant English language instruction, Canadian workplace experience through clinical practicum opportunities in both hospital and community agencies, and formal and informal mentorship activities.

### **D. Bridging for Internationally Educated Nurses (BIEN) — Mohawk College, Hamilton**

This project assists internationally educated nurses to gain accreditation and/or employment as practical nurses or personal support workers. The program consists of assessment and recognition of prior learning and experience, supported work experience, vocational skills, academic training and occupation-specific language training. Successful graduates will attain a post-secondary education credential.

### **E. Fast Track to RPN — Waterloo-Wellington Training and Adjustment Board**

This project assists in moving internationally trained health professionals, including medical doctors, through the Registered Practical Nursing Program at a highly accelerated rate to retrain them as RPNs and to prepare them to write the CPNRE. Upon completing the program, graduates will be prepared to either work as RPNs or pursue a nursing degree.

### **F. Institutional CELBAN for Internationally Educated Nurses — Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks**

This project is developing a language assessment tool for nurses entering bridge training programs, replacing the standardized tests currently used, such as TOEFL. The new assessment tool will highlight clinical and workplace language skills, an important component of bridging projects. It will complement an existing Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment (CELBAN), used to assess language proficiency in licensure exams, but will have been designed specifically to assess entry into bridging programs.

## **5. MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS**

Currently, CNO has a mutual recognition agreement for RNs with all provinces including Quebec. There is no mutual recognition agreement in place for RPNs because there is no national consensus on the skills and competencies for the profession.

## **6. APPLICANTS' INTERACTIONS WITH REGULATORY BODY**

### **A. Nature and Frequency of Communication**

CNO has frequent contact with each applicant throughout the process.

### **B. Backlogs**

CNO does not have a backlog of files. It has approximately 6,000 dormant files from applicants that have not been in touch with CNO for some time. CNO is reviewing these applications and following up with applicants to determine if they are still interested in pursuing registration. As of November 2007, there were 95 files waiting to be assigned for assessment because of outstanding information from third parties.

### **C. Complaints Regarding the Registration Process**

Complaints regarding the registration process are addressed by either the Manager of Registration or the Manager of Customer Service. Most of the complaints are resolved at this stage. Others are referred to the Director of Corporate Services, the Registrar or the Registration Committee.

## **7. CHANGES SINCE THE 2005 SURVEY**

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration conducted a survey in 2005 to collect information about occupational regulatory bodies in Ontario.

The CNO career map was last updated in November 2005. CNO's website is being redesigned to make the information clearer and more accessible. A revised application guide is planned to be in circulation by May 2008.

## 8. REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

Definitions used in these tables:

**Alternative class of licence:** a class of licence that enables its holder to practise with limitations; additional registration requirements must be met in order to be fully licensed. Alternative classes of licence granted by the College of Nurses of Ontario are specified under the tables below.

**Applicant:** a person who has applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

**Applicant actively pursuing licensing:** an applicant who had some contact with CNO within the year specified.

**Inactive applicant:** an applicant who had no contact with CNO within the year specified.

**Member:** a person who is currently able to use the protected title or professional designation “nurse,” “nurse practitioner,” “registered nurse” or “registered practical nurse.”

### Languages in which application information materials were available

| Language | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|----------|------|------|------|
| English  | Yes  | Yes  | Yes  |
| French   | No   | No   | No   |
| Other(s) |      |      |      |

### Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained in nursing

| Applications Received <sup>1</sup> | 2005               | 2006           | 2007           |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Largest number                     | Philippines        | Philippines    | Philippines    |
| Second-largest number              | India              | India          | India          |
| Third-largest number               | China              | China          | Nigeria        |
| Fourth-largest number              | Nigeria            | Nigeria        | China          |
| Fifth-largest number               | Russian Federation | United Kingdom | United Kingdom |

<sup>1</sup> Applications for the General Class only, for both RNs and RPNs.

### Staff employed by the College of Nurses of Ontario

| Number of Staff                        | 2005  | 2006  | 2007 |
|--|-------|-------|------|
| Involved in registration process (FTE) | 21.25 | 23.25 | 28.5 |
| Involved in appeals process            | 4     | 4     | 4    |

### Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in nursing (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)

| Members <sup>1</sup>                | Ontario | Other Canadian Provinces | USA   | Other International | TOTAL   |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|-------|---------------------|---------|
| Total members                       | 127,794 | 3,931                    | 1,274 | 14,272              | 147,271 |
| Non-practising members <sup>2</sup> | 470     | 0                        | 7     | 120                 | 597     |

<sup>1</sup> Includes members in both categories (RN and RPN).

<sup>2</sup> Only Retired Class members are authorized to use the title but cannot practise.

