

National Nursing Assessment Service

2016/19 Strategic Plan

Building A Strong Foundation



The nursing profession in Canada has been the driving force behind the quest for a new and innovative way to streamline and improve the overall process for assessing the credentials of internationally educated nurses (IENs) seeking registration to practise in Canada; creating a common, national approach among the Regulatory Bodies.

In 2012, Canadian nursing regulators, working with the provincial and federal governments, established the National Nursing Assessment Service (NNAS) to create a streamlined process for IENs to submit their documents and to assess them for Canadian nursing registration.

With a mandate to protect the public, Canada's nurse regulators had a vision of creating an assessment process for IENs that was open, fair and consistent, while ensuring the highest standards of care. As a result, Canada's nurses became the first health regulatory group in the country to create one common application process for internationally trained professionals. This unprecedented collaboration and harmonization has set an international gold standard for others to emulate.

Background

NNAS is pleased to have developed its first organizational Strategic Plan for the period 2016-19. The plan was developed based on information gathered from our membership (Canadian nurse Regulatory Bodies), IEN clients, external stakeholders and partners.

NNAS is a young, innovative organization that has accomplished a great deal during its formative years. In addition to building the new organization from the ground up, NNAS collaborated with countless organizations, working groups and individuals to develop, test and refine the service. The year 2015 was a significant one for NNAS with the launch of a new, streamlined single entry process for IENs applying for licensure to practise in Canada. That milestone marked the end of our pilot project phase as we officially transitioned into full international education credential assessment service operations. As a result, the organization was required to adopt a different and more evolved lens of its purpose, growth and development.

About the National Nursing Assessment Service

NNAS is a Canadian, not-for-profit organization. Its membership consists of the 21 licensed practical nurse, registered nurse and registered psychiatric nurse Regulatory Bodies in Canada, except Quebec and the territories. It is governed by a 11-member Board of Directors, representing the three regulated nursing groups. NNAS received start-up funding from the Regulatory Bodies, provincial governments and the Government of Canada.



The organization to-date has focused effort on establishing its policy governance infrastructure and tools and laying initial administrative foundations. The Strategic Plan reflects both organizational goals and the key themes arising from feedback provided by the membership, our clients and our stakeholders during a formal strategic plan development process. This feedback informed us that the partnership and relationships amongst NNAS, its membership and its international education credential assessment service provider were vital to the success of the organization. Further, there was a desire for continued evolution and strengthening of those relationships and partnerships at all levels of the organization.

As part of this focus on partnership and relationships, the members want more communication with NNAS and greater communication amongst the Regulatory Bodies themselves. They believe communication will be critical to advancing shared goals. Our members also expressed a desire for ongoing commitment to the quality of IEN education credential services and products provided by NNAS.

Strategic Directions and Objectives

a. Develop strong quality culture that will comprise a performance management system with necessary processes and tools.

The development of a strong culture of quality will require ensuring that key performance expectations, as identified in various service agreements for services and products, will be met or exceeded in a consistent and predictable manner. This will require the establishment of a performance management system that ensures the effective management of NNAS third party-service providers who assist in assessment services and products, commitment to measurement and outcomes and the development of the necessary tools and structures to support effective performance management and measurement and accountability of performance.

A. Improve Service and Product Excellence and increase their value for our Members and Clients.

With the launch into full operations, our services must now move past pilot project status and culture towards a strong client service culture. We will focus on providing high-quality IEN education credential assessment services and products to improve service and product excellence and bring greater value for our members and clients.

b. Develop a strong data management environment to support service improvement.

To support an enhanced culture of quality and service excellence, development of, and access to, data related to organizational performance, will be critical to determine the achievement of service expectations and targets and support enhanced service and organizational planning.

C. Provide enhanced supports for IENs to enable better decision making about NNAS services and the licensure pathway.

To better support IENs in their decision-making regarding the types of NNAS services they wish to access, enhanced educational supports, advice and consultation and decision-making tools will be required.

B. Strengthen NNAS Communications and Relationships with its Nursing Regulatory Body Members.

This strategic direction is intended to further strengthen NNAS' relationship with its Regulatory Body members and further enhance communication.

a. Establish a communication system that supports dialogue between NNAS and Regulatory Bodies at all organizational levels.

The focus of this strategic objective will be to create strong communication pathways, processes and approaches to enable greater dialogue and discussion between NNAS and its members and amongst the nursing Regulatory Bodies themselves.

b. Nurture strong relationships among Regulatory Bodies.

NNAS is committed to building stronger relationships with its members through greater communication and engagement. NNAS will continue to support Canadian nursing Regulatory Bodies with IEN education credential assessment services and related harmonization issues, and will cultivate partnership opportunities in these areas.

C. Advance Progress on IEN Registration Harmonization.

Although the priority remains on ensuring that the harmonized IEN education credential assessment services are of high quality and value to our members, NNAS will continue to work with the Regulatory Body members to advance their vision and goals around a harmonized pan-Canadian IEN nursing registration approach in Canada.

a. Develop an assessment of current Regulatory Bodies' IEN registration processes from amongst the NNAS membership.

A necessary component before initiating harmonization past the education credential assessment stage is to determine the current IEN registration process landscape amongst our membership.

b. Develop a prioritized and phased harmonization plan for the entire IEN licensure journey.

Following the assessment of the current IEN registration process landscape, NNAS will engage with its membership to develop a plan that identifies the priorities and a phased plan in advancing IEN registration harmonization.

D. Build a Stable and Effective Organizational Structure.

This strategic direction builds the needed infrastructure and supports to enable the first three strategic directions. This will permit NNAS to be resourced and structured appropriately to meet the needs of its membership, its IEN clients and its mandate.

a. Create a strong administrative infrastructure in the following areas:

- i. Finance
- ii. HR resources
- iii. IT/IM structures and resources

This strategic objective will ensure that necessary efforts are directed at the management and administration level such that the organization is financially healthy, has the appropriate human resources capacity and competencies and the necessary information technology in place in order to carry out the other strategic directions and meet its organizational mandate.

b. Continue to build a strong governance structure:

- i. Ensures effective relationships between Executive Director and Board.
- ii. Ensure appropriate liaison with Regulatory Bodies that comprise the NNAS membership.
- iii. Supports effective governance.

As NNAS continues to move fully into operations, our Board will continue to evolve into functioning within a policy governance framework that strengthens its governance role in policy development, strategy, performance and risk management. This strategic objective will ensure that the commitment to policy governance will involve continued nurturing of Executive Director-Board and Board-Regulatory Bodies relationships at a governance level.