



## SRNA POSITION STATEMENT PROFESSION-LED REGULATION

The government of Saskatchewan has granted the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA), through *The Registered Nurses Act (RN Act, 1988)*, the privilege and responsibility to regulate registered nurses (RNs) and registered nurse (nurse practitioners) (RN(NP)s), in the public interest. An essential component of profession-led regulation is public participation on SRNA council and on committees.

### Profession-led regulation

Profession-led regulation is the regulation of a profession by its members, where the regulatory body is accountable for ensuring members are competent and act in the public interest in providing the services that society has entrusted to them.

Profession-led regulation is premised on the belief that those within the profession possess the knowledge, skill, and judgement to best regulate that profession. This is accomplished through accountability of the regulatory body and its members, where both are answerable for their actions and are open to scrutiny and challenge (ICN, 2013).

### The SRNA and profession-led regulation

The primary purpose of profession-led regulation is protection of the public from harm. The role of the regulating body is to ensure that all individuals seeking entry into and maintenance on the register are qualified, competent, and ethical professionals.

The SRNA believes that it can best protect the public by:

- Setting requirements for the entry to the profession,
- Approving nursing education programs,
- Establishing standards of practice for RNs and RN(NP)s,
- Supporting members to meet practice standards through consultation and education,
- Promoting continuous learning and professional development as a standard for safe practice through a continuing competence program, as a requirement for ongoing licensure,
- Intervening when a member's practice does not meet standards, and
- Using evidence-informed information to continuously innovate towards best practice in regulatory policy.

The SRNA recognizes the legitimate roles and responsibilities of interested parties including the public, the profession and its members, government, employers and other professions. In the spirit of collaboration, the regulatory body consults with these parties and incorporates their perspectives in setting standards and administration of *The RN Act*. All practicing RNs and RN(NP)s participate in profession-led regulation when they accept responsibility to practise according to professional standards and code of ethics (CNA, 2007).

## Principles of profession-led regulation

Adherence to the principle of transparency contributes toward confidence and trust by the public. The use of clear language, open processes, and public involvement help to ensure the work of the profession is in the public interest, and that interested parties can make informed choices (ICN, 2013).

Regulatory systems are proportionate to the risks posed: the greater the risk, the more restrictive the form of regulation. Regulation is targeted (focused on the problem) and rules and standards are implemented consistently (CHRE, 2010). The design of the system balances all interests, by providing just and honest treatment for all parties involved (ICN, 2013).

Key components of a professional regulatory framework include:

- Protection of title,
- Scope of practice,
- A code of ethics to guide the profession,
- Officers of the regulatory body as practising members,
- Enablement of standards for professional education and practice,
- Complaints resolution process, and
- Continuing competence requirements.

Standards and processes of regulation are sufficiently broad, flexible and permissive to achieve their objectives while permitting freedom for innovation, growth and change (ICN, 2013).

## References

Canadian Nurses Association. (2007). Understanding self-regulation. *Nursing Now: Issues and Trends in Canadian Nursing*, 21, 1-5. Ottawa: Author.

Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE). (August 2010). *Right-touch regulation*. London: Author.

International Council of Nurses (ICN). (2013). *Position statement: Nursing regulation*. Geneva: Author.

*Approved by SRNA Council June 2014*