

# Am I Practising Nursing?

## Introduction

To practise as a nurse in Ontario, you must be registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario (the College). Nursing practice can take place in a variety of roles and settings. This fact sheet outlines the factors to consider when determining if you are practising nursing.

It's important to note that *practising nursing* is not the same as *being employed as a nurse*. Even if you volunteer as a nurse, you are performing nursing services and considered to be a practising nurse.

## Are you practising nursing?

### Step 1

Nursing practice must involve these three general elements:

- Applying nursing knowledge, skill and judgment
- Applying relevant nursing practice standards and guidelines.
- Having a direct or indirect effect on the recipient of a health care service.

### Step 2

Use the checklist below to examine your current role and check the activities that you engage in.

#### Assessment of:

- client health care needs (e.g., physical, social, emotional, psychological, spiritual)
- health care resources (e.g., staffing, equipment)
- the delivery or the facilitation of safe and competent nursing care
- health care needs required by individuals, groups, communities or populations
- context of nursing practice (nurse's working environment)
- impact of nursing policy

#### Planning by:

- analyzing the findings of a health assessment
- determining the appropriate service, treatment, care provider or equipment
- analyzing nursing issues to support client care/ nursing practice

#### Intervening by:

- providing treatment (including complementary therapies)
- health teaching or health promotion (including counselling)
- communicating with clients, families, groups, communities or populations
- providing professional advice
- collaborating with care providers
- directly or indirectly influencing the practice of care providers and/or policy
- managing nursing resources (e.g. staff, facilities, equipment)
- developing learning resources for nurses or other care providers

#### Evaluating individual or health service outcomes by:

- interpreting client health records
- observing and recording outcomes

#### Other:

- involved with a health-related product (e.g., medical supply) or process (e.g., quality assurance, workload management)
- providing or developing health education using nursing knowledge, skill and judgment
- performing a health-related intervention
- collecting health data
- access to confidential health information
- interacting with those who expect that you have nursing knowledge or skill

### Step 3

Check if you are practising in one of these settings:

- acute care hospital, addiction and mental health centre/psychiatric hospital, complex continuing care/rehabilitation hospital, other hospital
- long-term care facility, nursing home, home for the aged, retirement home
- Community Care Access Centre, community health centre, community mental health program, hospice, nursing/staffing agency, physician's office, public health unit/department, school, group home, street health agency
- independent practice, health care consultant agency, seasonal camp, occupational health services, industry; insurance, pharmaceutical or medical supply company
- health care education, nursing education program or research organization
- governmental health agency, correctional facility, social services agency or nursing organization (labour, professional support, regulatory)

My practice meets the three elements listed in Step 1 **and** I have checked one or more boxes in each of Steps 2 and 3:

- YES**  
You are a practising nurse.
- NO**  
You are non-practising.

### For more information

Contact the College at:

E-mail: [cno@cnomail.org](mailto:cno@cnomail.org)

Tel: 416 928-0900

Toll-free in Canada: 1 800 387-5526

Fax: 416 928 6507

Web: [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org)