



COLLEGE OF NURSES OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT

Board and Committee Composition Matrices Overview

Preamble

The College of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (CNNN) Board of Directors (BOD), in keeping with the current trend in nursing regulatory governing bodies and other Canadian not-for-profit organizations, recognizes the value of using a competency-based tool or matrix to support the selection of Board members-to better address the complex issues faced by the organization and the communities of the NT and NU.

Vision and Approach

A matrix can be defined as an environment or material in which something develops, a surrounding medium or structure. CNNN envisions a matrix which provides the environment in which nursing governance can develop, respond and flourish.

In the proposed Bylaws, a skills, knowledge and attributes matrix will be prepared annually by the BOD taking into consideration the following factors:

- the requirements of the NT and NU Acts, and the Bylaws,
- the composition of the Board,
- current or expected vacancies on the Board of Directors,
- the skills, knowledge and attributes for nurse members of the Board members to perform the duties and functions of the Board,
- the public members of the Board to perform the duties and functions of the Board,
- the primary residence or primary place of practice in the NT and/or NU.

MANDATE

CNNN functions under the mandate to safeguard the well-being of the public through the regulatory functions of registration and professional conduct review, establishing and maintaining codes of conduct and practice, standards of practice and scopes of practice with strategic registrant engagement and effective leadership.. CNNN's BOD is responsible for the direction, leadership, and strategy of the organization.

The BOD recognizes it is essential to have the skills, knowledge and attributes to understand the matters brought to the Board so it can function in a way that builds, honours, and maintains public trust and the trust of nurses.

We need individuals who:

- understand and are committed to the public protection mandate
- have the time and focus to engage deeply in this important work
- can balance public and professional perspectives
- uphold and model values such as accountability, respect, and inclusiveness
- are humble and self-aware and
- reflect the culturally rich communities we serve.

Matrix

The bylaws give authority to the BOD to determine the skills, knowledge and attributes matrix required for those who wish to serve on the BOD. It sets out the expectations and requirements for the BOD as a whole, and for individual directors.

The matrix includes academic and professional skills, personal values, lived experiences, varied backgrounds, perspectives and knowledge. This gives nuanced perspectives and backgrounds relevant to specific decisions that the Board makes for the organization.

The skills, knowledge and attributes matrix is reviewed annually. Each year-the BOD commits to reflecting on where additional experience, skills, and background might be needed to navigate emerging opportunities or challenges from within the nursing, healthcare, and regulatory environments, updating them as necessary.

It should be noted that the matrix is the *ideal* composition of a fully functioning board. The members of the BOD are not expected to possess every skill or trait listed in the composition matrix, nor will all the perspectives and experiences be easily obtainable; the BOD will demonstrate an earnest, legitimate and ongoing commitment to acquire the experience and knowledge necessary to make them as effective as possible in their roles. The BOD acknowledges that there will be gaps which are important to remain conscious of, and – when necessary, utilize external experts or resources to fill them. This allows CNNN to provide the BOD with specific education.

The matrix is a living document, continually adapting as our collective understanding and knowledge deepens and our needs change.

Board Composition Matrix

The matrix is twofold. Part One provides an overview of each individual Board Member's ideal values, attributes, skills, practices and knowledge. Part Two provides an overview of the ideal composition of the board in its entirety, outlining the diverse experience, backgrounds, perspectives, professional experience, knowledge and skills.

Part I

Board Member: Values and Attributes

To support strong decision-making in service of CNNN's promise to foster confidence in nursing care, every board member will bring the following values and attributes to the table:

- **Integrity, Accountability, Transparency:** Act with integrity and speak the truth; be able and willing to take full responsibility for decisions made; and follow through on commitments.
- **Collaboration:** Recognize that, in a complex system, what can emerge from collaborative and meaningful engagement and discourse will be stronger than what is created in isolation.
- **Learning Mindset:** Be open to new or broader perspectives; employ a learning mindset by listening and becoming better informed; take time to self-reflect and acknowledge the impact of personal power and privilege when contemplating decisions.
- **Safe, Supportive Interaction:** Actively commit to creating safe gathering spaces that welcome and support all who wish to connect, learn, share, belong, and grow.
- **Informed Decision Making:** Make decisions based on evidence and good information, that will best fulfil the public protection mandate.
- **Public Service:** Have passion for CNNN's purpose and vision; compassion for the public and their right to safe, ethical care; an understanding, appreciation of and commitment to, the BOD role in protecting the public and the time required to diligently execute that role; recognize that public interest will always be prioritized over personal or professional interests.
- **Effective Communication:** Work with others effectively to support a culture of trust; be present and participate fully in discussions; foster and promote, not impeding or stifling, robust dialogue; remain aware and sensitive to the impact of language used.
- **Self-Awareness:** Have a clear understanding of personal strengths and privileges, and the consequences of bias and potential conflicts of interest; recognize the value of continuous development and improvement; and be open to reflection, feedback, and opportunities to learn, relearn, and unlearn.
- **Confidentiality:** understands the need for confidentiality; can be trusted with confidential information;

Board Member: Skills and Knowledge

Every Board member will bring, or be willing to learn the following skills, practices and knowledge:

- **Cultural Safety:** Understanding of what it means to be anti-racist and an ally and knowledge of how to actively model this behaviour; ability to speak up and acknowledge instances or systems of oppression; and ability to hold self and others accountable for creating safe and inclusive spaces in which honest conversations about racism and privilege can occur.
- **Cultural History:** Understanding of the social, legislative and political history of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut people; the impact of colonialism in Canada and its enduring traumatic legacy; the effects of widespread Indigenous-specific racism within the healthcare system; and

knowledge of how Indigenous self-government and self-determination works in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

