

NNPBC Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQs

1. Why does B.C. have a single nursing association when other provinces don't??

B.C.'s four nursing designations, RNs, LPNs, NPs and RPNs, have been collaborating closely since 2013 on the BC Coalition of Nursing Associations (BCCNA or the Coalition). This collaboration has been ground-breaking in demonstrating the importance of collaboration and nursing unity to strengthen the profession. B.C. is leading this change!

2. How will this benefit the profession?

The Coalition has already been a powerful force in bringing together the nursing profession in the province and demonstrating that it is possible to break down the siloes and hierarchies that exist in the profession. With changes in government and the regulatory bodies on the horizon, now is the perfect time for nursing to band together to become the positive force for change that the profession knows it can be.

3. Why isn't the new name "Nurses of BC"? Aren't NPs also nurses?

Nurse practitioners (NPs) are an essential part of the nursing community. As the newest members of our community we recognize that NPs have long struggled to be recognized and understood in British Columbia. As a nursing profession, it is important to ensure that there is public and professional awareness of the different, broad role of the NP and our new title signals strong support of this important role within the nursing profession.

4. Why do each of the four organizations have equal representation on the board when the numbers of nurses in each designation are so different? Why not proportional representation?

Over the past three years since the Coalition was formed, we have learned that equal representation, regardless of the numbers of nurses working in each designation, is a very important part of an effective and fair Board. Whether there are 400 NPs or 40,000 RNs, it is so important to the smooth running of the organization, that each designation has an equal and valued voice at the table and in our decision-making processes.

It's also important to note that the representatives from each of the councils who sit at the NNPBC Board table will have ample opportunity to bring forward ideas from their respective councils. For example, RNs will have an opportunity to ensure that the RN Council (size and composition to be determined by the Council itself) bring forward all of the issues that are important to RNs. When the Board sits at the NNPBC 'table' they will hear all issues and ensure that the response that goes forward is based on a united nursing voice. This in turn strengthens the position of the designation that has brought forward the issue by allowing all of nursing to provide a collective response on the issue. To hear more about this, please feel free to [watch a video by Sally Thorne](#), RN Councillor and NNPBC Board member.

5. Why do we need any professional associations (one or many) if the BC Nurses' Union effectively represents all nurses and advocates for us?

Although there is some overlap, professional associations differ from unions in that they provide guidance to the professional members and to government on issues relevant to the profession such as use of evidence based initiatives, policies and advancement of the profession as a whole. Furthermore, the BCNU does not represent all nurses in B.C. – for example, nurse practitioners, most nurses in management, administration or education, nurses who belong to other unions (e.g. RPNs in the Health Sciences Association) and independent business owners (e.g. foot care nurses).

6. Is one association happening in direct response to one nursing college?

No, we are on this course because it is the right thing to do and we believe will be instrumental in changing the future for nursing in this province. Having one nursing regulator moving forward so quickly definitely increased the pace of our thinking around what we as a profession needed to do to be prepared, but this is the way the world is moving, and not just in BC, we're just a bit ahead of the game.

7. What will happen with the lawsuits currently against ARNBC?

Unfortunately the lawsuits the BCNU has brought against ARNBC may continue and if so, will be the responsibility of the RN Council. In recognition of this, the ARNBC Board has set aside funding to manage this.

Under the NNPBC members of all nursing designations will continue to seek ways to find partnerships and synergies with the BCNU.

Governance and Structure FAQs

1. Will there be a relationship with the Canadian Nurses Association/Practical Nurses of Canada/Nurse Practitioner Association of Canada?

We believe firmly that participation and engagement with the national and international nursing bodies is an important part of an Association's role. NNPBC has already been working closely with the CNA to transform the future of nursing in Canada. During CNA's June 2018 AGM, the membership voted to change the bylaws of CNA to include LPNs and RPNs. This was absolutely critical for NNPBC moving forward and we were proud and excited to have been one of the national leaders in moving this decision forward. We will continue to seek out the best path forward with all of our national nursing organizations as we transition to NNPBC.

