



NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL PROCESS

Administrative Document

For

**Approval of Nursing Education Programs
for Registered Nurse(Nurse Practitioners)**

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I INTRODUCTION

The nursing education program approval standards/criteria are approved by Council under the provisions of *The RN Act, 1988*.

End 3 “The nursing profession contributes to a proactive health system that meets the present and emerging health needs of the public” is accomplished in part by ensuring that graduates from RN(NP) education programs are competent to practice according to the standards of the SRNA. Approval of basic, re-entry, and RN(NP) education programs is required by the Bylaws of the SRNA.

Canadian jurisdictions have worked together in an effort to develop and reach a consensus on a national framework related to NP program approval. This work was driven by recognition for a need to ensure public protection by standardizing program approval processes across Canada. *The Canadian Nurse Practitioner Program Approval Framework, 2010* forms the basis of the standards and criteria found within this document.

Other documents, which identify the standards for competent practice, also provide the foundation for the approval of RN(NP) education programs:

- *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*;
- *Current Bylaws*;
- *Current Standards and Foundation Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses*;
- *Current RN(NP) Standards and Core Competencies*; and
- *Current CNA Code of Ethics*.

II ROLES IN THE NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL PROCESS

Nursing Education Program Approval Committee

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall consist of up to seven members appointed by the Membership Advisory Committee. Members shall have diverse expertise and perspectives:

1. Membership shall consist of:
 - a. Four registered nurses, one of whom is a registered nurse (nurse practitioner), from a broad range of practice, preferably nurses who work with new graduates, are in leadership positions, and/or have expertise in evaluation.
 - b. One public representative with expertise in general education.
 - c. One representative from the government responsible for *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*.
 - d. One representative from another health profession.
2. Members of this committee shall be appointed for a three year term, renewable for one additional term. Terms of office shall be staggered to provide for continuity.

Role of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall:

1. Review the process for approval of Nursing Education Programs as delegated to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.
2. May consult, as necessary or appropriate, with individuals who have expertise related to a program or any other matter considered by the committee.
3. Following a nursing education program approval review, report to the Executive Director recommending an approval rating of a basic or registered nurse-nurse practitioner education program based on council approved standards and/or criteria governing the approval of nursing education programs.
4. Maintain processes to ensure due process, procedural fairness and an open, transparent process for resolution of issues and/or concerns.
5. Submit an Annual report to the Executive Director regarding updates from the nursing education programs.

Role of the Assessment Team

The Assessment Team is responsible for verifying and clarifying the RN(NP) education program's self evaluation report through a site visit to the program site(s). The Assessment Team does not determine an approval rating for the RN(NP) education program, but rather provides information to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee for the committee's consideration. The Team is composed of two or three members who are retained by the Association on a contract basis. The Assessment Team is external to the program being evaluated. Members of the Assessment Team are recruited by the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.

The RN(NP) education program is consulted to ensure there is no conflict of interest prior to final selection of the Assessment Team by the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.

In total, members of the Assessment Team should possess the following qualifications:

- Masters preparation (PhD preferred).
- Experience in curriculum development, implementation, and program evaluation in RN(NP) education.
- Experience in appropriate areas of clinical practice.
- Current registration with their provincial RN regulatory body.
- Experience as a program assessor.

Role of the SRNA Staff Resource

The SRNA Staff Resource performs three roles in relation to the Nursing Education Approval Process:

1. The SRNA Staff Resource assists RN(NP) education programs to understand the approval process and the requirements of the review. The SRNA Staff Resource is available to meet with RN(NP) education programs prior to the submission of a self-evaluation report and/or a site visit. The SRNA Staff Resource will also provide follow-up with the program, as required, following a review.
2. The SRNA Staff Resource serves as staff support to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. This role includes providing a list of potential Assessment Team members and consulting with Assessment Team members prior to, during, and following the site visit. The SRNA Staff Resource supports the work done by the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee but does not participate in making decisions about approval status of a program being reviewed.
3. The SRNA Staff Resource serves as an ex officio member of the Assessment Team.

