

## Fact Sheet: Dual Registration and Concurrent Practice

In Canada, about 20 per cent of occupations are regulated to protect the health and safety of Canadians (CICIC, 2022). Regulated professions<sup>1</sup> are governed by legislation and regulated by their respective regulatory authority. The Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB) regulates the practice of registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) in New Brunswick. Legislation (i.e., [The Nurses Act](#)) defines the scope of practice while the NANB establishes regulation (e.g., registration requirements, standards of practice, practice guidelines) to support safe, competent, and ethical nursing practice (NANB, 2019a).

*Dual registration* applies to a nurse<sup>2</sup> holding a registration with the NANB and another professional regulatory body and authorized to practice in healthcare under both professional titles<sup>3</sup>. This is considered concurrent practice<sup>4</sup>. Dual registration requires that the regulated professional be accountable to the scope and standards of practice of each profession and to each regulator. Nurses registered with the NANB and with another regulator should contact both regulatory bodies to verify if dual registration is permitted, and for additional guidance on practising in this context.

Dual registration can cause role confusion, blurring of accountability, and potentially impact the quality of care when scopes of practice overlap. (NSCN, 2017). Nurses involved in practice under dual registration are expected to:

- Understand the scope of practice and accountabilities related to both registrations.
- Practice within the scope of nursing practice when nursing care is being provided.
- Demonstrate accountability for their conduct and nursing practice.
- Provide information to allow clients/co-workers/employers to understand the scope of nursing practice, set clear practice expectations and identify accountabilities.
- Ensure the client health record clearly reflects the nursing services provided.

If healthcare services are offered in both capacities in the same setting, the client should be informed of the dual registration and authority to perform services under both scopes of practice.

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of regulated professions in New-Brunswick, visit: [Certified Occupations, \(Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, GNB\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this document, the term “nurse” refers to the graduate nurse, the registered nurse and the nurse practitioner.

<sup>3</sup> For example, dual registration would apply to a nurse holding a RN or NP registration and a registration to practice as: a Primary Care Paramedic, a dietician, a physiotherapist, a social worker, or a massage therapist.

<sup>4</sup> Concurrent practice also applies to a nurse practising in both an NP and an RN role without a dual registration- see section: NP Practising as an RN.

## Accountability

The nurse is accountable to the client, public, employer, and profession. Nursing practice is expected to be in accordance with relevant legislation, standards, regulatory requirements, and employer policy (NANB, 2019b). While employer policy supports nursing practice and defines lines of accountability at the organizational level, the practice and conduct of nurses must comply with the legislated scope of practice and standards of practice. Furthermore, nurses are accountable for reflecting on their individual scope and for considering whether they have the adequate knowledge, skill, and judgment to perform an activity or procedure safely and competently (NANB, 2020).

Indicator 1.6 of the [Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses](#) requires that nurses recognize and take action in situations where client safety is potentially or actually at risk. This sets the expectation that the nurse determines when and what knowledge and skills must be applied to ensure safe, competent, and ethical care in the client's best interest. This applies whether practising as a nurse or in another healthcare provider role. When the nurse is practising in another healthcare provider role, the expectation would be that client issues that require nursing care be reported to the most responsible nursing care provider or acted on accordingly depending on the urgency.

Because employer policies further define the lines of accountability, it is important to clarify the employer expectations before engaging in concurrent practices. If these conflict with the regulatory expectations (as described above), the nurse should consult NANB for further guidance.

For more information on the accountabilities related to concurrent practice under dual registration, refer to the [Dual Licensure Case Study](#).

### NP practicing as an RN

Concurrent practice also applies to a nurse concurrently practicing under different nursing titles, such as an NP practising as an RN. In this case, the nurse would hold an NP registration only. NPs in N.B. are accountable for both the [Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses](#) and the [Standards for the Practice of Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners](#). Although NANB does not encourage concurrent or simultaneous practice under both titles, in the event a NP practices as an RN:

- The NP must determine whether she has the knowledge and competence to work in the specific setting and with the client population.
- It must be clear to the employer, the health care team, and the clients that the NP is practicing as a RN and not as a NP.
- The NP remains accountable to the NP advanced knowledge and skills; meaning that the NP may assess and identify client issues that an RN might not and would be expected to report the findings to the most responsible provider for follow up.



## **Nursing Practice Hours**

Each nursing category (RN, NP) has distinct registration requirements for currency of practice. When practising in both a nursing and another healthcare provider capacity, the hours worked in a non nursing capacity cannot be counted as nursing practice hours. This requires ensuring separate and distinct tracking of services. Likewise, the hours accumulated while working in a scope of nursing practice may not be used to satisfy the currency of practice requirement for another category of nurse. Meaning that, the NP cannot report hours working as an RN as NP hours of practice for registration purposes.

For any questions regarding nursing practice, contact a NANB nurse consultant at [practiceconsultation@nanb.nb.ca](mailto:practiceconsultation@nanb.nb.ca)

This document does not constitute legal advice with respect to dual practice. Details of liability coverage should be determined prior to engaging in concurrent healthcare practices. NANB recommends consulting the [Canadian Nurses Protective Society](#) (CNPS) for more information on related liability risks and protection.



## References

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- Nurses Association of New Brunswick. (2019a). *Practice Guideline. A Collaborative Approach to Assigning, Delegating and Teaching in Health Care.* [https://www.nanb.nb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NANB-ANBLPN-PG-CollaborativeApproachAssigningDelegatingTeachingHealth\\_Care-May19-E-1.pdf](https://www.nanb.nb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NANB-ANBLPN-PG-CollaborativeApproachAssigningDelegatingTeachingHealth_Care-May19-E-1.pdf)
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- The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials. (2022). *Learn about qualifications recognition.* [https://www.cicic.ca/928/find\\_out\\_if\\_your\\_occupation\\_is\\_regulated\\_or\\_not.canada](https://www.cicic.ca/928/find_out_if_your_occupation_is_regulated_or_not.canada)
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