

New Regulations for Nurse Practitioners



THE STANDARD OF CARE.

For Immediate Release

(August 29, 2007) Today the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) gains the authority to regulate three new Nurse Practitioner (NP) specialties in the Extended Class: NP-Paediatrics, NP-Adult and NP-Anaesthesia. The NP-Primary Health Care role has been regulated since 1998.

This follows the Ontario government approval of new regulations to expand Nurse Practitioner specialties. Also effective today, only nurses registered in CNO's Extended Class can use the title Nurse Practitioner.

Nurse Practitioners, also known as Registered Nurses (Extended Class) or RN(EC)s, are RNs who have obtained advanced education, passed an Extended Class exam and met additional registration requirements. These requirements ensure that they have the advanced knowledge, skill and judgment to provide a broad range of health services to the public, including communicating a diagnosis, prescribing certain drugs and ordering diagnostic tests.

CNO expects to register nurses in NP-Adult and NP-Paediatrics in 2008. Last year, 681 RNs identified "acute care nurse practitioner" as their nursing position, and some of them may meet many of the requirements for the new adult and paediatric NP specialties. The requirements for registration in NP-Anaesthesia are in the developmental stages.

Since CNO began regulating Extended Class RNs in 1998, it has worked with stakeholders to explore options to expand the services that NPs can offer. Today, almost 800 Primary Health Care NPs provide care in community health centres, clinics, doctors' offices, hospitals and other settings across Ontario.

In Ontario, all nurses – RPNs, RNs and NPs – are an important part of the health care system and work together as members of health care teams.

As the regulatory body for the province's 144,000 nurses, CNO sets the requirements to enter the profession; establishes, promotes and enforces standards of practice and conduct; and enhances the care that nurses provide through its Quality Assurance Program.

CNO's mission is to protect the public's right to quality nursing services by providing leadership to the nursing profession in self-regulation.

For more information about nursing regulation, visit the College's website at www.cno.org or contact:

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