III APPROVAL STANDARDS

Nursing Education Standards

The following are standards for RN(NP) education programs as set out in the national *Canadian Nurse Practitioner Program Approval Framework*:

1. Curriculum - The curriculum provides learning experiences necessary for students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.
2. Resources – Sufficient human, physical, and clinical resources to enable students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice (this includes appropriate finances to support sufficient resources).
3. Students – Students demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.
4. Graduates – Graduates successfully achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Standard I: Curriculum

Curriculum - The Curriculum provides learning experiences necessary for students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria:

1. A philosophy of nursing and education, and a conceptual framework together guide the development and implementation of the curriculum.
 - a) Evidence that the philosophy, conceptual framework, and curriculum are congruent.
2. RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice are systematically introduced and measured through theoretical courses, laboratory experiences, and clinical practice.
 - a) Evidence that RN(NP) standards and competencies are embedded throughout the curriculum to support entry level RN(NP)s to provide safe, competent, and ethical care.
3. In addition to RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice, the curriculum also includes:
 - a) Measurable course and program objectives;
 - b) Logical course sequencing;
 - c) Responsiveness to current and emerging trends;
 - d) A method for tracking and monitoring clinical hours (a minimum of 700) and placements for each student to ensure that all students have clinical practice with clients appropriate to the specialty /program category across the life span in a variety of clinical settings within the program category; and
 - e) Formative and summative evaluation processes in place that includes students, faculty, and key stakeholders to ensure the ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of the curriculum.
4. The program has learning opportunities to enable students to apply the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice:
 - a) That consolidate theory with practice;
 - b) To provide comprehensive care, relevant to RN(NP) practice; and
 - c) That involves interprofessional education and provision of collaborative care.
5. Nursing faculty supervise clinical learning activities with qualified preceptors.
6. There is systematic and continuous evaluation of the curriculum including opportunities for feedback from stakeholders, which is used to inform ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of the curriculum.

Standard 2: Resources

Resources – Sufficient human, physical, and clinical resources to enable students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria:

1. Faculty possesses the theoretical knowledge and clinical expertise appropriate to their RN(NP) teaching responsibilities.
 - a) A dean/director of the education program who:
 - i. Is registered with the SRNA
 - ii. Has Masters degree (required), Doctoral degree (preferred)
 - iii. Is a RN(NP) preferred
 - b) Nursing faculty who:
 - i. Are registered with the SRNA, as a RN(NP), in a specialty appropriate to the program category
 - ii. Has a Master's degree, Doctoral degree preferred
2. Preceptors possess the expertise appropriate to their clinical teaching and relevant to the student's area of RN(NP) practice.

3. There are sufficient faculty to ensure optimum student learning and safe client care.
 - a) There are approved policies and procedures for all full time and part time faculty related to:
 - i. Faculty selection including clinical expertise, teaching ability, research and scholarly activities.
 - ii. Ongoing evaluation of teaching, scholarly activities, and clinical competence in the settings where nursing faculty supervise students.
 - iii. Professional development.
 - b) There are policies and procedures for faculty to provide input and feedback regarding the educational program's ability to meet (a).
4. There are sufficient physical resources to support a variety of learning modalities. These resources may include:
 - a) Library services;
 - b) Virtual classrooms;
 - c) Technology; and
 - d) Laboratories
5. Clinical placements provide suitable learning opportunities for students to achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.
 - a) There are contractual agreements between the educational institution and the clinical placement agencies.
 - b) There are clients appropriate to the specialty/program category from across the lifespan who present with a variety of health issues.
 - c) There are measures in place to ensure the safety of students and clients.
 - d) There is a minimum of 700 clinical practice hours.
6. There are sufficient financial resources to support the program.

