

MANAGING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE CONCERNS & RISKS FAQ

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WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE CONCERNS?

Your first line of contact should begin with your colleagues, Charge Nurse, clinical experts (e.g., Clinical Resource Nurse, Clinical Nurse Educator, Coordinator), and your Manager or designate. Consider contacting your Local President and/or Nursing Advisory Committee Chairperson, who has the most direct knowledge about professional practice and your employer's work environment.

WHY IS A WORK SITUATION REPORT SO IMPORTANT?

SUN members have a professional responsibility and accountability to meet regulatory, professional and organizational obligations. Completing a Work Situation Report supports accountability and responsibility by providing the following:

- Documentation they attempted to address concerns impacting their ability to provide safe, competent, ethical and appropriate patient care;
- Evidence of issues and concerns in the work environment making it difficult to achieve or maintain professional standards and ethical responsibilities; and,
- If required, evidence of documentation and management notification of an issue to protect your licence to practice.

Not raising concerns about workload, staffing, and the inability to meet the minimum requirements of professional practice gives the impression of accepting unsafe or unethical situations. When these concerns are not addressed, the Employer may believe the situation is acceptable and that responsibilities and accountabilities can be upheld, even when they cannot.

Review the [SUN WSR/NAC Learning Modules & Resources](#) and familiarize yourself with the 'how to' and introductory information. It is important to know what to do before it happens, and you need to complete a Work Situation Report.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT RISK?

Complaints and concerns about professional practice can occur from the regulatory body, the Employer, or members of the public. Several reporting mechanisms exist that can result in investigations. Outcomes from investigations can result in limitations to a registered nurse or Nurse Practitioner's ability to practice.

Professional practice is defined by the legislation delegated to regulatory bodies, bylaws, standards of practice, codes of ethics/conduct, and other guiding documents required by regulatory bodies that set minimum expectations for registered nurses and Nurse Practitioners to maintain. Employers must file a report with the regulatory body when employment is terminated for cause related to professional competence and/or conduct.

Employers have policies, procedures, and work standards that further define and explain how professional practice is applied, employment expectations, and the employment contract. Employer policies, procedures, and work standards must be consistent with regulatory standards, ethical obligations, and the scope of practice. The Employer cannot remove a registered nurse's regulatory responsibilities and accountabilities.

There are other pieces of legislation and regulation that guide the healthcare system that can lead to issues or concerns within professional practice (e.g., *HIPA*) or may arise from workplace incidents, coroner's inquests, or other types of legal proceedings.

WHAT STEPS SHOULD I TAKE IF I AM NOTIFIED ABOUT A CONCERN OR INVESTIGATION ABOUT MY PRACTICE?

Contact your Local President to arrange for someone to attend the meeting with you to help protect your rights under the collective agreement, and to collect additional information about the concern being addressed by the Employer.

Your Local President can involve your Labour Relations Officer and/or Nurse Practice Officer in reviewing the concern, deciding on next steps, and managing potential outcomes, such as reports to the regulatory body.

Remember, all information involved in an investigation should be kept confidential.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I RECEIVE A COMPLAINT FROM MY REGULATORY BODY?

Stay calm, and immediately contact either your [Labour Relations Officer](#) or [SUN Provincial](#) for assistance.

You have the right to obtain legal counsel to assist you with a complaint about your professional practice at work from SUN Provincial. Although you can waive your right to legal counsel, SUN does not recommend that you take this step.

Your regulatory body is tasked with protecting the public, and one of its core obligations is to investigate professional competence and/or conduct concerns when reported to it.