



COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO'S Academic Reference Group

News to Use: June 2025

Program Approval

At the June meeting, CNO Council approved all entry-level programs based on their recently completed annual and comprehensive reviews. Please contact us at education@cnomail.org, if you have not received your program's approval status notification following the Council meeting. The list of [approved nursing programs](#) can be found on our website. As a reminder, if you are planning any changes to your existing nursing program, or wish to start a new program, please contact us at education@cnomail.org to start [preliminary approval](#) process, at least one year before the program changes start.

Registration Exams

CNO has recently shared the 2025 Q1 reports for REx-PN and NCLEX-RN exams. If you have any difficulty accessing these reports or wish to speak to an Education Consultant about your exam results, please contact us at education@cnomail.org.

Regulatory Changes

Education Requirements for Nursing Registration

On Tuesday, April 1, 2025, new nursing registration requirements came into effect. These changes enhance the way CNO registers applicants and provides support for internationally educated applicants to become registered in a timely way. The changes include modifications to the education registration requirement to enable CNO to accept relevant nursing education from any jurisdiction (Ontario, Canada or International), if it meets the education regulation requirements of a nursing baccalaureate for RN applicants or a nursing diploma for RPN applicants.

For applicants who do not meet these requirements and have been informed by CNO that their education is not [substantially equivalent](#), they will have the option to complete an IEN education pathway to meet their education requirement. In May 2025, two new [IEN education pathways](#) were approved by CNO to help IEN applicants meet this education requirement. The IEN pathway includes the completion of the Transition to Practice Course required for all applicants to meet the new 'transition to practice registration' requirement. Applicants educated within Canada meet the transition to practice registration requirement because their CNO-approved entry-level nursing program integrates all RN or RPN entry level competencies. Applicants educated outside of Canada will meet this new requirement by completing the new [Transition to Practice Course](#).

Single Classification of Nurse Practitioner Framework

CNO is working closely with the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNRR) on a national initiative that will result in changes to Ontario's framework for registering Nurse Practitioners (NPs) by removing the population-specific certificates (NP-Primary Health Care, NP-Paediatrics, NP-Adult) and replacing them with one NP classification.

In April 2025, following Council approval, CNO submitted draft NP regulations to government for their review and consideration. CNO continues to engage with the Ministry of Health on this work and will keep NPs and all community partners updated on transition and implementation timelines toward a proposed launch in 2026. Below are a few details about transition planning once the proposed new framework is implemented:

Current Registrants (transition of current NPs into the new framework):

- ✓ Current NPs will be automatically transitioned into the single NP classification and will continue working within their training and competence (knowledge, skill, and judgment for their practice area).
- ✓ Under the proposed framework, an NP with initial NP education in paediatrics or adult populations can only practice with a different patient population (outside of their initial NP education) provided they have the competence and training for this different practice setting.

New Applicants:

- ✓ If regulation amendments are approved, new applicants will continue to be required to apply to the extended class. New Canadian applicants will be educated based on common NP entry-level competencies. All applicants will take a common national NP entry-level exam and will be prepared to work with any patient population and practice setting in the province, within their regulated scope of practice and individual competence.
- ✓ For new Canadian NP applicants with a population focus (for example, neonatal NPs), CNO is exploring how best to continue supporting Canadian NP applicants interested in coming to Ontario to help meet our health human resource demands, while maintaining transparency regarding their educational preparation.
- ✓ Internationally educated NPs would continue to apply to CNO through the application process.

In 2025 and 2026, CNO will continue to engage with academic partners to support the implementation and change management planning of this project, including the new NP national exam, scheduled to launch in early 2026. For more information on the national NP regulation project, please visit CNO's [webpage](#) which outlines the national work, key milestones, engagement opportunities and [frequently asked questions](#).

Interjurisdictional Nurse Licensure (INL)

CNO has been working towards [implementing INL: a national initiative led by the Canadian Nurse Regulators Collaborative \(CNRC\)](#) to enhance labour mobility of nurses in Canada by enabling nurses to maintain registration in multiple jurisdictions and practices across Canada, while supporting patient safety.

On June 4, 2025, CNO Council considered registrant and system partner feedback, approving the fee by-law changes that would enable INL registrants who register with CNO as their host jurisdiction to receive a 25% rebate of their annual fee. Later this month, CNO will implement system changes to operationalize INL, enabling nurses who wish to practice in multiple jurisdictions across Canada, to register with CNO as INL registrants.

Scope of Practice Updates

Starting Tuesday, July 1, 2025, the following scope of practice changes for Nurse Practitioners and Registered Nurses will come into effect to improve access to care.

