



December 19, 2011

Dear CACCN Member:

Canadian Registered Nurse Examination

On behalf of the CACCN Board of Directors, I would like to bring to your attention, the recent announcement from ten of the provincial/territorial nursing regulators regarding the Canadian Registered Nursing Examination (CRNE). As you are likely aware, the Canadian Nurses Association has been the provider of the CRNE for over forty years. On December 2, 2011, the regulatory bodies that currently use the CRNE selected the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing** (NCSBN), a US company, in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the development of a new state-of-the-art, computer-adaptive entry exam for future RN candidates, rejecting the bid the CNA also made in response to the RFP.

While the regulators have indicated the exam development will include assessment of entry level practice competencies reflective of Canadian nursing practice, including opportunities for Canadian nurses to participate in all aspects of the exam's development, the opportunity for Canadian nurses to form expert panels to conduct sensitivity and translation reviews of the exam and the opportunity for nurse educators and students to learn about the new exam well in advance of the introduction of the exam, the NCSBN website announcement alarmingly contradicts this message and indicates they have been selected to bring the NCLEX-RN® to Canada for utilization by these entities as a licensure requirement (click here for the [NCSBN Announcement](#)).

This announcement has created much concern by nurses across the country that had not been consulted by the regulators in the development of the RFP criteria resulting in the announcement being a complete surprise to most nurses. The concerns remain, despite further communication by the regulators, around how an exam developed by a US based company will adequately and accurately reflect Canadian curriculum, research, cultural sensitivities and Canadian health-care system values. Additional concerns have been raised regarding the USA Patriot Act and the protection of the privacy of information of Canadian nurses, as well as concerns regarding the nursing mobility of Canadian nurses to be aggressively recruited to the United States more easily.

Each Canadian regulator (excluding Quebec) will individually make a decision on whether they wish to contract with the US providers. The regulators have approximately 120 days to enter into a contractual agreement with NCSBN. They have indicated through their communication in each province/territory that they do intend to sign a contract at the end of this with NCSBN.

While there are certainly more questions than answers remaining at this time regarding the concerns and issues raised, the CACCN Board of Directors has been actively participating in teleconference calls with CNA and other nursing specialty associations across Canada to gain more information and understanding of the current situation. We felt it was important to ensure the information we have at this time is shared with our members.

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As a Board we are particularly concerned that the Regulators chose to turn away from the expertise of nursing leaders in this country and instead choose an American company to do this work to transition and update the current exam to a computer-based exam with more flexible writing options. It is important that CACCN members become informed on the impact of this decision and its future implications for new nurses and its impact on nursing recruitment and retention in Canada. As a critical care specialty we already face these issues and across the country, we know that there are vacancies that cannot be filled in ICU's.

I would ask all members to review the information on the CRNE on our website and make contact with the regulatory body in your province/territory to ask the regulators to be more accountable for this decision.

It is time to ***Find Your Voice*** now if you are as concerned as we are as a Board and as are many nurses across the country. CACCN has provided a letter should you wish to contact your regulatory body.

Should you wish to share your comments, please join the discussion in the Members' Only forum or by responding to the President's Blog.

CACCN will continue to provide updated information as it is received via the CACCN Website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kate Mahon".

Kate Mahon
CACCN President