



In the Matter of: **The Regulated Health Professions Act, S.M.2009, c. R15**

And in The Matter of: Alison Sanders, a member of the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba

To: Alison Sanders CRNM #137280

TAKE NOTICE that the Complaints Investigation Committee (the “committee”) of the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba resolves and hereby censures you with respect to:

- **Failing to maintain professional boundaries by providing nursing care to at least 10 family members.**

On November 4, 2022, in accordance with section 102(1)(d) of *The Regulated Health Professions Act* (the “RHPA”), the committee decided to censure you as a record of its disapproval of the deficiencies in your conduct.

Censure creates a disciplinary record which may be considered in the future by the committee or an Inquiry Committee when determining the action to be taken following an investigation or hearing.

I. The Relevant Facts Are:

You entered into a therapeutic relationship with 10 family members.

This including providing assessments, treatments, and prescriptions to family members from 2017 to 2021.

II. Practice Directions and Code of Ethics

The committee is reasonably satisfied that the facts support that you did not meet the following Standards of Practice:

Practice Direction for Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Nurse (Nurse Practitioners) (RN (NP)s).

Practice Expectations for RNs

An asterisk* indicates a standard of practice from the College General Regulations Part 4.

Professional Practice

Registered nurses are accountable and responsible for nursing practice that is informed by evidence and demonstrates competence. As an RN, you must:

2. Demonstrate professional behaviours, attributes and values.

9. Identify issues which could have an injurious effect on clients or others and participate in resolving professional practice issues that interfere with your ability to practise according to the College regulations, practice expectations, practice directions, Code of Ethics and other provincial and federal legislation.

Ethical Practice

Registered nurses recognize, promote and uphold the ethical standards of the nursing profession. As an RN, you must:

19. Practise in accordance with the values outlined in the Code of Ethics.

25. When engaging in the practice of registered nursing in a clinical practice setting, you must provide nursing care that includes:

e) a referral of the client to another RN or healthcare professional when appropriate; and

*Collaborative Care

26 As an RN, when involved in providing for the health care of a client you must:

b) ensure that you understand your role and the role of other health-care providers in providing for the health care of the client;

Practice Expectations for RN (NP)s

In addition to upholding the Practice Expectations for RNs and the Code of Ethics, RN(NP)s are expected to meet the following nursing practice expectations.

Practice Expectation #1 Use of Knowledge, Skill and Judgment RN(NP)s apply additional knowledge, skill and judgment to address the health needs of clients. RN(NP)s must:

4. Use current evidence to support safe practice.

6. Establish consultative relationships with other healthcare providers appropriate to the clients you are providing care for.

11. Indicate the role and responsibilities of an RN(NP) as a member of the health-care team.

22. Not prescribe for yourself or family members.

CNA CODE OF ETHICS 2017

Part I. Nursing Values and Ethical Responsibilities

Nurses in all contexts and domains of practice and at all levels of decision-making bear the ethical responsibilities identified under each of the seven primary nursing values. These responsibilities apply to nurses' interactions with all persons who have health-care needs or are receiving care as well as with students, colleagues and other health-care providers. The responsibilities are intended to guide nurses in applying the Code to their practice. They also serve to articulate nursing values to employers, other health-care providers and the public. Nurses help their colleagues implement the Code and they ensure that nursing students are acquainted with it

A. Providing Safe, Compassionate, Competent and Ethical Care

Nurses provide safe, compassionate, competent and ethical care.

Ethical responsibilities:

1. Nurses have a responsibility to conduct themselves according to the ethical responsibilities outlined in this document and in practice standards in what they do and how they interact with persons receiving care and other members of the health-care team .

B. Promoting Health and Well-Being

Nurses work with persons who have health-care needs or are receiving care to enable them to attain their highest possible level of health and well-being.

Ethical responsibilities:

4. Nurses collaborate with other health-care providers and others to maximize health benefits to persons receiving care and with health-care needs and concerns, recognizing and respecting the knowledge, skills and perspectives of all.

C. Promoting and Respecting Informed Decision-Making

Nurses recognize, respect and promote a person's right to be informed and make decisions.

Ethical responsibilities:

4. Nurses are sensitive to the inherent power differentials between care providers and persons receiving care. They do not misuse that power to influence decision-making.

D. Honouring Dignity

Nurses recognize and respect the intrinsic worth of each person.

Ethical responsibilities:

7. Nurses maintain appropriate professional boundaries and ensure their relationships are always for the benefit of the person. They recognize the potential vulnerability of persons receiving care and do not exploit their trust and dependency in a way that might compromise the therapeutic relationship. They do not abuse their relationship for personal or financial gain and do not enter into personal relationships (romantic, sexual or other) with persons receiving care.

F. Promoting Justice

Nurses uphold principles of justice by safe guarding human rights, equity and fairness and by promoting the public good.

Ethical responsibilities:

6. Nurses make fair decisions about the allocation of resources under their control based on the needs of persons receiving care. They advocate for fair treatment and fair distribution of resources.

G. Being Accountable

Nurses are accountable for their actions and answerable for their practice.

Ethical responsibilities:

8. Nurses identify and address conflicts of interest. They disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest that arise in their professional roles and relationships and resolve them in the interest of the needs and concerns of persons receiving care.

III. On these facts of the Complaints Investigation Committee records its disapproval of the member's conduct.

As an RN and RN(NP) you must carefully consider when it is appropriate to provide nursing care to family, friends, or acquaintances. Prior to doing so, you must ensure to exhaust all other options and that there are no other care providers available. As well, RN(NP)s must not prescribe for family members. Providing care for your family member and prescribing for family members is a blatant disregard of your obligations as a RN and RN(NP). Nelda Godfrey and Nancy Crigger (2011) use the staircase model of professional development to address professional missteps that a nurse may make in their career. The committee's position is that this model understands your conduct to be the result of moral neglect. Moral neglect is a form of "wrong thinking" that happens in situations when nurses make wrong choices because they put their own desires, wants, or needs before the patient's needs. Your "wrong thinking" contributed to your "wrong decision making" which ultimately led to your "wrongdoing". Although practicing registered nursing is a privilege, it does not entitle an RN nor RN(NP) the right to provide health care services to family members.

Registered nursing is a self-regulated profession in Manitoba. RNs must recognize that self-regulation is a privilege, and that each RN has a continuing responsibility to meet the *Practice Directions: Practice Expectations for RNs* and the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*. In addition, RN(NP)s have a continuing responsibility to meet the *Practice Directions: Practice Expectations for RN(NP)s*.

On these facts, the committee records its disapproval of the lack of professionalism in failing to adhere to the ethical values and standards of practice and the RHPA.

Although the conduct is sufficiently serious to refer to the Inquiry Committee, the committee is mindful of the fact that you do not have a disciplinary record.

The censure will adequately protect the public's concern regarding nurses providing care to their family.

On these facts the committee believes that the censure should be published to act as a specific deterrence for you, and as a general deterrence for other RNs and RN(NP)s.

On these facts, the committee orders you to pay costs of \$1000.

I have been advised and understand that this censure, including my name and a description of the circumstances that led to the censure, will be published on the College's website.