



Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network Annual Report, June 2018

The 2018 Annual Report of The Network is a summary of its activities and accomplishments since our 2017 Annual General Meeting. Our 22 Network members are described on our webpage <http://www.nsrhpn.ca/member-listing>. *The Regulated Health Professions Network Act* proclaimed in September 2013 prescribes our work. The *Act* describes both the purpose and the duties of The Network.

Purpose of Network

The purpose of the Network is to foster and enable collaboration among regulated health professions in a manner that upholds and protects the public interest, through enhanced regulation by the health professions.

Duties of Network

In pursuing its purpose and in accordance with the guiding principles of this *Act*, the Network shall:

- (a) be a forum to share resources, information, trends and issues among the regulated health professions and others;
- (b) promote best practices in health-profession regulation while preserving the regulatory autonomy of each regulated health profession;
- (c) enable Network members to build capacity for their regulatory functions by facilitating collaboration with other Network members and other bodies;
- (d) provide a single point of contact for discussion and consultation with government and others on matters that may impact the regulation of health professions;
- (e) facilitate the development of strategies and approaches that will enable Network members to respond individually and collectively to regulatory challenges and opportunities;
- (f) provide information to other bodies that will facilitate improvements in health-care delivery or regulation;
- (g) encourage voluntary collaboration among Network members for any purpose that serves the public interest;
- (h) develop voluntary collaborative regulatory processes to allow Network members to address
 - (i) matters relating to scopes of practice that arise among regulated health professions,
 - (ii) collaborative investigative processes,
 - (iii) collaborative registration review processes, and
 - (iv) such other collaborative regulatory processes as are set out in the regulations.

Sharing Resources, Information, Trends and Issues

The Network Council welcomed new member representatives as some representatives retired and others have succeeded them. Their perspectives on collaborative health care regulation will be invaluable to serving our purpose.

Our Network continues to mature and has had substantial accomplishments this past year. Most noteworthy, an evaluation of the Network was led by the Business Unit of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF). NSHRF was recruited as an external, third party to oversee the design and implementation of an evaluation of the Network in partial fulfillment of a requirement in our *Act*. The report authors noted

“This report presents findings of an iterative, developmental evaluation, which found the Network to be operating as intended and achieving stated outcomes.”

The evaluation concluded that

“The evaluation report documents evidence of the Network’s implementation of the duties as outlined in the *Act* and establishes that the work of the Network is allowing achievement of outcomes including increased protection of the public, enhanced collaboration, sustainability and a high quality, contextually appropriate provincial regulatory environment in Nova Scotia. Subsequent impacts on key stakeholders including member organizations, regulatory bodies and practitioners, government bodies, and the public are also discussed. Based on the evaluative evidence, it is expected that the Network is well positioned to continue to contribute to the health and safety of Nova Scotians and the approach to doing so will continue to evolve to allow the Network to be responsive to developments in the regulated health profession sector provincially, nationally, and internationally.”

There is a tremendous in-kind contribution to the work of the Network by members not easily acknowledged in financial documents. Council members working on behalf of The Network volunteered hundreds of hours of time. In the evaluation report the following projects were highlighted:

- **Scope of Practice for Naloxone:** Leveraging the Network, a coordinated approach to changing scopes of practice allowed for efficient and effective response to the opioid crisis in Nova Scotia. Effective January 2018, changes have been made to the Licensed Practical Nurses Act and the Registered Nurses Act in Nova Scotia to enable LPNs and RNs to independently administer or provide naloxone take-home kits under their own authority to clients in need.
- **Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD):** To address questions that were important to Nova Scotians, the Network facilitated and compiled resources for regulators and the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) related to this topic. The Network hosts a collaborative venue for regulators, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and the Department of Health and Wellness to discuss MAiD issues.

- **Criminal Record Check Guidelines:** A project was undertaken to develop guidelines for the use of criminal record checks among regulated health professionals in Nova Scotia.
- **Social Media Guidelines:** A working group developed social media guidelines; work is ongoing as the Network continues to monitor for updates.
- **Jurisprudence:** The Network has been engaged in assessing and summarizing individual experiences and perspectives of member organizations related to jurisprudence that affect operations for all members, thereby creating efficiencies across member organizations.

In addition to our Executive Committee, the Audit and Nominations Committees have fulfilled their respective responsibilities. Our 2018 Executive Committee was:

Sue Smith (Chair)	College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia,
Bev Zwicker	Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Alec Stratford	Nova Scotia College of Social Workers
Janice Jones	Nova Scotia College of Medical Laboratory Technologists
Shannon McDonald	Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists
Bruce Holmes (ex-officio)	Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network

Our web pages, www.nsrhpn.ca, continue as a forum for sharing among a wider audience issues pertaining to self-regulation. It includes resources for regulators and the public on topics relevant to health profession regulation in Nova Scotia. The Network is maturing in its use of social media such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook to focus on issues pertinent to collaborative regulation.

In the evaluation report the NSHRF authors reviewed Network initiatives and aligned them to the duties of the Network as described in our Act. Figure 1 summarizes their findings.

Figure 1: Alignment between duties and illustrative projects

Duties	Illustrative Projects							
	Naloxone	MAiD	Criminal Checks	Social Media	Jurisprudence	HHR Planning	Collaborative Investigations	Collaborative Registration
a) be a forum to share resources, information, trends and issues among the regulated health professions and others								
b) promote best practices in health-profession regulation while preserving the regulatory autonomy of each regulated health profession								
c) enable Network members to build capacity for their regulatory functions by facilitating collaboration with other Network members and other bodies								
d) provide a single point of contact for discussion and consultation with government and others on matters that may impact the regulation of health professions								
e) facilitate the development of strategies and approaches that will enable Network members to respond individually and collectively to regulatory challenges and opportunities								
f) provide information to other bodies that will facilitate improvements in health-care delivery or regulation								
g) encourage voluntary collaboration among Network members for any purpose that serves the public interest								
h) develop voluntary collaborative regulatory processes to allow Network members to address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. matters relating to scopes of practice that arise among regulated health professions, ii. collaborative investigative processes, iii. collaborative registration review processes, and iv. such other collaborative regulatory processes as are set out in the regulations. 								

Note: 1 Shaded cells in Fig. 1 indicate alignment between duties and specific projects

Network Affiliations

The Network is a member of the CLEAR (Council on Licensure, Enforcement & Regulation; <http://www.clearhq.org>) and CNAR (Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation; <http://www.cnnar.ca>). Both of these organizations offer international and national perspectives on regulation with members having the opportunity to share resources. The Network is also represented on the Nova Scotia Academic Health Council, and committees of the Fair Registration Review Practices Office, SimEd Network, and Inter-professional Education Community Engagement at Dalhousie University.

The Future

“Great things happen when organizations work together”. The Network is mid-way in the agreement between The Network and the Department of Health and Wellness for the period of April 2017 to March 2019. We welcome their perspective on health profession regulation at our Council meetings. The Network has developed strategic directions where it will add focus and collective impact to health professions regulation.



We Listen

We seek out and listen to our public, to each other and to industry leaders to create a culture of continual improvement.



We Share

We share with each other, with our public, and with other jurisdictions and practitioners to generate discussion, increase knowledge and create an environment conducive to collaborative regulation.



We Lead

We innovate, create, and implement industry leading regulations, policies, and best practices to improve patient safety.