2. What role will the Councils play in comparison to the role of the NNPBC Board of Directors?

Each of the four Councils will play an important role in supporting, advocating and setting strategic policy direction for their designations. Councils will consist of elected representatives from their relevant designations who will administer a budget (to be used primarily to bring the Councils together for face to face meetings) and have autonomy over how many elected representatives sit on the council and which regions/areas they represent. The Councils will communicate and work with each of other Councils on a routine basis around shared issues and opportunities through the NNPBC Board of Directors and staff. The four Councils will also work together, with the NNPBC Board and staff to address issues and support their designation through NNPBC initiatives, programs and services.

3. Has there been any consideration to adding Care Aides to the organization?

This has absolutely been considered and is on our radar. Discussions will continue.

4. How do I become part of the my designation Council or the NNPBC Board?

Elections will be held every spring for Council positions (staggered by year). Each Council term is for a two year period. The call for nominations will go out in late winter, and we welcome all nurses, of every designation, to run for a position on their Council. Each Council may also decide to include additional Councillors, such as public reps, students, etc. (up to a maximum 15 per Council). Keep your eye open for the election call and be sure to submit your nomination. Every single Councillor is welcome to seek appointment to the Board (two per Council), following the terms of reference of their Council. Sound confusing? It is complicated, but the most important thing you can do to get involved is to join some of our committees, keep your eyes open for opportunities to participate and watch for election calls.

Membership FAQs

1. Will the membership of one nursing association be comprised of nurses?

Yes of course – every single nurse will have an opportunity to be a member, no matter what designation they carry.

2. Will one nursing association have student and/or retired members?

Yes! We will include both and are finalizing how these roles will be integrated. Our expectation is that both groups will have full voting rights. If you review our governance structure, you will see that our student member on the Board of Directors will have full and equal voting rights. Stick with us over these next few transitional months as we figure out how we will move forward with these absolutely critical members of the nursing community.

3. Can I opt out of one nursing association?

We are just beginning to figure out what a fee collection agreement would look like between the new regulatory college and the new association. This chapter of our story has not been written, and it does not mean it will be the same type of agreement as currently exists between CRNBC and ARNBC. Our intent is to move towards a voluntary structure, and we are working out how to reach that goal as soon as possible. Stay tuned and let us know if you have ideas.

You can always opt out of hearing from us, and remove yourself from having the right to vote in elections.

4. Will the existing associations function the same as they did before and have membership?

The majority of the professional associations involved will cease to function as they have, uniting all nursing designations under a single, unified NNPBC. The exception will be the LPNABC which has chosen to remain a separate organization. However, two of the LPNABC Board Members who were already part of the BC Coalition of Nursing Associations Board (BCCNA), chose to move forward with NNPBC, believing that is in the best interest of LPNs in the province, and that being part of a large, collaborative organization that continues to recognize the independence and importance of each designation would provide LPNs with unique opportunities to be heard and impact policy in ways they never have before in B.C. We already have some pretty significant plans underway that will include a strong partnership between government, the new College, the LPN Council of NNPBC and researchers which will provide opportunities for LPNs to have a say in the LPN Scope of Practice provincially – watch for an announcement in the next few weeks regarding what the plan is and how you can be involved as an LPN to finally resolve one of the most frustrating aspects of LPN practice in BC.

5. Will you hire nurses as employees of the new association?

Our intent is to hire additional staff to complement the existing staff, and we are just figuring out what the composition will be. We intend to hire a full-time RN and NP, and part-time RPN and LPNs to ensure we always have at least one staff member from each designation.

Programs and Services

1. What programs and services will be offered?

The beauty of moving to a new structure and organization means that we have opportunity to build whatever programs and services we want. That said, all existing programs, services, policy tables, funds, perk programs, etc., will be carried forward with slightly different compositions (for example, each of the existing committees and policy tables will add members of the other designations). There will also be opportunities to continue with designation-specific programs such as the NP Conference.

The roll-out of programs and services will be announced on our website on an ongoing basis. Please keep an eye on www.nnpbc.com for more information on what is coming and when.

2. Will there be educational dollars offered by one association?

We hope so – but we need to get the bones in place before we sort that out!

We are currently working in securing additional funding to continue our NP Continuing Education Fund, and hope to develop sustainability for this fund, as well as increase education funding for all nursing designations.

3. How will liability protection be provided for nurses under one association?

Our hope is that eventually, all B.C. nurses, regardless of designation, will have access the services and programs of CNPS. For the immediate future, RNs, NPs and RPNs will be part of this. We'll be talking to LPNs over the next year to figure out what the plan ahead is for insurance for this group.