

With the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA), members get a Professional Responsibility Clause, professional practice advice and much more.

What is the PRC?

ONA's collective agreements contain a process that enables you to address concerns about your ability to practice safely and have a manageable workload.

Reporting unsafe patient care or practice to our employers is our professional responsibility and accountability.

For several years the spotlight has been on professional practice concerns related to the shortage of nurses, standards of practice, and the impact of skill mix change on patients and health care professionals. The goal of nursing care and services (Professional Practice) is the best possible outcome for clients, with no unnecessary risk or harm. NPs are accountable for their own decisions and actions, and the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) standards must be met.

Why do you need a Professional Responsibility Clause?

The PRC:

- › Gives you a say in the quality of care you provide in your practice as an NP.
- › Opens discussion with management and provides a problem solving approach that helps you meet professional standards.
- › Provides documentary evidence.
- › Provides you with union representation for practice concerns.
- › Provides for resolution of disputes.

How are your professional concerns, as they relate to workload, addressed?

Most of the time, the employer's attitude is often summarized by:
"you'll have to cope" or "do the best you can."

This is **not** an acceptable response, and does not resolve the workload or practice concern.

Nurse practitioners need to take steps to correct excessive workload situations and unsafe patient care.

By using the Professional Responsibility Clause (PRC) complaints process and reporting situations of unsafe patient care, workload and/or practice concerns to the employer, nurse practitioners meet their professional standards and hold their employers accountable to find solutions and work collaboratively to resolve issues.

The PRC process provides evidence that you identified patient care concerns to management should you find yourself in the position of responding to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) at the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO).

The PRC process can result in:

- › Increased staffing levels.
 - › Improved communication with employers.
 - › The development of safer workplaces.
 - › Improved quality of care.
 - › Provision of necessary equipment and supplies.
 - › Improved documentation.
- › Participation in the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario's (RNAO) Healthy Work Environment Best Practice Guidelines.
 - › Liaising with the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO), including re: NPs prescribing controlled substances.
 - › Representation on the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Nursing Steering Committee.
 - › Lobbying the government for NP wage harmonization across the province.
 - › Working with other nurses' unions across the country—through the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions (CFNU)—on issues such as medical assistance in dying.

Medical assistance in dying

In May 2016, ONA submitted a brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights regarding *Bill C-14*. The following is an excerpt therefrom:

"Nurse practitioners can be held criminally liable for breaching any of a detailed set of procedural protections and filing requirements, which would be better dealt with in a regulatory context. Criminal liability at this level of procedural detail will act as a major disincentive for nurse practitioners to participate in medically assisted dying."

Read the full submission on ONA.org.

ONA is involved as a stakeholder in many professional nursing organization activities. For example:

Find out more about the involvement of ONA's Professional Practice Team with other agencies, CNO, NPAO and government committees. **For more information, visit ona.org**