



QUALITY PRACTICE  
 A RESOURCE FOR EMPLOYERS OF NURSES

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## Helping employers to protect the public

Whether you want to check the registration status of your nurses, or identify an illegal practitioner, the College's AAVR system is a fast and convenient way to confirm a nurse's eligibility to practice in Ontario.

For more information, visit the Employer section at [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org).

Check out  
**CNO's Automated  
 Annual Verification  
 of Renewal**

# Membership survey: Results are in!

Last year, the College conducted a survey of its members, which revealed that nurses are not only familiar with the work of the College, but they're also satisfied with how it supports nurses in self-regulation. On average, the nurses surveyed gave the College a satisfaction rating of 7.4 out of 10 for its work in helping nurses self-regulate, and a rating of 7.5 out of 10 for its efforts in helping them maintain competence.

The survey, conducted in the fall of 2006 by an independent research firm, involved phone interviews with a representative sample of 1,521 randomly selected members. Key findings include:

- 94 per cent of respondents are "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar" with self-regulation;
- 96 per cent are "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar" with the College and its purpose; and
- 97 per cent are "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar" with the College's standards of practice.

Of those surveyed, 82 per cent gave a rating of seven or higher out of 10 for the College's work in ensuring public protection, 86 per cent gave a rating of seven or higher for the College's efforts to enforce the practice standards, and 76 per cent gave the College a rating of seven or higher for influencing policy and legislation.

The College also learned that 81 per cent of respondents have access to the Internet at work, and 59 per cent have visited the College's website. Of those who have visited [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org), 86 per cent gave a satisfaction rating of seven or higher for completeness of material, and 75 per cent gave a satisfaction rating of seven or higher for being able to easily find the information they wanted.

There is room to improve member participation in College activities, such as electing members of Council, developing standards, and providing feedback on draft by-laws and regulations. In these areas, average ratings of engagement ranged from 3.6 to 4.8 out of 10. The good news is that 33 per cent of the nurses reported that they intend to be more involved with the College in the future, and the College hopes that employers would support nurses in such pursuits.

The College will use the survey findings to plan future initiatives that engage members in activities of self-regulation. The survey will be conducted again in 2008 to gauge the effectiveness of these efforts.

For more results from the survey, see the Spring 2007 issue of *The Standard*.

# Connect with New Graduates

A new Ontario government program is striving to help nursing graduates find full-time jobs. But employers should remember that new grads must register with the College before arriving for their first day of work.

The New Graduate Guarantee is a Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care initiative to help nursing graduates find full-time work in Ontario. It aims to help this year's 4,000 graduates find employment in the hospital, long-term care, home care, public health and primary care sectors. The College has included a brochure on the new program in its "Guides to Registration in the General and Temporary Classes for Ontario Students" packages, which were mailed to all graduating nursing students this winter.

Once registered in the program, employers can post advertisements for employment positions (that are completely

funded by the government), receive applications from recent graduates, and arrange interviews and make job offers to recent nursing graduates. The match is confirmed once the application for temporary registration has been completed by the applicant and employer and the temporary registration has been issued by the College. Since everything is done through the website, employers in more remote communities have the same equal access as larger urban centres to the applicants participating in the program.

Once a graduate has an offer of employment, she or he must apply for and receive Temporary Class Registration with the College before beginning work. For information on Temporary Registration requirements, visit [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org). For more information on the New Graduate Guarantee, phone the Nursing Secretariat at the Ministry at 416 314-0400.

## Registration bill passes

Last December, the Ontario government passed the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act* (also known as Bill 124). It's the first act in Canada to address registration processes for internationally educated regulated professionals. The act promotes consistency in the registration practices for internationally educated professionals, including health care professionals.

Bill 124 gives the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration the authority to review the application processes of regulated professions. Under the new bill, all health regulatory colleges must provide applicants with information on registration requirements, application procedures and registration time frames. The College is also required to submit a report of its registration practices every year and have its registration practices audited every three years.

A new Fairness Commissioner will be appointed to ensure that regulatory bodies comply with the bill. The

commissioner will give information on registration processes to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

The bill also introduces the Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals, which opened in December 2006 to assist health professionals with professional registration.

The Access Centre offers support resources and information tools for professionals educated in other countries who would like to be registered to work in Ontario's health care system. The centre is located on the Ryerson University Campus in Toronto. For more information, visit [www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca).

## Suspension notice—April 10

Employers of nurses should make note of the date April 10, 2007. On this day, nurses who have not renewed their membership with the College will be suspended. Nurses not in possession of an Annual Payment Card with an expiry date of December 31, 2007 from the College cannot hold themselves out to be a nurse or practise nursing in Ontario after April 10. Practising nursing while suspended is considered professional misconduct and could result in disciplinary action.

Nurses who did not renew by the December 31, 2006 deadline, but have not yet received suspension notices, are permitted to keep working until the suspension date unless their employers have collective agreements or policies that state otherwise. Once an individual has received a suspension notice, however, they are prohibited by the *Regulated Health Professions Act* from working as a nurse.

A regularly updated list of suspended members' names can be found in the Employers section of [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org).

