



## ONA Position Statement

### Peer Review and Performance Appraisals

The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) believes performance appraisals/evaluations of employees are the responsibility and function of management. **Grievances should be filed whenever ONA members are required to do performance appraisals of other employees.**

A performance appraisal, which is based on the employers' criteria and results in an employee work assessment, must be distinguished from "peer review," which is an open process based on individual choice and complete confidentiality. Members should not participate in peer review if it is part of an employer's performance appraisal process/evaluation and does not meet the criteria outlined below.

Members may voluntarily participate in a peer review process if asked by a fellow colleague, provided the outcome or goal of the process is to enhance the quality of patient/client care and provided both personal growth and learning for the professionals is involved. This can be an opportunity for the individual to develop greater awareness and insight into her/his professional practice in a non-threatening manner.

ONA supports such peer review only if the following principles are respected:

1. The peer review process must be strictly confidential and in no circumstances should the results of the review be shared with the employer.
2. There must be professional input into the format of the review itself by individuals who will be subject to such a review.
3. The peer reviewer must be chosen by the individual under review, and must be a colleague of the same profession who works with the peer. The reviewer should be someone who is respected, trusted and familiar with the individual's practice.
4. A learning plan may be developed by the individual receiving the review. The individual may choose to share the learning plan with the employer, but only at her/his own discretion.
5. Education in the peer review process and how best to give appropriate feedback is critical for individuals who participate in such a program.
6. An environment where nurses are supported in their professional practice must also exist. This includes educational opportunities, adequate staffing supports and demonstrated leadership.

Should an employer fail to respect these principles in a peer review process and/or should any member suffer discipline as a result of a peer review, ONA will take immediate action, including filing a grievance.

#### **CNO Quality Assurance Reflective Practice**

It should be noted peer feedback is a component of the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) Quality Assurance Program (QAP), which requires nurses to participate in Reflective Practice to maintain their competence. Each year, nurses must complete a self-assessment, obtain peer feedback and develop a learning plan. When participating in such reflective practice, CNO requires it to be a "self-directed, confidential process." In other words, the employer has no access to the results of the peer feedback and no nurse should suffer discipline as a result of her/his participation in this program.