

Professional Responsibility - KISS Keep it Simply Succinct

For ONA ALL SECTOR MEMBERS

It is your professional responsibility to report patient care and practice concerns to your employer when workload and practice situations make it difficult to provide safe, ethical and quality patient/client care. The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) states, "Challenging situations are not always full-blown emergencies or crises, but they can test a nurse's ability to follow regulatory standards and provide quality care to our patients." (CNO, Winter 2012)

Steps for Resolving Professional Responsibility Concerns

1. When a professional responsibility workload issue occurs:
 - Discuss with your colleagues on your unit and identify possible solutions.
 - If necessary, seek immediate assistance from an individual on your team (Charge Nurse, Team Lead, manager, manager on-call) to resolve the issue.
 - If unresolved, inform your manager that you will be submitting a Professional Responsibility Workload Report Form (PRWRF).
2. Finish filling out the PRWRF as soon as possible.
 - Give a copy to your manager and keep a copy for yourself.
 - Submit remaining copies to your Bargaining Unit President for distribution.
3. Meet with your manager within the timeframes in your collective agreement to discuss the PRWRF. A union rep can attend with you. The manager's written response is due within the timeframes as detailed in your collective agreement.
 - Meeting notes must be recorded and signed by all parties (consult with the Servicing Labour Relations Officer regarding the resolution).
 - Your union representative must be involved in all resolution discussions at the unit level.
4. Following the manager's response, or when the manager ought to have responded, the Bargaining Unit President will submit the PRWRF to the Labour-Management Committee* within the appropriate timeframes as detailed in your Collective Agreement.
 - Discuss the form with your Bargaining Unit rep/Professional Responsibility Complaint (PRC) rep, and prep for the HAC meeting; discuss possible resolutions.
5. Attend the Labour Management Committee meeting within the timelines in the collective agreement and try to resolve the issues. If resolved, the Minutes of Settlement (MOS) are signed by all parties at the meeting. The Servicing Labour Relations Officer must sign on behalf of ONA.
6. If not resolved:
 - Your Servicing Labour Relations Officer attends the next two (2) Labour Management Committee meetings and seeks resolution with the employer.
 - If still unresolved, the Servicing Labour Relations Officer involves the Professional Practice Specialist for further resolution.

Strategies for Professional Responsibility Concerns

- Ask your Servicing Labour Relations Officer for support in creating the tracking tool and action plans. They can consult with a Professional Practice Specialist as needed.

Strategies for Bargaining Unit Executive Members

- Ensure Labour Management Committee minutes are shared with individual members whose concerns were presented at the Labour Management Committee meeting.
- If concerns are unresolved, the Bargaining Unit President MUST send them to the Servicing Labour Relations Officer.
- Members may access the College of Nurses of Ontario's Outreach Program and Outreach Consultants at cno.org. If members do not want to contact the College, they may consult with their Servicing Labour Relations Officer.

Strategies for ONA Members

References and materials to support your concerns:

- Refer to professional practice information on ONA's website. Register for Professional Practice Tele-connects, workshops and e-learning modules.
- Refer to the College of Nurses of Ontario's Practice Standards and Guidelines at www.CNO.org/pubs/compendium.html.
- Refer to specialty certification requirements, such as the Canadian Nurses Association website at www.cna-aiic.ca.
- Review legislation and regulations specific to your sector at www.health.gov.on.ca.

Remember the PRWRF, in itself, is not a Professional Responsibility Complaint, but the start of a paper trail to identify and demonstrate ongoing concerns requiring a response by your employer. It provides evidence of your workload and patient safety issues, and provides you with documentation should you be the subject of a complaint or a report to the College of Nurses of Ontario.



The Ontario Nurses' Association is the union representing 65,000 front-line registered nurses and health-care professionals as well as more than 18,000 nursing student affiliates, providing care in Ontario hospitals, long-term care facilities, public health, the community, industry and clinics.

* Labour Management Committee may also be referred to as Union Management Committee, Nurse/Management Committee or Association Agency Committee.