



Plain Language Summary for Bill 77: *Nursing Profession Act*

The Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Health and Social Services is developing a new *Nursing Profession Act* to repeal and replace the current *Nursing Profession Act*. The *Nursing Profession Act* came into force in 2004 and has only had minor miscellaneous amendments since.

The new Act will create a single regulatory framework for all nurses in the Northwest Territories. This will standardize the assessment of credentials and oversight of nursing practice under one regulatory structure.

The new *Nursing Profession Act* will:

- Repeal the current *Licensed Practical Nurses Act* and transfer the authority to regulate Licensed Practical Nurses from the Department of Health and Social Services to the Registered Nurses Association of Northwest Territories and Nunavut (RNANTNU);
- Establish new nursing designations, scopes of practice, registers, and associated requirements for Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Nurse Authorized Prescriber, Registered Psychiatric Nurse, and Registered Psychiatric Nurse Authorized Prescriber;
- Allow Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses who meet certain requirements to order and interpret specific diagnostic and screening tests, make diagnoses, and prescribe specific medications;
- Updates the complaints and discipline process, including the appointment of a Complaints Officer;
- Add a requirement for employers to report to RNANTNU if they terminate a nurse, or if the nurse chooses to resign instead of being terminated, due to unprofessional conduct;
- Add by-law making powers to regulate the practice of nurses, including nurses who practice solely through virtual care;
- Update the name of RNANTNU to the College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut; and
- Modernize and clarify language, including the use of gender-neutral language.

The new Act was developed through close collaboration with RNANTNU. A Discussion Paper for public and stakeholder engagement on the proposed amendments was released in August 2020 and a “What We Heard Report” was released in April 2021, which informed the development of the Legislative Proposal for the new Act.

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