

Registration

Who are RN(EC)s?



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

THE STANDARD OF CARE.

Introduction

RN(EC)s, also known as Nurse Practitioners (NPs), are Registered Nurses who have met the advanced requirements necessary to enter the Extended Class. They provide comprehensive nursing services including health promotion, disease and injury prevention, treatment, cure, rehabilitation and support. RN(EC)s have advanced knowledge and decision-making skills, and work in a variety of settings such as community health centres, clinics, public health units, long-term care facilities, and hospital in-patient and outpatient units.

RN(EC) Titles

In August 2007, the title Nurse Practitioner became a protected title in Ontario. Now, only nurses registered in the Extended Class can use this title.

There are four Nurse Practitioner specialty certificates in the Extended Class: NP-Primary Health Care, NP-Paediatrics, NP-Adult and NP-Anaesthesia.*

What can an RN(EC) do?

Registration in the Extended Class gives nurses the legislated authority to autonomously perform controlled acts not available to Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs).

When ordered by a physician, dentist, midwife or chiropodist, or as permitted by legislation, all General Class RNs and RPNs can:

1. perform a prescribed procedure below the dermis or a mucous membrane;
2. administer a substance by injection or inhalation; and
3. put an instrument, hand or finger beyond a body orifice or artificial opening to the body.

In addition, RN(EC)s have the legislated authority to autonomously perform the following controlled acts::

4. communicate a diagnosis made by an RN(EC) to a client or the client's representative;
5. prescribe a drug from the approved list of drugs and drug categories;
6. administer by injection or inhalation a drug the member prescribes; and
7. order the application of a form of energy as prescribed in the regulations, such as diagnostic ultrasound.

Also, RN(EC)s can order certain X-rays, laboratory and diagnostic tests. The list of X-rays, lab tests and diagnostic tests that RN(EC)s can order and the list of drugs they can prescribe is at www.cno.org/drug_list. In special circumstances, RN(EC)s can complete a Medical Certificate of Death.

The role of RN(EC)s

RN(EC)s are expected to demonstrate competence in health assessment and diagnosis, health care management and therapeutic intervention (including pharmacological, complementary and counselling), as well as in health promotion and the prevention of illness, injury and complications. They are also expected to understand the professional roles and responsibilities associated with being a member of the Extended Class.

In addition to the above competency requirements, RN(EC)s are expected to:

- assess and provide services to clients from pre-birth to death, and to families and communities;
- treat episodic illnesses and injuries;
- diagnose and manage the care of clients with acute and/or chronic physical and/or mental

* The NP-Primary Health Care role has been regulated in the Extended Class since 1998. Check the College website, www.cno.org, for registration information on the other speciality certificates.

- disease, disorder or condition;
- provide specialized health services to clients with an acute illness and/or condition; and
- identify, manage and monitor chronic conditions.

Registration in the Extended Class

To register in the Extended Class, a graduate of an approved nursing program must demonstrate that she or he has the advanced knowledge, skill and judgment to provide a wide range of health services to the public, including communicating a diagnosis, prescribing drugs and ordering tests.

The requirements for entry into the Extended Class include:

- recent evidence of safe practice in an advanced practice role;
- successful completion of an approved Nurse Practitioner program for a specialty certificate in the Extended Class; and
- successful completion of an approved exam for the specified specialty certificate.

The College's *Registered Nurses in the Extended Class* practice standard outlines the knowledge, skill and judgment necessary for safe practice, and includes accountabilities and responsibilities. It also contains the standards of practice and competencies, Quality Assurance expectations, and references to the legislation and regulations specific to RN(EC) practice.

For more information on the registration process and RN(EC) practice, visit www.cno.org/rnec.

RN(EC)s and the Public Hospitals Act

The Public Hospitals Act, Regulation 965 authorizes RN(EC)s to treat registered outpatients at the hospital, order laboratory and diagnostic testing, and prescribe treatments and medication for clients. This regulation does not apply to registered in-patients in a hospital.

The regulation also applies to non-hospital staff RN(EC)s who practise in a community where the only available diagnostic testing is at the local hospital. These RN(EC)s can order laboratory and diagnostic testing and treatments, such as ultrasounds and X-rays, for their outpatients. Non-hospital staff RN(EC)s must apply to the hospital's medical advisory committee to obtain these hospital privileges.

For more information

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