

RNANT/NU Strategic Plan

2019-2022

Context for planning

The Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association (NWTRNA) was established in 1975 by the *Nursing Profession Act* as the regulatory and professional body for registered nurses in the Northwest Territories. In 1999, after Nunavut became a separate territory, the NWTRNA became the regulatory body and professional association for both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Effective January 1, 2004, the Association changed its name to the Registered Nurses Association of Northwest Territories and Nunavut (RNANT/NU).

Registered nurses and nurse practitioners are the only self-regulated health professionals in both the NWT and Nunavut.

The regulatory functions of RNANT/NU are described in the Nursing Profession Acts of each territory. They include the functions to protect the public in relation to Registered Nurses (RNs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs) who practice in the NWT and Nunavut, including:

- Member Registration (licensing);
- Professional Conduct Review; and
- Approval of Education Programs.

RNANT/NU also acts as the professional association for RNs and NPs who practice in the NWT and Nunavut, providing support for their professional practice as well as advocacy and promotion.

RNANT/NU is governed by a Board of Directors as mandated in the Nursing Profession Acts. The Board of Directors consists of 12 members; 10 elected registered nurses and two public representatives appointed by the Minister of Health and Social Services in the NWT and the Minister of Health in Nunavut. The day-to-day operations of RNANT/NU are performed by RNANT/NU employees. In addition, RNANT/NU employees work with a number of RNANT/NU committees composed of volunteer RNANT/NU members and public representatives to perform both regulatory and professional advocacy roles.

The RNANT/NU strategic plan expires in 2022.

Key strategic planning considerations

A few key factors are particularly relevant to the development of the current strategic plan:

- The Government of the NWT is in the process of **updating the *NWT Nursing Profession Act*** and plans to introduce amendments to the legislation by March 2021. RNANT/NU is an active partner in this process. A key anticipated outcome of this legislative change is that RNANT/NU will be mandated to register Licenced Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs), which will require the Association to create or update policies, review membership of the Board and committees, and make other practical adjustments to its operations.
- RNANT/NU is also preparing for a change in the **scope of practice for RNs** to include prescribing drugs and ordering diagnostic tests, which will entail updates to policies, continuing competency requirements and other considerations.
- RNANT/NU serves a **diverse group of nursing professionals who operate in a wide range of different environments across a vast geographic area**. It serves members who operate in territorial and regional centres as well as small, isolated communities and has many members who do not live in the NWT or Nunavut.
- RNANT/NU is in the process of **modernizing its operations and transitioning away from paper-based business processes to integrate more online tools and systems**. This will greatly improve the association's ability to serve its members and to manage its operations efficiently, however, it is a process that takes time and resources. It is also something that will require staff and members to adjust to a new way of doing things. There will be a learning curve and we can expect bumps along the way.
- RNANT/NU has a broad mandate and serves a large number of members with a **very small team of staff and limited resources**. Members who have experience with other provincial associations may have expectations of RNANT/NU that do not align with the resources available. Strategic planning is one important way for RNANT/NU to get the most value from its relatively limited capacity by helping to focus its efforts and facilitate priority setting. It is also a tool that can be used to better communicate priorities and constraints to members.

Our Vision

Our preferred picture of the future

Nurses in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut provide professional, client-centered care, and drive positive change within the health-care system. This improves the safety, health and wellness of the population.

Our Mission

What we do, for whom and why it is important

RNANT/NU has a dual mandate.

- We regulate nursing in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Through licensing, policies and standards we promote excellence in nursing and ensure public safety.
- As an association, we provide nurses with a professional community and advocate for nursing in the public interest.

Our Principles

Guidelines for how we operate and conduct ourselves as an organization

- ***We believe we have a responsibility to act in the public interest.*** *Therefore, we hold nurses accountable for their practice and take appropriate actions to protect the public. We develop policies, procedures and standards that protect the public. When mistakes are made, we look for opportunities to educate and share lessons learned.*
- ***We believe nursing is a proud and valued profession.*** *Therefore, we treat our members with respect and offer them quality professional services.*
- ***We believe that keeping the public safe is a shared responsibility.*** *Therefore, we ensure the public, our members, employers and others within the health-care system know when and how to report concerns related to the conduct or practice of a Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner.*
- ***We believe continuing competence is a fundamental requirement of our profession.*** *Therefore, we expect and require nurses to remain up-to-date on best practices and to continue their professional development, and provide them with information, resources and opportunities to do so.*
- ***We believe nurses play a pivotal role in the health-care system.*** *Therefore, we take a team approach and build relationships that allow us to share our unique perspective, knowledge and experience with governments and other partners.*
- ***We believe that cultural safety is essential in nursing practice.*** *Therefore, we promote and support the development of cultural awareness, sensitivity, humility and competence among our members and advocate for cultural safety in the health care system.*

