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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NANB Board Responds to Poor Performance on Entry-to-Practice Exam

FREDERICTON, December 3, 2015- The Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) is a professional regulatory organization that exists to protect the public and to support nurses by promoting and maintaining standards for nursing education and practice, and by promoting healthy public policy. Under the *Nurses Act*, NANB is legally responsible to protect the public by regulating members of the nursing profession in New Brunswick.

Since introducing the NCLEX-RN exam in January 2015, there have been approximately 400 exams issued in the province. Results for Anglophone and Francophone New Brunswick nursing graduates continue to be disappointing, significantly lower than our Atlantic counterparts and the lowest performance in the country. In acknowledgement of the impact of the transition to a new exam on many stakeholder groups; a special meeting has been called of the NANB Board for early December.

“As a regulatory body for the nursing profession, we are mandated to ensure nurses entering practice have the necessary knowledge and skills to practice both safely and competently in the public’s interest,” says Laurie Janes, Executive Director of the Nurses Association of New Brunswick. “Preliminary provincial data is currently being analyzed and shared with nursing programs as we initiate an action plan to work collaboratively through this transition phase with all stakeholders.”

In 2012, three years prior to the first exam writing, communication with nursing stakeholder groups was initiated. Different methods of communication were used including: three NCLEX-RN information workshops developed for nurse educators (Moncton/Fredericton/Halifax); regularly posted updates on the NANB website (Communique), and presentations by NANB staff to graduating student classes across the province. Presentations are scheduled by contacting NANB offices.

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Students can access a variety of resources to prepare for the NCLEX-RN exam. Key resource documents for educators and students were identified in 2012. Those documents are on the NANB website in both official languages. As NANB receives student, educator, feedback further resources are considered. As we continue to dialogue with students and families, and hear messaging from other nursing organizations, it is apparent to NANB there is a need to move towards a productive dialogue fostering solutions that assist graduate nurses through this transition period for the new exam.

“As exam results continue to become available, the trend would indicate improvements upon a 2nd write attempt of the exam,” says Janes. “Although this is encouraging, we are sympathetic to those struggling to enter our profession and want to take any action possible to support their success in entry to practice while being mindful of our regulatory mandate for public safety.”

The NANB Board of Directors will convene for a special meeting in December to review potential opportunities that may enhance graduate nurse success.

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