



MEETING SD 90-20-25

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 10, 2025
DET'ANCHOGH KÚÉ - EAGLE ROOM
10:30 AM**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer/reflection
3. Review and Adoption of Agenda
4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
5. Public Matters
 - a) Public Briefing on Healthcare Accountability and Sustainability with College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (CANNN)
6. In Camera Matters
 - a) Debrief
 - b) SCOSD Correspondence to HSS Minister
 - c) SCOSD Correspondence to ECE Minister
 - d) SCOSD Workplan
7. New Business
 - a)
8. Date and Time of Next Meeting:
 - a) Wednesday December 10, 2025 at 7pm
9. Adjournment



COLLEGE AND ASSOCIATION OF NURSES
Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Healthcare Sustainability in the Northwest Territories

Feedback Presentation

December 10, 2025

CANNN – the College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut has been in existence since 1975 when we were established as both the regulatory body and association for Registered Nurses practicing in the Northwest Territories.

Since that time the organization has grown to represent both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, and in 2023 expanded to regulate all designations of nursing: Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Psychiatric Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses

Dual Mandate Organization



Protect the Public



Advocate for Nurses



COLLEGE AND ASSOCIATION OF NURSES
Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Future State: Establishing an independent association to amplify the voice of nurses



What are we doing?



Interjurisdictional Nursing Licensure & Labour Mobility

CANNN has entered into a commitment to enhance labour mobility for nursing professionals by facilitating common approaches to licensing with other jurisdictions. This includes the shared principles of remaining:

- Client Centric
- Focused on protection of the public
- Constitutionally Valid
- Stable
- Focused on continuous improvement

Interjurisdictional Nursing Licensure & Labour Mobility

What does this look like?

- Change in licensing types
 - Home vs. host licenses to reduce requirements for nurses that are providing short term contract and/or locum care
- Minimum processing times for verifications
 - Verifications to other jurisdictions are processed in less than 10 business days
- Adoption of Nursys
 - Onboarding of Nursys – a national database of all nursing regulators to review and exchange information on license status. This will be an additional safeguard for the public through the assignment of a unique identifier. Once adopted, this will replace the need for verifications of registration.

Expanded Scope of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses

The regulator is responsible for determining the scope of practice – the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment that LPNs are required to possess to do their work safely. In November of 2024, we released a new – adopted - scope of practice for the profession which allows them to work to their highest possible scope of practice, while also remaining within the confines of legislation. This means, that the regulatory scope of practice supports LPNs advancing their skills and abilities, so long as they are properly supported, educated and trained to deliver care.

RN & RPN Prescribing

We have established the Nursing Practice Committee to advance our legislative ability to regulate advanced practicing Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses. This committee will work towards determining what is required to consider an RN or PRN to have an expanded scope of practice and allows them to prescribe medications and communicate diagnoses for the purpose of prescribing those medications. This committee will determine the educational requirements, as well as any restrictions for medications that these designations are able to prescribe and any settings in which they are able to do so.

Internationally Educated Nurses

Nursing education is not the same in every country and so there are differences in the knowledge, skills, and abilities of nurses who are integrating into the Canadian Healthcare system. Historically we required that these nurses have 1,125 practice hours in another Canadian jurisdiction before we would license them. We have recently updated this to 450 hours in the past two years. For those who do not have these practice hours, they are able to complete the Inspire Assessment. This assessment provides an in-depth overview of their education's curriculum, a review of their clinical and communication skills, and a detailed report of any gaps that may impact their ability to deliver care.

Upon receiving a report, the Registration committee can make a recommendation for coursework to fill these gaps, or the Registrar can consider placing conditions on the IENs license to restrict the areas in which they are practicing.

This is another way in which we are improving how accessible it is to work in our healthcare system, while still upholding our mandate of public safety.

Research

In collaboration with the Nunavut Tunggavik Incorporated. CANNN has secured funding for a research project that is being executed in collaboration with the Institute of Circumpolar Health Research (ICHR) to explore Indigenous Nursing students' experiences writing their licensing exams.

We also hope to further explore the unique recruitment and retention issues impacting northern nursing practices.

What are the perceived needs?



Utilization of RPNs

At this time, there are less than 40 Registered Psychiatric Nurses employed in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Less than five of these professionals are being utilized in the Northwest Territories.

Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) are health care professionals who provide holistic, client-centered care for clients with complex psychosocial, mental health and addictions, and physical needs. RPNs coordinate care for individuals, families, groups, and communities in a variety of health care settings with a variety of health care professionals. RPNs unique scope of practice focuses on mental health, addictions and neurodevelopmental disorders.

Recommendations:

- Review current job descriptions within the health and social services system to see where RPNs may be utilized
- Consider the establishment of RPN educational programs that would meet the unique needs of our mental health system.

Increased Scope for LPNs

With the increase scope of practice for LPNs, comes the inevitable need for education and training for LPNs who are already employed in the system and for those considering applying for jobs in the Northwest Territories. Nurses wish to work to their highest scope of practice, but they need the supports in place to be able to do so. In our survey conducted we heard this specific feedback from many respondents, some quotes shared included: “Bringing in qualified nursing staff is more difficult because people become frustrated that they are not able to work to the full scope of practice.”

“I feel right now that the RNs get all the glory and the LPNs are left behind and treated unfairly. In all other parts of Canada, LPNs are given opportunities to work in various departments such as ICU, ER, Public Health, Dialysis etc. But that opportunity is not given here to LPNs. Nurses comes in many classifications. Not just RN.”

