



Nurse Practitioners  
Association of Canada

Association des  
infirmières et  
infirmiers praticiens  
du Canada

NPAC-AIIPC  
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## Position Statement

# Pan-Canadian Nurse Practitioner Regulation and Licensure in Canada

Across Canada Nurse Practitioner practice is restricted to the province or territory the NP is licensed. In order to provide care in other provinces or territories a NP must apply for licensure with each individual regulator. This process restricts access to care for Canadians and limits NPs ability to work to full scope.

### 1. Introduction

In Canada, the need for Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner regulation and licensure is imperative to ensure the safe and effective delivery of healthcare services. Nurse practitioners are crucial in delivering primary, acute care and long-term healthcare and have the advanced skills and training necessary to provide a wide range of healthcare services. This work addresses the importance, challenges, and benefits of implementing a Pan-Canadian framework for nurse practitioner regulation and licensure in Canada. By establishing uniform standards and qualifications, Pan-Canadian regulation can improve patient care, enhance professional recognition, and facilitate the labour mobility of nurse practitioners across provinces and territories.

### 2. Importance of Pan-Canadian Nurse Practitioner Regulation

Pan-Canadian Nurse Practitioner Regulation plays a crucial role in Canada's healthcare system. It ensures standardized and consistent guidelines for nursing practitioners' education, training, and practice nationwide. By implementing a Pan-Canadian framework for regulation, Canada can address the variations in licensing requirements and scopes of practice that currently exist among different provinces and territories. This would enhance the mobility and interoperability of



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nurse practitioners, allowing them to practice in any jurisdiction without undergoing additional regulatory processes. For example, for Nurse practitioners who provide virtual care must be licensed in every province or territory the patient resides in. The result of this costly and reduces access to care for patients across Canada. Moreover, Pan-Canadian regulation promotes patient safety by establishing uniform standards of competence and ethics, thus enabling Canadians to receive high-quality care from nurse practitioners, regardless of their location. It also facilitates interprofessional collaboration and communication, as healthcare teams can trust that nurse practitioners possess a consistent level of expertise. Additionally, creating a Pan-Canadian regulatory body for nurse practitioners can provide a platform for research and quality improvement initiatives specific to the profession, leading to advancements in healthcare delivery and outcomes across the country.

### **3. Current Challenges in Nurse Practitioner Licensure**

Nurse practitioner licensure in Canada currently faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of uniformity in licensure requirements and processes across different provinces and territories. Each jurisdiction has its own set of regulations and criteria for nurse practitioners to obtain licensure, leading to inconsistencies and barriers for practitioners who wish to practice in multiple locations. This fragmentation hinders the portability of licenses and limits the mobility of nurse practitioners within Canada. Additionally, the lack of harmonization in licensure standards makes it difficult to ensure the quality and competency of nurse practitioners nationwide. Another challenge is the limited recognition of nurse practitioners as autonomous healthcare providers within the healthcare system. In some provinces, nurse practitioners still face restrictions regarding the scope of practice and prescribing authority, which can impede their ability to provide comprehensive care to patients. Furthermore, there is a need for standardized continuing education requirements and ongoing quality assurance processes to ensure that nurse practitioners maintain their skills and knowledge up to date. Addressing these challenges is crucial to establishing a



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consistent framework for nurse practitioner licensure in Canada, promoting nationwide mobility and ensuring high-quality care delivery.

#### **4. Benefits of Pan-Canadian Nurse Practitioner Licensure**

Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner licensure in Canada offers numerous benefits for healthcare professionals, health organizations and the public seeking healthcare. Firstly, it promotes consistency and uniformity in the qualifications and competencies required for nurse practitioners nationwide. This ensures that nurse practitioners possess a standardized level of knowledge and skills, enhancing the quality and safety of patient care. Additionally, Pan-Canadian licensure facilitates mobility for nurse practitioners, allowing them to practice in different provinces and territories without requiring time-consuming and duplicative licensing processes. This enables healthcare professionals to meet the evolving healthcare needs of various regions and enhances access to primary care services for patients. Furthermore, Pan-Canadian licensure promotes the collaboration and integration of nurse practitioners within the healthcare system. By recognizing their expertise and providing a consistent framework for their practice, it encourages interdisciplinary teamwork and strengthens the role and opportunities for nurse practitioners to deliver comprehensive healthcare services. Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner licensure in Canada would improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and standardization of nurse practitioner practice, benefiting both healthcare professionals and Canadians!

#### **5. Conclusion**

The Nurse Practitioners Association of Canada calls for Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner regulation and licensure in Canada. Establishing a standardized framework across provinces and territories will address the current challenges in nurse practitioner licensure, ensuring consistency in education, training, and competency standards. With a Pan-Canadian approach to regulation, nurse



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practitioners will be able to practice seamlessly across the country, enhancing access to high-quality healthcare services for all Canadians. Furthermore, Pan-Canadian licensure will enable the recognition of nurse practitioners as autonomous healthcare professionals, maximizing their contributions to the healthcare system. In summary, the benefits of Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner licensure are numerous and far-reaching, including improved patient care, increased efficiency, enhanced workforce mobility, and a stronger professional identity for nurse practitioners. Therefore, Canada must prioritize developing and implementing a Pan-Canadian nurse practitioner regulation and licensure system.

### **About NPAC**

The Nurse Practitioners Association of Canada (NPAC) is the national voice of Nurse Practitioners, representing NPs in every province and territory. NPAC advocates for evidence-based policy, education, and practice environments that enable NPs to deliver accessible, high-quality care to all Canadians.

*Approved by the Nurse Practitioners Association of Canada of Board of Directors: May 2024*