### Applicants<sup>1</sup> processed by the College of Nurses of Ontario in 2005

| Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in nursing (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario) |         |                                |     |                        |        |  |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|-----|------------------------|--------|--|
| In 2005<br>(Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)  | Ontario | Other<br>Canadian<br>Provinces | USA | Other<br>International | TOTAL  |  |
| New applications received   | 5,133   | 484                            | 45  | 1,351                  | 7,013  |  |
| Applicants actively pursuing licensing  | 6,560   | 995                            | 266 | 5,758                  | 13,579 |  |
| Inactive applicants   | 1,352   | 1,120                          | 268 | 5,830                  | 8,570  |  |
| Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members  | 672     | 604                            | 43  | 303                    | 1,622  |  |
| Applicants who became members   | 5,190   | 521                            | 89  | 1,144                  | 6,944  |  |
| Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup> but were not issued a licence                                      | 0       | 0                              | 0   | 0                      | 0      |  |
| Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup>   | 1,774   | 39                             | 8   | 13                     | 1,834  |  |

<sup>1</sup> Includes applications under both categories (RN and/or RPN) and for all classes.

<sup>2</sup> Temporary Class: Applicants who meet all the requirements for entry to the General Class, including recent safe practice within the last year, but have yet to meet the examination requirement are entitled to register in the Temporary Class for a term of six months.

Transitional Class: Registered members from other Canadian provinces who do not meet CNO's current program requirement (baccalaureate degree for RNs and diploma for RPNs) are registered in the Transitional Class. Registration in this class is for a term of two years for RPNs, who are required to bridge to an RPN diploma, and four years for RNs, who are required to bridge to a current Ontario baccalaureate degree.

### Applicants<sup>1</sup> processed by the College of Nurses of Ontario in 2006

| <b>Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in nursing (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)</b> |                |   |            |                                |              |  |
|--|----------------|---|------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--|
| <b>In 2006<br/>(Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)</b>   | <b>Ontario</b> | <b>Other<br/>Canadian<br/>Provinces</b> | <b>USA</b> | <b>Other<br/>International</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> |  |
| New applications received  | 6,846          | 625                                     | 157        | 1,716                          | 9,344        |  |
| Applicants actively pursuing licensing   | 5,138          | 747                                     | 261        | 5,516                          | 11,662       |  |
| Inactive applicants  | 1,580          | 1,412                                   | 292        | 7,642                          | 10,926       |  |
| Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members   | 783            | 445                                     | 50         | 268                            | 1,546        |  |
| Applicants who became members  | 6,376          | 422                                     | 52         | 380                            | 7,230        |  |
| Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup> but were not issued a licence   | 0              | 0                                       | 0          | 0                              | 0            |  |
| Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup>  | 2,425          | 54                                      | 16         | 29                             | 2,524        |  |

<sup>1</sup> Includes applications under both categories (RN and/or RPN) and for all classes.

<sup>2</sup> Temporary Class: Applicants who meet all the requirements for entry to the General Class, including recent safe practice within the last year, but have yet to meet the examination requirement are entitled to register in the Temporary Class for a term of six months.

Transitional Class: Registered members from other Canadian provinces who do not meet CNO's current program requirement (baccalaureate degree for RNs and diploma for RPNs) are registered in the Transitional Class. Registration in this class is for a term of two years for RPNs, who are required to bridge to an RPN diploma, and four years for RNs, who are required to bridge to a current Ontario baccalaureate degree.

**Applicants<sup>1</sup> processed by the College of Nurses of Ontario in 2007**

| <b>Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in nursing (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)</b> |                |   |            |                                |              |  |
|--|----------------|---|------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--|
| <b>In 2007<br/>(Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)</b>   | <b>Ontario</b> | <b>Other<br/>Canadian<br/>Provinces</b> | <b>USA</b> | <b>Other<br/>International</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> |  |
| New applications received  | 8,688          | 781                                     | 171        | 2,114                          | 11,754       |  |
| Applicants actively pursuing licensing   | 7,107          | 1,633                                   | 432        | 8,928                          | 18,100       |  |
| Inactive applicants  | 4,493          | 1,159                                   | 268        | 6,147                          | 12,067       |  |
| Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members   | 725            | 210                                     | 43         | 176                            | 1,154        |  |
| Applicants who became members  | 7,958          | 510                                     | 95         | 541                            | 9,104        |  |
| Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup> but were not issued a licence   | 0              | 0                                       | 0          | 0                              | 0            |  |
| Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence <sup>2</sup>  | 3,180          | 103                                     | 25         | 54                             | 3,362        |  |

<sup>1</sup> Includes applications under both categories (RN and/or RPN) and for all classes.

<sup>2</sup> Temporary Class: Applicants who meet all the requirements for entry to the General Class, including recent safe practice within the last year, but have yet to meet the examination requirement are entitled to register in the Temporary Class for a term of six months.

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Registration in this class is for a term of two years for RPNs, who are required to bridge to an RPN diploma, and four years for RNs, who are required to bridge to a current Ontario baccalaureate degree.

## 9. SOURCES

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Representatives of the College of Nurses of Ontario met with staff of the Office of the Fairness Commissioner on November 19, 2007, to provide further information for this study

[To Contents](#)