Recommendation:

- NTHSSA is providing skills and education to LPNs; however, additional investment may enhance the sustainability of the healthcare system.

Utilization of Nurse Practitioners

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) have an independent scope of practice and are authorized to provide autonomous care across various clinical settings. Their role is particularly valuable in regions with limited access to physicians.

A 2022 report by the Canadian Nurses Association found that jurisdictions utilizing NPs in expanded roles experienced improved patient outcomes, shorter wait times, and cost efficiencies due to decreased dependency on physician services.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the territory continue to expand and support the integration of Nurse Practitioners, especially in rural and remote communities, to improve access to timely primary care services and reduce system reliance on locum physicians.

Regulation of Allied Health Professionals

Regulation is often seen as red-tape; however, right touch regulation is the process of providing regulatory oversight for a profession that is interested in improving the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the profession to uphold the mandate of public safety – moving away from the punitive historical way of regulating. Being a regulated, particularly self-regulated profession provides reassurance to the profession, and those who work with them that they are held to certain standards. At this time, nursing is the only self-regulated health care profession in the Northwest Territories. As of late, we have heard of significant concerns from the front line regarding the lack of regulation of allied health professionals.

Recommendation:

- Consider regulation for allied health care professionals, including but not limited to: paramedics, midwives, health care aides, respiratory therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists etc.
- Advance professions abilities to self-regulate to reduce conflicts of interest between the employer acting as the regulator.

Funding for Nursing Education Programs

CANNN completes educational program approvals for any nursing education opportunities provided in the NWT. This ensures that programs meet national standards for their students. We hear about the gaps when nurses can't get the training they need in territory – to no fault of the educators, but due to a lack of resources. Some program gaps include:

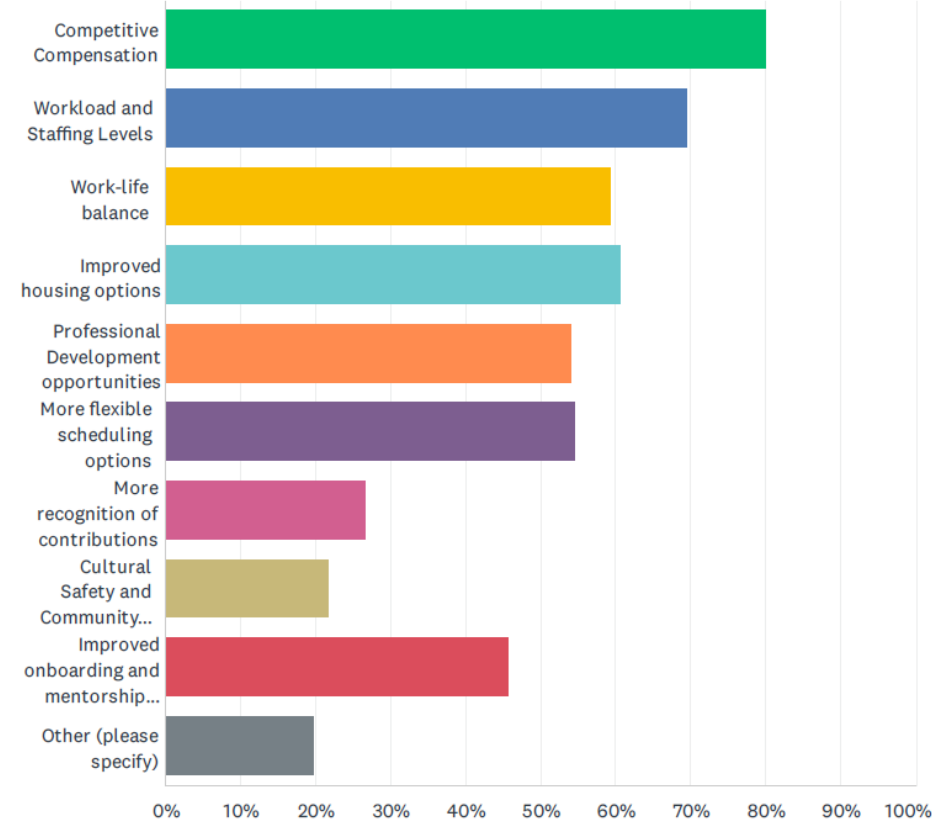
- Nursing refresher programs
- Nurse Practitioner programs
- Nursing Bridging programs
- Registered Psychiatric Nursing programs
- Midwifery programs
- Prescribing and Diagnoses programs

Survey Results

Recently we asked nurses what they want. What would entice them to be recruited or retained in our health care system.

In your opinion, what specific changes or initiatives do you think would entice nurses to work in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut?

Answered: 207 Skipped: 3



Qualitative Results - Survey

- “Improved, consistent safe nurse-patient ratios; More collaborative leadership; Value experience of staff; Listen to staff, allow them to be part of the discussion and solutions”
- “I believe that more flexibility in job status would benefit the north. There are nurses who live in the communities who are there because of a partners job, who do not have the capacity to take a position with the GWNT but who would love to be able to work as a casual, picking up shifts as needed. This model is consistent with many other health regions. There is no real disadvantage and obvious advantages of using the local resources available. Job shares while not as beneficial as regular full time permanent employees help create a stability in the work-place that supports best patient outcomes.”
- “Access to childcare”
- “Paid nursing school practicums with a term casual employment opportunity signed prior to graduating nursing school”
- “Improve management practices”

THANK YOU.

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