Our Goals

Broad aims that define the accomplishment of our vision

A. Regulation in the public interest	Ensure nurses in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are providing safe, quality care.
B. Nursing education in the North	Ensure nursing education programs in the NWT and Nunavut approved by RNANT/NU are providing nursing students with a complete, up-to-date curriculum that meets national standards.
C. Membership	Provide our members with information, services, networking and engagement opportunities in support of our mission.
D. Partnership	Improve nursing and health-care in the North through strategic partnerships at the territorial and national level.
E. Competence	Promote and facilitate continuous learning and development of nursing competence among our members.

A. Regulation in the public interest

“Ensure nurses in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are providing safe, quality care”

Objectives

1. Nursing legislation and regulations in the NWT and Nunavut are up-to-date and responsive to the changing realities and requirements of the nursing profession and the health-care system in general.
2. RNANT/NU members consistently meet the criteria required to obtain and renew their licences.
3. RNANT/NU's Professional Conduct Review process effectively addresses conduct and practice concerns and is transparent, fair and respectful of nurses, employers and complainants.
4. RNANT/NU uses its knowledge and networks to pro-actively address issues that impact the delivery of safe, quality care by its members.

Critical conditions that will influence our successful achievement of these objectives

- RNANT/NU requires a complete and up-to-date set of policies.
- RNANT/NU needs to be prepared to respond to the broader scope of practice for RNs (i.e. prescribing and ordering diagnostic tests).
- RNANT/NU needs to be ready to effectively integrate LPNs and RPNs into its membership, policies and practices.
- RNANT/NU must be able to effectively collect and analyse information received through complaints, registration and other feedback from members, employers and the public in order to identify issues or trends that are impacting the delivery of safe, quality care by our members.
- Employers, nurses and the public need to understand RNANT/NU's role, policies and the process for making a complaint.
- Employers, nurses and the public need to trust that the reporting system is fair, effective and focussed on protecting public safety and improving nurse practice.
- Employers, nurses and the public need effective channels to provide feedback to RNANT/NU.
- Employers need to see RNANT/NU as a partner in dealing with workplace issues that are impacting nurses' ability to deliver safe, quality care.

Strategies

1. RNANT/NU is developing a new website and member database which will improve communication with members, employers and the public and will make data collection and analysis easier.
2. RNANT/NU is an active partner in updating the Nursing Profession Act.
3. RNANT/NU will determine the policies and tools required to bring LPNs and RPNs into the Association's membership and develop a plan to implement these steps (e.g. scope of practice, entry-level competencies, a code of ethics and standards of practice).
4. Develop a targeted campaign to increase awareness of RNANT/NU's role in protecting public safety with key audiences (i.e. members, employers, patients and their families).
5. Determine what data should be collected and build these needs into new tools such as the new website and database.
6. Conduct a strategic review of issues and trends from complaints, registration and other feedback to identify areas for action. Share analysis with key partners to discuss areas for collaboration.

B. Nursing education in the North

“Ensure nursing education programs in the NWT and Nunavut approved by RNANT/NU are providing nursing students with a complete, up-to-date curriculum that meets national standards”.

Objectives

1. RNANT/NU-approved institutions are providing quality nursing education in the North that produces qualified graduates who meet the entry-level competencies and the requirements for registration to practice in Canada.
2. RNANT/NU maintains an efficient and effective education approval process for post-secondary nursing programs in the NWT and Nunavut.

Critical conditions that will influence our successful achievement of these objectives

- RNANT/NU must have an effective review and audit program.
- Partners need to understand our role and approach to approving education programs (i.e. governments and educational institutions).

Strategies

1. RNANT/NU is revising its education approval process to be more strategic and streamlined.
2. Develop a strategy to ensure regular and transparent communication and engagement with key partners (i.e. governments and educational institutions) about where we are going with respect to nursing education.

C. Membership

“Provide our members with information, services, networking and engagement opportunities in support of our mission.”

