



Canadian Nursing Students' Association
Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

Resolution Statement

Establishing a Committee Chair Position for Practical Nurse Advocacy

Approved by: 2019 National Assembly, Canadian Nursing Students' Association

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Submitted to: Board of Directors

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Introduction/background information

According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) there are over 100 000 licenced practical nurses in the nursing workforce (CIHI; 217). In Ontario, this designation is referred to as registered practical nurses and in Quebec as infirmier(ère) auxiliaire; hereafter these designations will be referred to jointly as practical nurses (PN). Collectively, they represent approximately 27% of regulated nurses in Canada (CIHI; 2017). Practical nurses are becoming an increasingly important part of the interdisciplinary healthcare team. The cumulative growth in the supply of PNs from 2007 to 2016 has increased by 49%, compared to 8.9% for registered nurses (RN) and nurse practitioners (CIHI, 2017). In 2016, there were 10,000 new RN graduates and nearly 8,000 new PN graduates holding a licence to practice.

Mutual trust and respect influence intraprofessional RN-PN collaboration, which in turn affects work satisfaction and patient care (Huynh, Alderson, Nadon, & Kershaw-Rousseau, 2011; Kalisch, Lee, & Salas, 2010). A major factor in limited and uncollaborative interactions is due to time constraints, a systemic factor that students do not encounter as much (Huynh, Alderson, Nadon, & Kershaw-Rousseau, 2011). Intraprofessional mutual trust and respect begins in the educational period, and the CNSA can advance the relationships between RN and PN students by providing increased involvement and networking opportunities within the family of student nurses.

In June of 2018, the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) voted to pass a landmark resolution that CNA “work with *nurses of all government legislated designation* to foster and promote a sense of professionalism and pride as a nurse” (emphasis added, p. 13, 2018b). The expected outcome of this resolution is to demonstrate solidarity and inclusion with other nursing designations, including PNs. Since its founding over 100 years ago, CNA has been the national voice of RNs and nurse practitioners, and, with this resolution, CNA can review its governance to expand its member base (2018a).

While PN students are welcome to join CNSA, without a national association, there is not a unified national voice to advocate on behalf of this large branch of the nursing family. In this transition period before CNA updates its governance to reflect the 2018 resolution change, CNSA can cultivate lasting relationships with and advocacy for PN students.



Information on CNSA's position

The Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) represents 57 schools of nursing nationwide, with 24 of them offering practical nursing studies. However, as of the 2018 membership year, only 6 chapter members included PN students under their membership.

In August of 2018, at the CNSA board of directors meeting, the board determined a need to address the lack of representation and input from PN students in the decision making and planning of the organization. The board voted to approve the creation of an ad-hoc Practical Nursing Advocacy Committee, that was subsequently filled. This committee's goals and objectives include engaging and representing the voice of PN students. This ad-hoc committee is directly related to CNSA's governing objective A: to be the primary resource for nursing students (Canadian Nursing Students Association [CNSA], 2016).

Rationale

WHEREAS CNSA's objective is to be the primary resource for nursing students, and;

WHEREAS CNSA's outcome is to provide accessible and relevant information and services our members, and;

WHEREAS CNSA's outcome include engaging nursing students, and;

WHEREAS There is a determined need to increase PN student representation in CNSA, therefore;

Resolution

Be It Resolved That CNSA adopts a Practical Nursing Advocacy Committee Chair to advocate for and promote CNSA involvement with practical nursing students across Canada.

Conclusion

As the national voice of nursing students, CNSA has an active dedication to the positive promotion of nurses and the nursing profession. CNSA board members have determined a need for increased PN student representation in the decision making and planning of the organization. CNSA has committed to be the primary resource for nursing students and thus establishing a position for PN student advocacy better equips CNSA to be the primary resource for PN students. With this, the organization will foster intraprofessional collaboration between RN and PN students in preparation for collaboration as regulated nurses.



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