- **Indigenous Perspectives:** Ongoing learning, appreciation and respect for the distinct and important Indigenous-specific rights, approaches, protocols and perspectives that inform discussion and decision-making; ability to contribute to and support CANN as it works to develop a culturally safe organization and health system through the continuous practice of cultural humility; an ability to support and respect those who communicate they are feeling unsafe.
- **Financial:** Reasonable understanding of financial and budgeting information, and the confidence to ask questions that safeguard the financial stewardship of CANN.
- **Governance:** Understanding of the Board member's role and fiduciary duties, good governance principles, and the stewardship responsibilities of the Board.
- **Health Professions Regulation:** Understanding of the role and philosophy of health profession regulators, the public protection mandate of CANN, the applicable legislation, regulation, bylaws and policies, and the core work of CANN.
- **Decision-making:** Understanding and appreciation of the development and limitations of policy and decision-making in a large, complex system; and ability to ensure that decisions are based on clear, objective principles, as informed by evidence and best practice.
- **Systems Awareness:** Awareness of the complex system in which CANN works, including the partners within that system, and the impact that CANN decisions have on the greater communities of the NWT and NU.
- **Computer Skills and Access:** Ability to efficiently navigate and use CANN's conferencing and SharePoint systems, adhering to applicable security and privacy policies.

Part II

Board of Directors: Experience and Perspectives

To support strong decision-making in service of CANN's promise to foster confidence in nursing care, the Board of Directors will bring the following diverse experience, backgrounds, and perspectives:

- **Knowledge of and Commitment to the NT and NU:** Reside in the NT or NU; or the primary place of work is the NT and/or NU
- **Age Variety:** Representation across adult age groups to reflect the diverse experiences and perspectives of registrants and the public served by CANN.
- **Cultural Diversity:** A variety of cultural and historical backgrounds and experiences that reflect the communities that CANN serves and the cultural context with the NWT and NU healthcare system.
- **Educational Diversity:** Local, national, and international academic backgrounds and experiences that reflect the diverse education and knowledge of registrants and the public served by CANN.
- **Indigenous Perspectives:** Diverse Indigenous perspectives embedded within CANN's governance structure to ensure that: deliberations include and are informed by firsthand knowledge and experiences of Indigenous communities; decisions respect key rights, protocols and perspectives; collective biases are identified, questioned and mitigated; and CANN's cultural safety and humility journey continues to be supported in order to contribute to positive systemic change.
- **Gender Diversity:** A range of gender identities and gender expressions, promote knowledge and understanding of societal attitudes around gender and sexual orientation and the impact this has on access to and experiences within the healthcare system.

- **Regional Diversity:** Regional diversity, including small, remote communities and regional centres, to reflect the reality of care, access to levels of health care, and the public's expectations of the health care system throughout the NT and NU.
- **Nursing Practice Experience:** Diverse practice experiences, backgrounds and specialties that inform dialogue and decision-making, ensuring decisions meet intended objectives, are practical and, ultimately, protect the public.
- **Leadership:** Diverse leadership experience in the public, private, healthcare, and not-for-profit sectors, to promote knowledge and the sharing of best practices.
- **Lived Experience:** Varied perspectives arising from the multifaceted, and intersectional measures of social and economic standing, the lived experience of which will promote recognition of inequities and privilege and ensure that solutions can be universally applied without causing unintended barriers or consequences.
- **Lived Experience as a Health Care Recipient:** Lived experience accommodating or navigating physical, mental health, or cognitive abilities, the knowledge of which can enhance relevant, thoughtful decisions that protect the public.

Board of Directors: Knowledge and Skills

One or more Board members will have the following specific professional experience, knowledge, and skills:

- **Board Experience:** Knowledge and experience as a board member, including the ability to calmly weigh evidence, think critically, consider options and bring sound judgement to decision making.
- **Facilitation:** Experience in facilitating board and committee meetings, developing board culture, creating safe collaborative environments, leading sensitive conversations, and fostering board effectiveness.
- **Business Experience:** Business experience; an understanding of the incorporation of operational effectiveness, and economic forces in decision-making, and good management principles.
- **Change Management Experience:** Change management and transformation experience that will support CANN's ability to adapt, evolve and lead systemic change.
- **Social Equity Experience:** Experience in advancing strategies that promote equitable access and opportunities, and in developing practices to correct non-inclusive behaviour.
- **Board Experience:** Experience developing and working with a board to oversee executive performance management and succession planning.
- **Financial Experience:** Accounting or financial management experience to support Board decisions
- **Public Administration:** An understanding of how government works, and how to affect change within all levels of government.
- **Information Technology and Management:** An understanding of information technology and management systems, security, and sector change.
- **Team Building for Change:** Experience developing teams and environments that foster new thinking, new products, and system change.
- **Legal Knowledge:** An understanding of contracts, privacy, employment, labour, litigation management, and administrative law.
- **Communications:** Extensive experience in strategic communications and stakeholder relations.

- **Quality Improvement:** Experience and understanding of quality assurance and quality improvement.
- **Risk Management:** An understanding of effective and meaningful risk management and oversight.
- **Leadership:** Experience leading a team to articulate a vision, identify strategic priorities, and oversee organizational performance.
- **Nursing Designation:** Experience in one of more practice designations: Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN) and Nurse Practitioner (NP).

The Overall Picture

The matrix is a single piece in the overall requirements and expectations of the BOD. Before taking office, for example, board members must swear or solemnly affirm an Oath of Office: this is a binding commitment. Ongoing mentorship, professional development, and access to external supports are all examples of resources made available to the BOD throughout their term.