

# HOW TO DECIDE BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND LABOUR RELATIONS?

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

*Formally addressed through Nursing Advisory Process*

- Nursing practice concerns.
- Safety of patients and registered nurses.
- Workload/staffing levels/patient acuity.
- Other factors which negatively affect patient care.

## LABOUR RELATIONS

*Formally addressed through Grievance Process*

- Breach of Collective Agreement.
- Violation of member's rights.
- Breach or change in application of Employer policy/procedure

There are many avenues that address member concerns within SUN collective agreements. Overlap can and does exist between Professional Practice and Labour Relations. The graphic outlines the primary concerns to be addressed in each area, and the best process to be followed based on the root causes of the concern. It is important to remember our professional practice and collective agreements apply to and are about the professional practice of RNs, GNs, NPs, GNPs, RPNs, and GPNs.

The intent and purpose of our collective agreement respecting professional practice, are for safety, efficiency, collaboration, fulfilling regulatory and professional obligations, and patient care. Management rights identify what is within their sphere of control and what SUN has within its sphere of control and influence. This does not eliminate SUN's ability to influence and act on "how" employers use their management rights. The employer is obligated to provide a working environment that is consistent with nursing standards, practices, and procedures, including applicable legislation.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, WORKLOAD, AND STAFFING?

Professional practice incorporates regulatory, professional, organizational, best practice, and evidence-informed practices that directly relate to your ability to practice as a registered nurse and provide care to patients. Regulatory requirements are the minimum expectation of a practicing registered nurse set by either the CRNS or RPNAS. These minimum requirements are defined in professional legislation, bylaws, entry-level competencies, standards, codes of ethics, scope of practice, and related interpretative regulatory documents.

Workload can be difficult to define. Simply put, as defined by our collective agreements, it is when registered nurses are expected to do more work than is consistent with proper client care. This can include excess work, additional tasks and/or assignments, non-nursing duties, or not reasonably possible responsibilities and expectations.

Staffing is about ensuring that the “right provider, is providing care to the right patient, in the right place, at the right time”. Staffing concerns can and do create workload for registered nurses and place patients, staff, and professional practice at risk. There are no collective agreement articles addressing minimum staffing requirements for SUN members. Guidelines, best practices, and benchmarks do exist that can be useful to address concerns within registered nurse practice and the work environment.

### WHEN SHOULD I COMPLETE A WORK SITUATION REPORT?

A work situation report should be completed every time that there is a professional practice and/or workload issue that is not resolved through low-level resolution. To learn more about work situation reports and the Nursing Advisory Process, learning modules, resources, and frequently asked questions are located [here](#) on the SUN website.

### WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE QUESTIONS?

Your Local President and Local Nursing Advisory Committee Chair are your primary contacts to assist you with questions and concerns relating to professional practice, workload, and staffing. You can also contact the SUN Provincial [Nurse Practice Officer](#) responsible for your Local.

Members are encouraged to contact their professional regulatory body (CRNS or RPNAS), and the Canadian Nurses Protective Society for additional consultation and assistance.

### WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES?

SUN Provincial has created a document entitled [Living, Learning & Growing Your Professional Practice Resources](#) to provide members with a launching point to locate regulatory bodies, professional nursing associations, and other organizations for information, resources, and support in professional practice.

### WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE LABOUR RELATIONS QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about interpretation, breach, or violation of collective agreement articles, outside of the professional practice articles, you should contact your Local President, SUN Provincial [Employment Relations Officer](#), or [SUN Duty Roster](#).