

Professional Responsibility - KISS Keep it Simply Succinct

For ONA HOSPITAL 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 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 and Workload Issues

1. When a professional responsibility and workload issue occurs:
 - Discuss with colleagues on your unit and identify possible solutions.
 - If unresolved, seek immediate assistance from an individual responsible to address workload issues (charge nurse, team lead, manager, manager on-call) to resolve the issue.
 - If unresolved, meet with your manager to discuss the issue on the next working day or within the timelines identified in your collective agreement.
 - If unresolved, inform your manager that you will be completing and 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 10 calendar days to discuss the PRWRF. A union rep can attend with you. The manager's written response is due within 10 days of receipt of the PRWRF.
 - Meeting notes must be recorded, and any resolution achieved must be signed by all parties (consult with the Labour Relations Officer regarding the resolution).
 - Your union representative must be involved in all resolution discussions at the unit level.
4. If unresolved, the Bargaining Unit President will submit the PRWRF to the Hospital Association Committee (HAC) within 20 days following the manager's response, or the date when the manager's response was due.
 - Discuss the form and possible resolutions with your Bargaining Unit rep/Professional Responsibility and Workload rep, and prep for the HAC meeting.
5. Attend the HAC meeting within the timelines detailed in the collective agreement and try to resolve the issues. If resolved, Minutes of Settlement are signed by all parties at resolution. The Labour Relations Officer must sign on behalf of ONA. All PRWRFs must be submitted to the Labour Relations Officer.
6. If not resolved:
 - Your Labour Relations Officer attends a HAC meeting to seek resolution with the employer. A HAC meeting may be called to discuss the issue(s).
 - Some collective agreements provide a PRW Review Tool to develop joint recommendations for solutions.
 - If still unresolved, the Labour Relations Officer involves the Professional Practice Specialist for further work on resolution.

Strategies for Professional Responsibility Concerns

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

Strategies for Bargaining Unit Executive Members

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

Strategies for ONA Members

References and materials to support your concerns:

- Refer to professional practice information on ONA's website. Access ONA's website for Professional Practice information, educational resources, tools, and e-learning modules at www.ona.org.
- Refer to the CNO's Practice Standards and Guidelines at www.cno.org.
- Refer to specialty certification requirements. A list of specialty certifications can be found on the Canadian Nurses Association website at www.cna-aicc.ca.
- Review the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario's Best Practice guidelines at <https://rnao.ca/bpg/guidelines>.
- Review legislation and regulations specific to your sector at www.health.gov.on.ca.

Remember, the PRWRF on its own is not a Professional Responsibility and Workload file. Rather, the PRWRF starts a paper trail to identify and demonstrate ongoing issues requiring a response from 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 your Regulatory College.



The Ontario Nurses' Association is the union representing 68,000 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.