



College of
Registered Nurses
of Manitoba

Practitioner Remediation and Enhancement Partnership (PREP)

What is PREP?

The Practitioner Remediation Enhancement Partnership (PREP) is a framework within which the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba works in partnership with an individual registered nurse and their employer to identify and remedy potential clinical competency deficiencies. PREP targets early identification of RNs who have made significant and repeated errors or demonstrated competency deficits. These concerns may be identified when clinical performance fails to meet the accepted practice direction *Practice Expectations for RNs*. PREP is a positive approach because it offers an opportunity for improvement and enhanced clinical competence as a non-disciplinary, non-punitive intervention.

Background

In response to the Institute of Medicine report *To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System* (2000), the Citizen Advocacy Center in Washington D.C. proposed a greater collaboration between health facilities and regulatory bodies in an attempt to forestall errors and address substandard competence by assisting with remediation. The result was the creation of PREP. Practitioner Remediation Enhancement Partnerships were adopted and implemented by the California Medical Board, the North Carolina Board of Nursing and other regulatory boards in the United States. Upon learning of the success of the PREP program in various nursing boards in the U.S., the College decided to initiate a PREP program in Manitoba. The College's PREP

program was developed in 2007 and is based on the North Carolina Board of Nursing PREP program.

Criteria for Eligibility

A candidate for PREP is an RN who has demonstrated clinical competence issues (i.e. knowledge, skill or judgment) that have not resolved with additional support, coaching or mentoring. In order to be eligible, the RN must be employed by a facility or agency, have no previous serious practice issues, will continue to be employed and be willing to be involved in PREP. In addition, if the RN has more than one employer, all need to be informed and involved in the process.

If safe practice cannot be ensured while supporting the remediating RN, PREP may not be appropriate. There may be circumstances where after entering the PREP partnership the interests of client safety result in a decision made by the employer and/or the College to discontinue the PREP program and take another course of action. In addition, if the RN's knowledge gaps and competence issues are too extensive, PREP might not be the best course of remediation.

Professional misconduct issues (such as verbal abuse of a client or health-care team member as an example) are not suitable for the PREP process because they are not related to a lack of competence but are considered to be intentional actions. Professional misconduct issues should be referred

to the College's CEO/Registrar as a complaint. Further information on professional misconduct can be accessed through the *Discipline Definitions* document on the College website.

The PREP Process

The employer or the RN may contact the College to make a referral to the PREP program. If the RN and the employer are willing to explore the PREP program, the Manager of Professional Conduct will arrange an interview with the RN and the employer(s). The purpose of the interview is to determine the nature of the clinical competence issue, obtain background on the RN's education and work history and to determine the appropriateness for the PREP program. It may be decided that in order to better understand the nature and extent of the clinical competence issues, the RN should be referred for a clinical competence assessment (CCA). If this is recommended, more information regarding the CCA will be provided. The College will determine the type of assessment(s) required and will refer the RN for a CCA.

The results and recommendations of the CCA are sent to the College. It is understood that the RN will pay for the CCA as well as any costs to complete recommended courses of instruction.

At the interview or following analysis of the CCA (if required) a plan of remediation is developed with the RN, the employer and the Manager of Professional Conduct. Learning activities including goals and objectives are developed as well as timelines for completion.

Activities may include attending courses or workshops, self-study initiatives or counseling depending on the nature of the clinical competence issue. There is an expectation that the employer will meet regularly with the RN to discuss progress throughout remediation.

In addition, the College maintains regular contact with the employer and the RN throughout the process to monitor the process both from the RN's perspective as well as from the employer's perspective. The length of time in the PREP is dependent on the individual RN and the extent of the clinical competence deficits.

Advantages of PREP

PREP has been shown to improve client safety. PREP also provides incentives for the individual RN as it offers a proactive, non-punitive approach to address clinical competence issues. PREP has been shown to be associated with decreased risks to client safety, increased retention of nursing staff, increased recruitment of nursing staff and increased staff morale.

The College's PREP is attractive as it offers a positive approach to address issues and improve competence in RNs apart from the traditional complaints and discipline process.

Resources

- *Entry-Level Competencies for Registered Nurses*
- *Practice Expectations for RNs*
- *Discipline Definitions*

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