



CNNAR Questions and Answers

(1) What is CNNAR?

The Canadian Network of National Associations of Regulators (CNNAR) is the federation of national organizations whose provincial and territorial members are identified in legislation as responsible for protection of the public through the self-regulation of professions and occupations.

(2) What is a profession?

A profession requires special education, knowledge and skill. Most professions have a code of ethics which governs the conduct of members in their relationships with clients, employees, colleagues and the public.

(3) What is professional regulation?

Professional regulation refers to all legitimate and appropriate means – governmental, professional and private – whereby order, consistency, identity and control are brought to the profession. The profession and its members are defined; the scope of practice is determined; standards of education and of ethical and competent practice are set; and systems of accountability are established through these means.¹ For most professions in Canada, this is a self-regulated or profession-led process.

(4) Who regulates professions in Canada?

In Canada the authority to make laws with regard to professions lies, for the most part, with the provinces and territories. They have made laws creating professional regulatory bodies and giving them the powers necessary to govern the professions.

(5) What is a provincial or territorial regulatory body?

Most professions are governed by an association or college which consists of all the professionals in the province or territory. The head of the association or college is a council consisting of professionals and public representatives.

¹ International Council of Nurses, [1997], *ICN on Regulation: Towards 21st Century Model*. Geneva, International Council of Nurses, p.2.

(6) Is there a different regulatory body for each profession?

Normally, yes. In any one province or territory each profession usually has its own regulatory body. Sometimes related professions share the same regulatory body. Regulatory bodies are often referred to as associations or colleges but may also be known by other names.

(7) What licensing authority does a regulatory body have?

The provincial or territorial regulatory body has the authority to regulate entry into the profession and the standards of practice that must be met to maintain the professional designation. Regulatory bodies also administer programs to maintain member competence and provide an investigation process to address any professional complaints that may arise.

(8) Once I am licensed, are there any other professional obligations?

Once someone is licensed to practice in a profession, the regulatory body will continue to govern that person's practice. Individual members are responsible for practicing in accordance with the standards of the profession and for keeping current and competent throughout their careers.

(9) How does a regulatory body govern someone's practice?

Regulatory bodies carry out their mandates in many ways. For example, they set admission and licensing standards, set practice standards, monitor the work done by professionals and require them to maintain competence by continuing their professional education, publish ethical guidelines, and discipline practitioners for misconduct.

10) Why isn't there a national license so that someone can practice in a profession across Canada?

A few professions are regulated nationally but the vast majority are regulated by the provincial or territorial governments because the courts have interpreted the Constitution of Canada so as to put professions under the provincial or territorial law-making power. Most professions have inter-jurisdictional mobility agreements. Contact the provincial or territorial regulatory body for more details.

(11) Where should an individual from outside Canada apply to obtain registration or licensure in Canada?

Before engaging in the practice of a profession everyone, including persons outside Canada, must apply to the relevant provincial or territorial professional college or association in Canada for permission to practice. That regulatory body will assess one or both of the applicant's credentials and competencies to determine eligibility to practice.