Nurse Practitioners will be able to:

- ✓ Order and apply a defibrillator
 - ✓ Order and apply a cardiac pacemaker
 - ✓ Order and apply transcutaneous cardiac pacing
 - ✓ Order and perform electrocoagulation
- (Regulated Health Professions Act)*

AND

- ✓ Complete and sign a Medical Certificate of Death, without conditions, permitting them to do so in any circumstance.
- (Vital Statistics Act, 1990)*

The Mandatory Blood Testing Act, 2006, was recently updated to allow NPs to complete certain public health forms on behalf of patients who were possibly exposed to infectious diseases. Please visit the Ministry of Health's website for more information on mandatory blood testing.

Registered Nurses will be able to:

- ✓ Complete and sign a Medical Certificate of Death in specified circumstances when death is expected. This authority does not apply to RNs working in a hospital setting due to the *Public Hospital Act* or for Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) related deaths (*Vital Statistics Act, 1990*).

CNO is working with the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement and the Ministry of Health to assist in the development of resources to support this scope change. This includes the development of a Handbook on Medical Certification of Death for RNs and revisions to the existing Handbook on Medical Certification of Death and Stillbirth prepared for physicians, coroners, and coroners assistants, which will include NPs. Training materials are in development and will be made available.

RNs and NPs must ensure they have the appropriate knowledge, skill and judgment and support of their employer before they complete a Certificate of Death. We recognize with all scope changes, organizations and nurses may need time to address training and learning needs to safely implement scope of practice changes. For more information, please continue to monitor [CNO's website](#) for further updates, including the release of resources.

RN Prescribing

On June 4th, 2025, CNO's Council made a policy decision that impacts how RN prescribing education may be delivered in Ontario. Council will now consider approval of RN prescribing education that is delivered either before or after RN registration. This change means that education may be offered as it currently exists, a standalone, post-graduate (continuing education) program or integrated as part of the student's undergraduate baccalaureate program. Colleges and universities may now choose to offer RN prescribing education integrated as part of, or alongside, their undergraduate nursing program. In addition, RN prescribing will continue to be offered as a post-RN or continuing education program for RN registrants.

CNO is not proposing a revision of the RN Entry-Level Competencies and is NOT mandating the integration of RN prescribing into the existing baccalaureate nursing education. This policy change provides flexibility to colleges and universities that may wish to add RN prescribing education to their baccalaureate nursing programs.

CNO will continue to assess RN prescribing education using the same RN Prescribing Competencies and Program Approval process. As per CNO's [Program Approval Policy](#), please contact CNO's Education Program Team at education@cnomail.org if you are:

- considering a change to an existing, approved RN prescribing program or
- want to offer RN Prescribing as part of your baccalaureate program.

For more information, visit our [webpage on RN prescribing](#).

Standards, Guidelines and Guidance

Scope of Practice and Medication Practice Standards Updates

The [Scope of Practice](#) and [Medication](#) practice standards have been revised to reflect changes regarding who nurses can receive orders from to administer medication. Nurses can now administer oral and topical medications with a prescription from other regulated health care professionals with prescribing authority, like pharmacists. This change fosters a more integrated approach by improving access to care for patients. However, it is important to note that medication administration requiring a controlled act, such as injections and inhalations, nurses are still limited to accept orders from a physician, NP, midwife, chiropodist, dentist or RN with prescribing authority.

Virtual Care Guideline

CNO is releasing a new *Virtual Care* practice guideline at the end of June. The document replaces the previous *Telepractice* guideline. The document, available in English and French, highlights considerations that are important when providing virtual care to clients, including giving inclusive and culturally safe care. The guideline also includes a definition of virtual care and registration requirements when providing virtual care. When ready, the guideline will be posted on CNO's [Standards and Guidelines](#) webpage, along with knowledge translation tools to support nurses in using the guideline in their practice.

Artificial Intelligence Guidance

CNO recognizes artificial intelligence (AI) is already part of nursing practice, and that the AI landscape is rapidly evolving. In response to emerging technological changes, CNO has developed a guidance webpage to help nurses understand what AI is, how it can be used to support their practice and what they need to keep in mind when integrating it into their practice.

CNO will continue to monitor and review AI's role in nursing practice and regulation, focusing on its current application to promote safe and responsible use. As part of this process, CNO will engage employers to understand how different organizations are using AI and explore how CNO can support employers, including what types of learning and practice resources are needed to promote responsible AI use in nursing practice. Continue to monitor CNO's [Educational Tools](#) webpage for guidance on AI and additional resources, as they become available in 2025 and 2026.

Practice Support Resources

Nurse Practitioners Authorizing Medical Cannabis

'Q& A' information for NPs about Medical Cannabis has been updated and is available in both [English](#) and [French](#). The key change is the communication that Health Canada monitors misuse of the medical cannabis system in Canada and that NPs may be subject to review by Health Canada to substantiate the amount of medical cannabis authorized.

Council Updates

For more information please check our website: [Council Meeting Minutes](#).

Please share this update with other nursing educators at your school.