

Quality Assurance Reflective Practice



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

THE STANDARD OF CARE.

Introduction

The *Regulated Health Professions Act* requires each regulatory college to develop, establish and maintain programs that promote continuing competence among the members of the profession. One way that the College of Nurses of Ontario accomplishes this requirement is through its Quality Assurance (QA) Program.

The College developed the QA Program in consultation with nurses across the province. The aim of the program is to help members maintain and improve their competence from year to year.

The QA Program has two components relevant to individual members:

1. Reflective Practice
2. Practice Review

Reflective Practice is a formal process that helps nurses maintain their competence in today's rapidly changing health care environment.

Nurses reflect on their practice almost every day. One way nurses maintain their ability to provide high-quality care to their clients is to review aspects of their practice and determine what worked and what could have been done differently.

Meeting the requirements and maintaining records of yearly Reflective Practice participation is a legislative requirement for all nurses in Ontario.

Reflective Practice is a five-step process. Each year, nurses who practise in Ontario are required to:

1. Complete a self-assessment.
2. Obtain peer feedback.
3. Create a learning plan.
4. Implement the learning plan.
5. Evaluate the learning and application of knowledge in practice.

1. Complete a self-assessment

An in-depth assessment of their practice helps nurses determine what they do well and what they could improve on. Nurses can use the College's Self-Assessment Tool or other self-assessment methods of their choosing to complete this step.

To assess their practice, nurses need to

- compare their practice to the College's professional standards; and
- refer to other relevant College practice documents and standards, government legislation and regulations, as well as workplace or professional policies and procedures.

2. Obtain peer feedback

By asking for feedback from a peer, nurses can learn about aspects of their practice that they may have been unaware of before. Peer feedback builds on self-assessment by providing greater awareness of strengths and opportunities for learning. To give and receive constructive feedback, nurses should:

- ask for feedback from their peers at the same time as they do their self-assessment;
- choose a peer familiar with at least some of their practice. A peer can be a non-nurse or more than one person;
- connect with someone who has a similar role if practising without a direct peer and/or working in an isolated area. The peer does not have to directly observe a nurse's practice to be able to provide constructive feedback. Nurses can get feedback by discussing examples that illustrate the issues in their practice; and
- ask their peer to identify three things they do well in their practice and three things that could enhance their practice.

3. Create a learning plan

A learning plan is an outline of how nurses will meet their learning needs. It should include:

- learning goals (to address identified learning needs) that provide the overall direction for their learning;
- detailed learning objectives (should be specific);
- success indicators (how the nurse will know that she/he has accomplished the learning objectives);
- resources or strategies for meeting the goals. Nurses should be creative and consider people, books, videos, articles, workshops, in-services, conferences and courses; and
- a timeline for completing the learning plan.

4. Implement the learning plan

Once the learning plan is developed, nurses can begin to complete the learning project(s) they have created.

5. Evaluate the learning and application of knowledge in practice

When nurses have completed the learning plan, it is important that they evaluate the learning they have achieved. A key part of evaluation is identifying how they applied their learning in practice and how the practice changed or was enhanced as a result.

Nurses must complete a self-assessment and obtain peer feedback every year. They must also update their learning plan and evaluate last year's learning.

Maintaining Reflective Practice written records

All nurses must keep written records of their ongoing education, practice, professional development and Reflective Practice for a minimum of two years. As well, nurses must make these records available to the College if the Quality Assurance Committee or if College assessors request them.

Reflective Practice survey

The College may randomly select nurses to collect information about their experiences with Reflective Practice. Referring to records will help nurses provide this information.

Requirements for non-practising nurses

Nurses are non-practising if they did not practise nursing in Ontario for the entire year. They

may have been engaged in another occupation, practising nursing outside of Ontario or on a leave from nursing. As non-practising nurses, they are not required to complete all five steps of Reflective Practice. At a minimum, they are required to keep up-to-date with the changes and developments in the nursing profession in Ontario by, for example, reading the College's magazine *The Standard* or nursing journals. To determine if you are a non-practising nurse, see the College's *Am I Practising Nursing?* fact sheet.

Requirements for nurses registered in the Retired Class

Nurses registered in the Retired Class are not required to participate in Reflective Practice.

The Reflective Practice declaration

Each year, nurses are required to indicate if they participated in Reflective Practice. The Reflective Practice declaration appears on the Annual Membership Renewal Form.

For more information

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