



Understanding the Difference: Regulator, Association, Union, and Employer

The College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (CANNN) serves a dual mandate as both a regulatory college and professional association to Registered Nurses (RN), Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) and Nurse Practitioners (NP).

Regulatory colleges, associations, unions, and employers each perform a different function that works towards protecting the public and supporting the profession or the healthcare professional. This info sheet is intended to support an understanding of the distinct functions of a regulator, association, union, and employer.

THE BASICS: What Do They Do?



REGULATOR

Protect the public.

- Ensures compliance with healthcare legislation.
- Sets registration, annual renewal and continuing competence requirements.
- Approves nurse education programs.
- Establishes professional requirements through standards of practice, code of ethics and other guidance documents.
- Investigates allegations of unprofessional conduct.



ASSOCIATION

Advocate on behalf of and **promote the interests** of members of the profession.

- Advocates for the interests of the profession to government, employers and other healthcare organizations.
- May provide education, career, social and award opportunities.
- May promote research interests of the profession.



UNION

Establish a bargaining relationship with intent to promote collaborative labour relations between employees and employers.

- Negotiates conditions of employment such as wages, benefits, working conditions and job security.
- Processes employee grievances under collective agreements.
- Assists employees with labour issues and conduct matters.
- Advocates for employee rights.



EMPLOYER

Hires and compensates people for their work.

- Follows employment laws of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to ensure employees are treated safely, fairly and are free from discrimination.
- Defines the specific job duties of employees.
- Ensures employees understand their rights.
- Supports nursing practice through employer-specific requirements.