

The Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) Board of Directors met January 5, 2012 and announced its decision to work with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) to develop and deliver a computer-adaptive entry-to-practice examination to be introduced in January 2015 for applicants seeking initial registration in New Brunswick.

Please refer to the following Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF A COMPUTER ADAPTIVE EXAM FOR ENTRY TO THE REGISTERED NURSE PROFESSION

What was the selection process?

A Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the Development and Delivery of a Computer Adaptive Exam for Entry to the Registered Nurse Profession was issued by the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) in September 2011 on behalf of 10 Canadian regulatory bodies.

A Steering Committee comprised of representatives from the regulatory bodies, with the assistance of a Canadian psychometric expert, reviewed the proposals submitted and met with proposers to clarify issues and seek additional information on which to make a decision.

Based on the outcome of the RFP process, the Steering Committee recommended that the regulatory bodies enter into negotiations with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN).

Who was selected to partner in the development of the computer-adaptive exam?

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) was selected to partner in the development of a state-of-the-art, computer-adaptive RN entry exam after 10 Canadian regulatory bodies completed a comprehensive search for an exam provider. The search included a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) process and an independent assessment of the final proposals by a Canadian psychometric expert.

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Why was the National Council of State Boards of Nursing selected?

The NCSBN offered the best option and a proven ability to meet the needs and expectations of the Canadian regulatory bodies.

What is the NCSBN?

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) is a not-for-profit organization through which US boards of nursing work together on matters of common interest, including the development of registration/licensing examinations in nursing. For more on the NCSBN, visit www.ncsbn.org.

What were the evaluation criteria for selection?

The NCSBN proposal best met the evaluation criteria in terms of:

- Meeting public interest goals: legally defensible, credible and accessible;
- Testing entry level competencies of Canadian nursing practice;
- Stakeholder input in key activities that contribute to exam integrity;
- Affordability to candidates based on a solid business model;
- Accessible, secure, and adaptable testing centres;
- Frequent and timely statistical analysis and reporting;
- The ability to adapt to the regulator's needs as they continue to evolve;
- Experience communicating and working with regulatory bodies, transitioning to automated examinations, and delivering excellence in testing services;
- A proven state-of-the-art product;
- Ability to deliver the exam in both English and French; and
- A shared goal of excellence in nursing regulation.

Why change the existing method for exams?

Currently, RN candidates write a paper and pen exam. The current CRNE continues to be a valid and reliable assessment of entry level competencies. The new exam will have computer features that make it affordable, flexible, and accessible year-round, and provide exam results within 48 hours leading to timely registration of nursing candidates.

When will the computer adaptive RN entry exam be introduced?

The goal is to introduce the new exam in January 2015.

How will the exam be implemented?

A fundamental responsibility of the regulatory bodies is ensuring RN candidates meet the entry to practice competencies and are qualified to provide safe and

ethical care. The entry to practice examination is a critical tool in this assessment.

To ensure the exam meets Canadian requirements, the regulatory bodies will participate in exam development and administration. This will include a thorough study of Canadian RN practice and entry-level competencies and input from Canadian nurses and nurse educators. The exam will be provided in both English and French.

There will be opportunities for nurse educators and students to learn about the new exam well in advance of its implementation. Canadian RNs will participate in all steps of the exam development process.

The end result will be a new RN entry exam that offers a fair and accurate assessment of a candidate's readiness to practise nursing in Canada.

How will the exams be administered?

- Online year-round self-scheduling in English and French which increases accessibility to testing in our province and year-round testing nationally
- Year-round online call centre support in English and French
- Online review and practice tests
- Quarterly reporting to regulatory bodies on psychometric reliability/statistics
- Reliable scoring model

How will the privacy and confidentiality be protected?

The exam provider must comply with Canadian Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and all applicable provincial/territorial privacy legislation.

How does the decision to go with the NCSBN affect NANB's relationship with the CNA?

The NANB will maintain its strong relationship with CNA as the national professional voice of registered nurses, advancing the practice of nursing and the profession to improve health outcomes in a publicly-funded, not-for-profit health system.

How do I get more information about the exam process and the NCSBN?

The NANB will keep up-to-date information online at www.nanb.nb.ca. If you require further information, please contact the NANB directly @ 1-800-442-4417. For more information on the NCSBN, visit www.ncsbn.org.