Objectives

1. Members understand what RNANT/NU membership means and the benefits it provides.
2. Members express satisfaction with RNANT/NU membership.
3. There is a sustainable level of participation by members in the RNANT/NU Board, committees and other volunteer opportunities.
4. Members use and value RNANT/NU communications tools available to them (i.e. website, newsletter, emails).

Critical conditions that will influence our successful achievement of these objectives

- RNANT/NU needs to have a consistent and reliable way to gather data and get feedback from members.
- Members need to have easy access to information about RNANT/NU membership and services.
- Members need to be aware of opportunities to volunteer with the Association and see them as relevant to their interests.
- Opportunities for participation need to be designed to fit within the schedules of working nurses.
- The unique needs, interests and challenges of members in Nunavut need to be better understood and integrated into RNANT/NU’s approaches.

Strategies

1. RNANT/NU is developing a new website and member database which will improve communication with members and improve the Association’s ability to collect data through website statistics.
2. RNANT/NU conducted an online membership survey in 2018. This survey will be updated and conducted on an annual basis to provide year-over-year statistics.
3. Establish a Nunavut Working Group that includes staff, Board members as well as other interested members or partners research the particular characteristics and needs of membership in Nunavut and to propose approaches to better reach and engage with them based on a factual assessment of key challenges to meeting the mandate of RNANT/NU in Nunavut.
4. Develop a membership communications strategy that looks at ways to better tailor communication to different types of members (regional vs remote centres, resident vs non-resident, etc.). The strategy should include an improved/expanded “onboarding” package for all new members that explains what it means to be a member of RNANT/NU, as well as key Association policies and services (consider what will be required for the addition of LPNs and RPNs).
5. Consider making certain information a requirement of registration and renewal process (i.e. required online modules).
6. Schedule an annual visit to Nunavut by the President and Executive Director to meet with members and key officials in the Nunavut Government.

D. Partnership

“Improve nursing and health-care in the North through strategic partnerships at the territorial, national and international level.”

Objectives

1. RNANT/NU is involved in strategic discussions and initiatives that are relevant to the nursing profession in the NWT and Nunavut.
2. RNANT/NU ensures the knowledge and interests of its members is included in national and international discussions and initiatives that are relevant to nurses in the North.
3. RNANT/NU has an effective working relationship with the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut.

Critical conditions that will influence our successful achievement of these objectives

- RNANT/NU needs to find a way to overcome persistent challenges in establishing a connection with senior officials in the Government of Nunavut.
- Requires adequate time and resources for the Executive Director and other representatives of RNANT/NU to participate in discussions and initiatives in a consistent and effective way.

Strategies

1. RNANT/NU is an active partner in updating the NWT Nursing Profession Act.
2. RNANT/NU participates in the NWT Joint Territorial Nursing Council.
3. RNANT/NU's Executive Director is in regular contact with key officials in the GNWT.
4. RNANT/NU President and Executive Director schedule an annual trip to Nunavut to meet with members and key officials in the Nunavut Government.
5. RNANT/NU participates on key committees to engage with territorial, national and international partners on issues that are a priority for RNANT/NU.

E. Competence

“Promote and facilitate continuous learning and development of nursing competence among our members.”

Objectives

1. Members meet their responsibilities for lifelong learning and professional development.
2. RNANT/NU provides relevant information and resources to members that facilitate their learning and development.

Critical conditions that will influence our successful achievement of these objectives

- RNANT/NU members are aware of their responsibilities for lifelong learning and professional development.
- RNANT/NU understands the educational needs and interests of its members.
- RNANT/NU remains current as to the educational opportunities and resources available to nurses and the changing requirements and expectations of practice.
- RNANT/NU’s registration committee understands the processes and expectations with respect professional development.

Strategies

1. Review and revise the Continuing Competence Program.
2. Develop an online jurisprudence module that must be completed as part of member registration and renewal.
3. Use the annual member survey to gather general information on education needs and interests of members that can inform communications planning.
4. Use data analysis from the Professional Conduct Review process to identify gaps in competence and jurisprudence.
5. Actively inventory relevant courses, learning opportunities and resources and use existing communications tools (newsletter, emails and website) to communicate them to members. Consider having members opt-in to targeted emails on educational information in areas of interest.
6. Use the new website to support more self-directed professional development planning for members (e.g. written or video guidance on how to set learning goals and plans, FAQs, etc.).
7. Add references to cultural competence in materials that inform members about their responsibilities for lifelong learning and professional development.
8. RNANT/NU Board has struck a working group on Cultural Competence which may provide additional recommendations.