Standard 3: Students

Students – Students demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria:

1. Students are currently registered and practising as a RN with the Association.
2. There are policies and procedures in place for student selection and admission.
3. There are policies and procedures related to academic progression. This includes:
 - a) Withdrawal;
 - b) Probation;
 - c) Failure;
 - d) Appeals;
 - e) Student discipline;
 - f) Readmission; and
 - g) Graduation
4. There are measures to ensure student and client safety. This includes:
 - a) Ensuring that the student's immunization status meets the requirements of the clinical facility;
 - b) Ensuring that the students have a security clearance completed; and
 - c) Ensuring that students have current life support certification appropriate to the specific practice population.
5. Students receive well-timed, formative, and summative feedback about their learning from faculty using a variety of evaluation methods to facilitate their achievement of the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

6. Students have access to services that increase their potential to successfully achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice. These include:
 - a) Student health services;
 - b) Financial support;
 - c) Academic and personal counseling; and
 - d) Learning resources.
7. Student trends including enrolment, transfers, withdrawals, and graduation are tracked and inform admission criteria.
8. There are policies and procedures related to maintaining student records related to relevant legislation.

Standard 4: Graduates

Graduates – Graduates successfully achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria:

1. Results from the registration exam are monitored, analyzed and used to inform ongoing program development and program decisions.
2. There is a post-graduate evaluation with stakeholder feedback.

IV PROGRAM APPROVAL RATINGS

Each program assessed shall be rated in one of the following categories, with written rationale for the rating and the period of time for which the rating is granted.

Preliminary Approval: The rating given to a new program that shows evidence of the ability to meet the criteria for approval but that has not yet graduated students from the program or an established program seeking initial approval. A program receiving preliminary approval must undergo an assessment for full approval in the academic year following the first class of graduates. Graduates from a program who have received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved nursing education program for the purposes of registration/licensure. The nursing education program is responsible to ensure the graduates meet the current *RN(NP) Standards and Core Competencies* at the date of graduation.

Provisional Approval: The rating granted to a new program, or an established program that is seeking initial approval, or an existing program that was previously approved and that only partially meets the criteria as identified. Provisional Approval is granted for a designated time period. The SRNA makes recommendations to the program regarding the criteria that are not met or are only partially met. Graduates from a program that has received this rating may be required to upgrade before they are considered graduates of an approved nursing education program and eligible for registration/licensure.

Approval Granted: The rating given to a program that meets the criteria for approval. Initial approval can be granted for a period up to three years. Following initial approval, approval may be granted up to five years depending on the nature and significance of strengths and deficits identified in the review. Graduates from a nursing education program that has received this rating will be considered graduates of an approved nursing education program for the purposes of registration/licensure.

Approval Denied: The rating given to a program that does not meet the approval criteria. Graduates from a nursing education program that has received this rating will not be eligible for registration in Saskatchewan.

V ANNUAL UPDATES

The purpose of the annual update is to provide updated, new or changed information since the previous submission to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. Information to be included in the annual update is as follows:

1. Any significant changes, revisions, or other updates since the previous submission. This may include program and faculty achievements.
2. Description of the progress and ongoing development in meeting identified recommendations from the Approval Report.
3. Description of the analysis of program evaluation data (course evaluations, student and faculty feedback) as well as an identified plan regarding how the program intends to integrate this data into the future program development.
4. Description of challenges and opportunities for improvement in the ongoing delivery of the nursing education program that reflect current trends.
5. Impact of change on ability of graduates to meet NP standards.

All annual update are to be submitted to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and are due **June 1** of each year.

VI OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The administrative policy for the approval process for a review of nursing education programs is outlined in detail in the following Sections. The process chosen shall be appropriate to the nature of the program (e.g. established program, new program, substantially changed program, or discontinued program). The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee is authorized by the Executive Director to select the process appropriate to the program. If educational institutions are part of a collaborative/partnership arrangement in which the partners share a curriculum, one report will be submitted that identifies the contributions of each institution.

