



In 2009, there was agreement among nursing regulators across Canada that elevating awareness of jurisprudence was essential and in the best interest of the public. As a result, the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia is in the process of developing a jurisprudence examination as a requirement for licensure, beginning in 2014.

Q: What is jurisprudence?

A: Jurisprudence means having an awareness of legislation, standards and regulatory policies impacting one's field of work. It also includes knowing how these principles and theories could be applied on a day-to-day basis.

Q: What is the purpose of the College's jurisprudence exam?

A: This exam will evaluate nurses' awareness of any provincial and federal laws, provincial standards and regulatory policies that would relate to their nursing practice in Nova Scotia. Being knowledgeable about these documents will enhance nurses' ability to practise safely, ethically and competently – and within legal parameters.

Q: Who will be required to write the exam?

A: Anyone applying for a licence to practise as an RN or NP in Nova Scotia for the first time ever will be required to write the jurisprudence exam; beginning with those applying for a 2014 licence. This will also apply to those seeking temporary licences.

NPs will be required to pass the 'basic' exam, plus answer a number of additional questions pertaining directly to the practice of NPs.

Q: When will this exam become a prerequisite for licensure?

A: The jurisprudence exam will come into effect for the 2014 licensure period.

Q: What format will the exam take?

A: The College's jurisprudence exam will be developed in an online, open-book, multiple-choice format, and there will be no limit on the number of times it can be written.

Q: Will practising RNs and NPs be required to write the exam?

A: At the present time, the plan is to only require those applying for a licence for the first time ever in Nova Scotia to write the exam. However, the College is committed to assessing the impact of this process and may introduce further options for greater jurisprudence awareness in the future.

Q: How will applicants be able to prepare for the exam?

A: The College is developing a jurisprudence resource guide, which will be available online for convenient access to all relevant material. This resource will allow applicants to study all the content covered in the exam.

Q: Will there be a cost associated with writing the exam?

A: Yes, there will be a nominal fee to cover the administrative costs of the exam.

Q: What happens if someone doesn't pass the exam the first time?

A: The exam can be written as many times as needed, however, a fee will be charged for individual writings so it would be best to study thoroughly in advance.

Q: Are jurisprudence exams a requirement in other provinces/territories?

A: In an ongoing commitment to strengthen their public accountability and promote safe, competent, and ethical nursing practice, the regulatory bodies for registered nurses across the country unanimously agreed, in 2009, to work toward adding jurisprudence exams as a requirement for licensure in their respective provinces/territories. Today, this is a 'work-in-progress' for all the regulatory bodies in Canada.

As the regulatory body for the province's 10,000 registered nurses/nurse practitioners, the College of Registered Nurses sets the standards for registered nurses' education and practice, issues nursing licences, supports continuing competence, and intervenes when standards for nursing practice are not met.