



SRNA Continuing Competence Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Continuing Competence?

Continuing Competence is the ongoing ability of a RN, RN(NP) to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, judgment and personal attributes required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting. Maintaining this ongoing ability involves a continual process of linking the Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and lifelong learning. The RN, RN(NP) reflects on his/her practice on an ongoing basis and takes action to continually improve that practice.

What are the requirements for the Continuing Competence Program?

Each year, a RN, RN(NP) is required to complete a reflective practice review which includes:

- A personal assessment of his/her nursing practice according to Nursing Practice Standards and Foundation Competencies approved by SRNA Council;
- Feedback on that personal assessment;
- Development and implementation of a written learning plan based on the assessment; and
- A written evaluation of the impact that the learning plan has had on the RN's, RN(NP)'s practice.

Do I have to complete the program every year?

Yes, every year RNs, RN(NP)s will be expected to:

- Complete a personal assessment;
- Engage in peer feedback;
- Develop a learning plan which includes a timeline to meet priority learning needs for that registration year. The learning plan must identify priority learning needs to be met that year. Learning needs and associated educational or experiential activities that may take more than a year to complete may also be included; and
- Include a written evaluation of the impact that the learning plan has had on his/her practice.
- Records should be kept for a minimum of 5 years.

What standards do I use to assess my nursing practice?

- RNs will use the current *Code of Ethics* and the current *Standards and Foundation Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses*.
- RN(NP)s will use the above documents as well as the *Registered Nurse (Nurse Practitioner) RN(NP) Standards and Core Competencies, 2003*.

Where can I find a copy of the Standards and Foundation Competencies?

The standards and foundation competencies are included in the continuing competence documents and can also be found on the SRNA website – www.srna.org under Standards and Practice Documents.

I am just coming back to work after having been on a leave of absence. I have not maintained a practising licence. Do I still have to complete the program?

Yes, RNs, RN(NP)s who have not worked at all in the previous year and are returning to work after the leave will be expected to participate in a modified Continuing Competence Program. The RN, RN(NP) must

complete a personal assessment and develop a learning plan which includes a timeline to meet priority learning needs for the registration year. He/she will not be required to engage in peer feedback, implement or evaluate his/her learning plan prior to licensure.

What are the requirements for a member with a Graduate Nurse licence?

The Graduate Nurse is expected to meet the continuing competence requirements. This means he/she will need to complete a personal assessment, obtain feedback and develop a learning plan within eight months of the initial Graduate Nurse licence being issued.

If I am audited, will I be required to submit my documents?

Yes, a RN, RN(NP) may be required to submit his/her documents if randomly selected to be part of the annual audit. The documents he/she may be required to submit are protected under *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988* which ensures that any information related to a member's participation in the Continuing Competence Program is confidential. The auditing process may include:

- Completion of a continuing competence survey
- Submission of documents for review

Members will receive feedback following the audit. Their Continuing Competence documents will be returned at that time.

What criteria will be used to audit my documents?

The criteria for auditing include:

- Demonstration of participation in the Continuing Competence Program;
- Linkage between the personal assessment, peer feedback, learning priorities selected, learning plan goals and learning activities;
- Linkage demonstrating the relevance of the learning plan to the practice role;
- Evidence of completion of learning activities; and
- Evaluation of the impact learning has had on nursing practice.

What information will be requested in a continuing competence audit survey?

Each year a random sample of members will receive an audit survey that must be completed. The survey will ask questions related to the RN's, RN(NP)'s activities and participation in the Continuing Competence Program. The completed survey will be retained together with the registration renewal form for five years.

What is the difference between answering a survey and submitting continuing competence documents?

A survey involves the RN's, RN(NP)'s response to a number of questions related to his/her reflective practice review. The RN, RN(NP) is not required to submit his/her actual documents which include personal assessment, evidence of peer feedback, learning plan and evaluation.

What do I need to include if I am requested to submit my documents as part of the audit?

The RN, RN(NP) will be asked to submit his/her personal assessment, evidence of peer feedback, a developed learning plan including learning activities completed (e.g. certificate of attendance at conferences, etc.) and evaluation of the impact that the learning had on his/her nursing practice.

Who will audit my documents?

