

# ESCALATING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & WORKLOAD CONCERNS

SUN members have a historical, legally binding, and robust process within their collective agreement, negotiated in good faith, for provisions dedicated to low-level resolution and collaborative problem-solving. The Joint Nursing Advisory Committee (NAC) is made up of the Local, Members, and the Employer.

Mutual goals of collaborative problem-solving include:

- ensure patient safety,
- safe practice,
- quality patient care improvement,
- adhering to professional standards, and
- evidence-informed practice.

When barriers, conflict, or reasonable solutions cannot be found at the NAC by the Local Members, then additional intervention is needed to safeguard safe, high-quality, and appropriate healthcare services.

Unresolved professional practice and workload concerns can be directed to the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC), Employer Board of Directors (BOD), and/or Independent Assessment Committee (IAC).

To learn more about work situation reports, escalation committees, and processes, please see [SUN/SAHO Collective Agreement](#) Articles 56-58 and Appendices A-F.

If you work under a [separate collective agreement](#), review your professional practice articles and contact your Local President or Nurse Practice Officer for assistance.

## **Board of Directors/Board of the Employer**

When work situation reports remain unresolved after a minimum of two NAC meetings, and all options for resolution have been exhausted, a Local NAC can choose with the Nurse Practice Officer to refer the matter to the Board of Directors/Board of the Employer.

A written report will be developed using Situation-Background-Assessment-Recommendations (SBAR) format outlining the work situation reports, problems, issues, evidence, and recommendations to address professional practice and workload concerns.

Using the timelines established in the collective agreement, presentations and recommendations are provided to the BOD to obtain intervention and action on the concerns.

## **Independent Assessment Committee**

SUN Provincial can make a referral on workload concerns to an IAC when the BOD response does not provide a satisfactory outcome to the professional practice concerns presented to them.

An IAC is an independent third party panel made up of a joint-selected registered nursing Chairperson, and a representative nominated individually by SUN and the Employer.

The IAC Hearing process and procedures are specified in the [SUN/SAHO Collective Agreement](#), Article 58 and Appendix A.

The Nurse Practice Officer will work with the Local NAC Chairperson and involved members to create a formal report (SBAR) and presentation focused on work situation reports, nursing advisory process and action plans, data/statistics, evidence, and best practices.

The priority is defining the workload issues, nursing and non-nursing barriers, and the inability to perform professional responsibilities and obligations to ensure patient safety. Recommendations identify the required steps needed to ensure safe, high-quality, competent, and appropriate registered nursing practice by the Employer.

The IAC can make both binding (i.e.: directly about or impacting SUN registered nurses and practice) and non-binding recommendations (i.e.: other healthcare providers/ support staff and environment) to eliminate excess workload created by deficient registered nursing baseline staffing and meeting required regulatory, professional, and organizational obligations.

SUN Provincial will not publicly release the IAC Report unless the binding recommendations are not implemented in a reasonable manner. If the Employer does not act or reasonably address the recommendations, then the SUN Board of Directors may escalate the matter to the Minister of Health, and in due course to the media.