



November 18, 2020

RE: Expanded Prescriptive Authority

To: British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives (BCCNM)

The Association of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia (NNPBC) supports the recent *expansion of prescriptive authority* for Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) in BC. This change will enhance patient care in British Columbia and bring BC nurses scope in line with other jurisdictions across Canada and internationally. NNPBC supports the nursing profession's current responses to the changing needs of public health in a timely and effective manner. Therefore, in support of these changes, it is imperative that regulators draft and enact sound regulatory changes based on evidence and observed systemic needs. In support of nursing and its regulators to lean into these changes NNPBC has conducted a literature and policy review of expanded prescriptive authority for nurses across multiply national and international jurisdictions.

Locally, the new regulatory changes to adding prescriptive authority ¹ to the scope of practice for RNs and RPNs, will improve the following patient care metrics:

- Reduce current inadequate prescriber-to-patient ratio's which in turn will reduce:
- The lengthy wait times for patients who require prescriptions;
- Help to mitigate the increasing complexity and burden of illness arising from these lengthy wait times.

Nationally and internationally (commonwealth countries) the boundaries of nursing prescriptive authority vary, however all the jurisdictions that we reviewed did incorporate some form of prescriptive authority to address gaps in service delivery and improve patient outcomes. Flowing is a brief review of six resources providing information about scope of practice and prescriptive authority for RNs and RPNs in other jurisdictions. Prescriptive authority is becoming more prevalent, primarily to address the need for cost neutral improvements in patient management outcomes. Enhancements to scope and practice of RNs and RPNs also support the trend towards nursing as a solution to the more complex issues related to determinants of health at the community level. After reviewing the currently available literature on this topic NNPBC suggests that *BC should follow the lead of other jurisdictions and countries in modernizing the current nursing scope of practice to include broad nursing prescriptive authority.*

We note in our literature review that the *Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN)* designation varies widely in terms of education, competency and scope of practice. It would be necessary to further examine the RPN position description within BC, to ensure that the literature recommendations align with current BC standards.

Registered Nurse and Midwife Prescribing

Author Australia Nursing Midwifery Federation Position Statement

http://www.anmf.org.au/documents/policies/P_Registered_Nurse_and_Midwife_Prescribing.pdf

Focus: The federation reminds that Registered Nurses in 2000, and Midwives in 2010 prescribe safely and competently, and independently, given their respective education and experience. Continuing a consistent approach based upon a framework for safe care achieves the safest results for patients.

¹ *Scope of Practice for Nurses Practitioners, 2020, 14.*



Providing a complete episode of care: A survey of registered nurse and registered midwife prescribing behaviours and practices

JCL: The Journal of Clinical Nursing, First published October 14, 2019

Authors Mary Casey MMedSci, PhD, RGN; Daniela Rohde BA(Hons), MSc, PhD; Agnes Higgins PhD, MSc, BNS; Tom Buckley RN, PhD, et al.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jocn.15073>

Focus: This article studies an international group of registered nurses and registered midwives with prescriptive authority and the barriers and challenges they face in practicing to scope parameters even in cases where they possess competencies to do so.

Nursing Council of New Zealand

Regulatory Information regarding Scope of Practice in Prescriptive Authority in New Zealand 2020

https://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/Nursing/Nurse_prescribing/NCNZ/nursing-section/Nurse_Prescribing.aspx#:~:text=Prescribing%20by%20registered%20nurses%20makes,to%20prescribe%20any%20prescription%20medicine

Focus: This regulator provides PDF documents to the general public outlining scope of practice for registered nurses with prescriptive authority. Documents detail education, competencies, types of medication and scheduled medication to be prescribed, and other expectations in prescribing for RNs under this Council.

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland

Regulatory Information regarding Scope of Practice in Prescriptive Authority in Ireland 2020

<https://www.nmbi.ie/Education/Standards-and-Requirements/Prescriptive-authority>

Focus: This board outlines the curriculum, examination, regulatory standards and professional standards for nurses and midwives with prescriptive authority in Ireland. Once certified, professionals are recognized as nurse prescribers. Individual nurses must successfully pass education to obtain prescriptive authority.

Framework for Registered Nurse Prescribing in Canada

Author Canadian Nurses Association April 2015

https://www.cna-aicc.ca/~media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/cna-rn-prescribing-framework_e.pdf?la=en

Focus: This document details a framework for RNs in Canada to prescribe medications and discusses the necessity of utilizing the RN for this role. Benefits include enhanced patient care and reduced burden in the health care system.

The Need for Nurses in DR Congo, Wonder Foundation Insite Report

United Kingdom

Authors for Wonder Foundation 2019: Isabel Cumming-Bruce, Olivia Darby, Alan Locke

<https://wonderfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/congo-report-online.pdf>

Focus: Recommendations for critical action to health care reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). These actions include support for nursing education and training to respond to health crises across



the lifespan. A shortage of nurses combined with poor education leads to poor health and higher mortality rates. This report discusses the need for international education, and states that seeking external educational support is a priority.

There is evidence that changes to scope of practice can restore patient health and is helping to ease constraints on the health care system. We also see evidence of suffering where the opportunity for change was not, or cannot yet, be taken.

Prepared by Tammi Guimond, On Behalf of:

Michael Sandler 

Michael Sandler, RN MSN CNCC(C)
Executive Director
Nurses & Nurse Practitioners of BC