At least two RNs, RN(NP)s will review submitted documents for completeness. The criteria that will be used are very broad, recognizing the uniqueness of each person's practice. All identifiable information on the submitted documents will be masked so that the RN's, RN(NP)'s identity remains anonymous to the reviewers.

How are RNs, RN(NP)s selected to review documents?

All SRNA practising members will have the opportunity to be asked to volunteer to be a member of the audit panel. Each member chosen will receive an education session prior to the documentation review. They will receive a per diem honorarium.

How often will an audit occur?

Audits will occur annually. At this time they are scheduled for the spring.

Am I required to answer a continuing competence survey or submit my documents if requested?

Yes, a RN, RN(NP) will be expected to respond within 30 days of the request. Failure to respond to the audit request will place his/her licence in jeopardy.

How will I know if I have met the requirements of the audit?

The RN, RN(NP) will receive a letter containing feedback related to his/her documents. The intent of the audit is to assist members to be successful in their nursing practice.

How many learning activities must I have in my learning plan and do they need to be approved by the SRNA?

There is no fixed number of learning activities. The number of activities in a RN's, RN(NP)'s learning plan will be directed by his/her personal assessment of his/her practice. For example, if a RN, RN(NP) has just moved into a new role, he/she may have a number of goals and objectives. The SRNA will not approve a RN's, RN(NP)'s learning activities. The activities will be determined by his/her self-development goals and learning plan.

I am an employer, how can I support my employees?

The individual RN, RN(NP) has the professional obligation and primary responsibility for continuing competence. The employer is encouraged to support RN, RN(NP) employees. This can be achieved by asking staff about their learning needs and appropriate learning activities that could enhance their practice. Providing or facilitating educational opportunities is one of the ways employers can support RNs, RN(NP)s in continually developing their knowledge and skills. Professional development can be enhanced by employers and RNs, RN(NP)s collaborating to develop appropriate educational opportunities.

Do I still have to maintain 1125 hours of nursing practice in five years?

Yes. SRNA bylaws specify that members are required to practice as a RN a minimum of 1125 hours in a five year period prior to the year registration is sought, in addition to participating in the Continuing Competence Program. RN(NP) licensure requires 1800 hours of nurse practitioner recognized practice in three years; 600 of those hours of those hours must be in the clinical setting.

What resources are available to help me meet the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program?

The Continuing Competence Program documents are available at www.srna.org. These can be placed in a 3-ring binder for quick and easy access. There are several references and resources listed in the appendix of this document. A Continuing Competence Tutorial has been developed and is accessible on the SRNA website. This tutorial will provide examples of how RNs from different practice areas have chosen to complete their reflective practice review. It will facilitate the development of your own practice review. Another excellent resource is The Canadian Nurses Portal – www.NurseONE.ca. Developed by CNA in 2006, it is a personalized interactive web based resource that provides RNs, RN(NP)s in Canada with access to current and reliable information that will support their nursing practice, manage their careers, and allow them to connect with colleagues and health care experts. RNs, RN(NP)s will have the ability to develop and save their individualized continuing competence documents on the NurseONE website.

Does the program require the completion of continuing education units (CEUs)?

No. In order to provide maximum flexibility as recommended by members, the SRNA has opted not to use this approach. The Continuing Competence Program requires the completion of a personal assessment and a self directed learning plan. This allows the RN, RN(NP) to choose from a wide variety of learning activities based on his/her learning style and individual needs in his/her area of practice.

What documents do I have to submit with my annual registration renewal?

A RN, RN(NP) will not be required to submit documents as part of his/her annual registration. However, he/she will be required to declare on the annual registration renewal form that he/she has completed the Continuing Competence Program.

What if I do not participate in the Continuing Competence Program?

Participation in the Continuing Competence Program is mandatory for all members of the SRNA. Failure to participate in the program will place a RN's, RN(NP)'s licence in jeopardy for the next licensure year. Although the SRNA recognizes the professional demands of its members, the regulatory responsibility is to protect the public by ensuring RNs, RN(NP)s are competent. Individual circumstances may be reviewed on a case by case basis.

How do I learn more about the program?

There are a variety of ways to learn more about the program. The SRNA website (www.srna.org) is a good starting point. The SRNA will coordinate educational sessions in your area upon request.

Call 1-800-667-9945 or 359-4200 in Regina to request an education session.