# Reporting obligations, part two: Sexual abuse

As an employer of nurses, you have a key role to play in self-regulation by fulfilling your legal obligations to report to the College in two situations: (1) when you terminate the employment of a nurse; and (2) when you have reasonable grounds to believe that a nurse has sexually abused a client. In the December 2006 issue, we addressed the mandatory report you must make when you terminate a nurse. In this issue, we outline your duty to report sexual abuse.

Under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA), all regulated health professionals and their employers must report allegations of sexual abuse of clients to the college that regulates the health professional involved. The RHPA defines sexual abuse as:

- (a) sexual intercourse or other forms of physical sexual relations between the member and patient/client;
- (b) touching of a sexual nature of the patient/client by a member; or

(c) behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by the member towards the patient/client.

“Sexual nature” does not include touching, behaviour or remarks of a clinical nature that are appropriate to the health care being provided.

It is mandatory to report sexual abuse to the College if you have reasonable grounds to believe that a nurse has sexually abused a patient, and you know the name of the nurse. Your report must be filed within 30 days of learning of the abuse. Reports should be made immediately if there is concern that the nurse will continue to sexually abuse the client or other clients. In addition, you are still obligated to report sexual abuse even if the abused client doesn't consent to your making the report.

You should make every effort to let abused clients know you are obligated to make a report whether they want you to or not, but you must

have clients' (or their representative's) written consent to provide their name to the College.

When a report of sexual abuse turns out to be unfounded, there is no liability on your part if you made the report in good faith; however, failure to report incidents of sexual abuse of clients can result in convictions and fines of up to \$25,000. Nurses who fail to report sexual abuse may also be subject to additional allegations of professional misconduct by the College. Reports should be directed to the Executive Director of the College of Nurses of Ontario. Reports must be made in writing and, in the Employer section of [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org), there is an Employer Report Form you can use to complete a report.

For more information on reporting sexual abuse of clients, see the *Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Abuse* fact sheet in the document list on the website.

## Help us reach the public

The College's annual newsletter for the public, *Here For You*, is now available for distribution. This glossy, eight-page magazine explains the College's role in protecting the public interest, what the public should expect when receiving care from nurses, and the steps that the College and nurses take to support the provision of safe, effective and ethical care to the people of Ontario.

*Here For You* can be easily displayed in waiting rooms or magazine racks at your facility. It is also a handy giveaway at health fairs or trade shows that will be attended by the public.

A PDF of *Here For You* was included with the electronic version of QP for online subscribers to preview. The College appreciates the assistance of employers in making this

information available to the public.

Additional copies of this free publication can be requested throughout the year.

To order copies for your facility, contact Hillary Burrridge at 416 928-0900, ext. 6367; toll free in Ontario 1 800 387-5526, or e-mail [hburrridge@cnoemail.org](mailto:hburrridge@cnoemail.org).

## Ask CNO: CNS Statistics

**Q** I'm looking for statistics on the number of Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) and nurses registered in the Extended Class [RN(EC)s] in Ontario. Since RN(EC) is a protected title, and CNS is not, how will the numbers I receive be affected?

**A** Because CNS is a position in nursing and not a protected title, the number you retrieve from the College database will be based on data collected from the Annual Membership Renewal form. Although the College defines CNS in the guide that's included in members' renewal packages, the College cannot guarantee that members used this definition when they completed the form. Therefore, nurses who do not meet the College's definition of CNS could be included in the data if they misclassified themselves on the renewal form.

RN(EC) refers to the category and class in which a member is registered, and is a protected title. Therefore, the number that you receive will accurately depict the number of nurses registered in the Extended Class who renewed their membership in a given year.

You can retrieve this statistical information from the College's website using the data query tool. With this tool you can search, free of charge, for a wide range of data on nurses in Ontario. Visit [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org) and access the About CNO/Statistics link from the home page.

## Online renewal—it's a hit!

The College's first venture into online membership renewal has been a resounding success. By the December 31st deadline, 42,336 members had renewed their membership online, and over 99 per cent of those who provided feedback said the process was "easy" or "very easy." An equally high percentage said they would recommend online renewal to other nurses and would use it again.

"When the College originally launched online renewal, we hoped that 10 to 20 per cent of members would access the service," says Suzanne Vogler, the College's Manager, Customer Service. "In the end, over 30 per cent of the membership used online renewal, which is an exceptional amount of use for a new service.

"Online renewal definitely had a positive impact on the service we could provide to nurses," continues Vogler. "There were fewer returned forms due to incomplete information, as well as fewer delays in the processing of forms and payments."

For the 2008 renewal season, the College plans to support a wider range

of browser software, which will allow an even greater number of members to access this service. The suspension date for members who have not yet renewed is April 10, 2007 (see page 2 for more information). Membership renewal for 2008 will begin at the end of October 2007.

## We Can Help

### Answering your call

Our Customer Service Centre and Practice Consultants answer calls from 0830 until 1700 hrs from Monday to Friday. Call 416 928-0900 (toll-free in Ontario at 1 800 387-5526). Using the automated system, choose your language of preference, and then select option "0" for Customer Service or ext. 2 to speak with a Practice Consultant.

### Visit the Web

Our Web site ([www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org)) includes specific information for employers about registration, building quality practice settings, and investigations and hearings. There is also regularly updated information on College events or information sessions. Visit it regularly to keep informed!

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