Self-Regulation

As with many other professions, such as physicians or pharmacists, registered nursing is a self-regulating profession in Manitoba. The purpose of regulation is to ensure that regulated health-care providers practise in a safe, competent and ethical manner. Regulation is all of the activities directed toward this end.

Self-regulation means that the government has granted a professional group, such as registered nurses, the privilege and responsibility to regulate themselves. In essence, society contracts with the registered nursing profession to regulate its own members in order to protect the public from harm that could be caused by RNs in the course of their practice.

Self-regulation acknowledges that a profession itself is in the best position to regulate its registrants because their specialized body of knowledge makes external regulation difficult and impractical. RNs understand registered nursing better than anyone else so it simply makes good sense for the public to have professionals regulate themselves as long as they do so in the public interest. When there is a conflict between public interest and professional self-interest, regulatory bodies such as the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba are mandated to support the public interest. If Manitobans became unhappy with the way professions regulate themselves, they could, through the elected members of the legislature, take away the privilege of self-regulation.

RNs are accountable to Manitobans by adhering to a code of ethics (which is a public statement of the values we hold and what we determine to be acceptable professional conduct), by meeting standards of practice and by involving the public in self-regulation. Meaningful and effective public participation in our decision-making processes is necessary to ensure that the profession remains accountable to society at large. To this end, public representatives sit on the College's Council and on all legislated committees. Truly, the participation of individual RNs, government, employers, educators, other professional groups and the public is essential for responsible self-regulation.

The College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba is charged with carrying out the responsibilities of self-regulation. We ensure the public is protected from unsafe, incompetent, unethical, impaired and unauthorized practice through a number of activities and initiatives. The main things we do can be described under three main areas:

Setting standards for RN education, registration and practice:

- We approve nursing education programs to ensure RNs get the education they need to perform the competencies of an RN.
- We establish and maintain a registration process that ensures those who practice as RNs are qualified and competent.
- We set and maintain the standards of nursing practice that RNs must meet every day to ensure safe, competent and ethical registered nursing care.
- We establish and monitor continuing competency requirements.

Supporting RNs in meeting these standards:

- We provide educational opportunities and resources for RNs.
- We provide practice consultation services for RNs and employers of RNs.

Taking action when these standards are not met:

- We receive and manage complaints about the nursing practice of RNs and order appropriate remedial or disciplinary actions as required.

These are some of the ways the College fulfills its mandate of public protection through the activities of self-regulation.

Resources

College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (2018).
Practice Expectations for RNs.

College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (2018).
Practice Expectations for RN(NP)s.

Canadian Nurses Association (2017).
Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses.

For more information please contact one of our practice and standards consultants at

Our publications are available on our website at **www.crnm.mb.ca**

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