Notification of Intent to Review Program

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall notify, in writing, the Dean/Director of the nursing education program of the intent to review one year prior to the site visit.

Self-evaluation Report

A self-evaluation of the RN(NP) education program in relation to the approval standards and criteria shall be completed by the educational institution. The self-evaluation report is due two months prior to the scheduled site visit.

Review of Self-evaluation Report

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the Assessment Team shall review the self-evaluation report. The RN(NP) education program may be required to provide additional information upon request of either the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and/or the Assessment Team.

Site Visit

An Assessment Team shall visit the RN(NP) education program on-site(s) to clarify and validate data reported in the self-evaluation report. At the end of the site visit, the Assessment Team will first provide a verbal report to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and then to the RN(NP) education program. The Assessment Team shall provide a confidential report of their finding to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. The RN(NP) education program shall be provided with a copy of the site visit report. The program is encouraged to provide feedback related to the factual content of the document. A site visit may not be conducted during the approval process of a new nursing education program.

Review of Assessment Team's Report and Recommendation by Approval Committee

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall review the report and make a reasoned recommendation to the Executive Director regarding the approval rating. A copy of the draft report will be

forwarded to the RN(NP) education program to afford the program an opportunity to respond to the tentative approval rating recommendation. The RN(NP) education program may provide a response verbally, via e-mail or may request a face to face meeting with the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee will forward its report to the Executive Director.

Notification to Program

The Executive Director shall notify the program of the reasoned decision in writing. The Executive Director will notify other stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education of the program's approval status.

Appeal

Following unsatisfactory resolution of any dispute with the Executive Director, the program has the right to appeal, in writing, a decision of the Executive Director to the Council within 30 days of decision.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING A NEW PROGRAM

New nursing education programs are to receive preliminary approval before admitting students to the program and beginning course offerings. The purpose of the preliminary approval process is to assess the ability of the educational institution to deliver the proposed program and that graduates are able to meet the RN(NP) standards and core competencies.

STEP

1. Notification of intent to establish a new program

DESCRIPTION

At least one year in advance of the proposed commencement date program, the RN(NP) education program shall provide written notification to SRNA. The notification shall include a demonstration of the ability of the institution to meet the standards and criteria for approval.

2. Self-Evaluation Report

At least eight months in advance of the proposed commencement date of the new program, a required number of preliminary self-evaluation reports shall be submitted to the SRNA Staff Resource. The SRNA Staff Resource will ensure that each Nursing Education Program Approval Committee member and the Assessment Team receive a copy of the report. The report shall include the following information:

- i. Purpose and goals of the new program:
 - historical development
 - rationale for program change/development
 - financial and budgetary arrangements for the establishment of the nursing education program and for its continued operation
- ii. Program intents
- iii. Program description including:
 - length, admission requirements
 - entry and exit points
 - planned enrolment numbers
 - collaborative/partnership agreements (if relevant)
 - proposed date of commencement

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- iv. Overview/blueprint of the proposed program curriculum and the ability of the nursing education program to meet the standards and criteria for approval:
 - Standard #1 Curriculum
 - Standard #2 Resources
 - Standard #3 Students
 - Standard #4 Graduates
 - v. A description of strategies used to obtain systematic and ongoing evaluation
 - vi. Expected student numbers and RN(NP) education program faculty required to ensure program intents are met:
 - including faculty/student ratios in clinical settings
 - including faculty selection process criteria
 - vii. RN(NP) education program committee structure:
 - RN(NP) education program advisory committee
 - RN(NP) education program evaluation committee
 - other committees
 - viii. Discussion: Discussion regarding each standard/criteria are stated as specifically as possible, including projected dates and plans for addressing identified problems or deficiencies.
 - ix. Summary: Conclusions reached and recommendations made throughout the report are summarized at the end of the report.

If aspects of the RN(NP) education program are not completely developed at the time of submission, the plans for development must be included.

3. Review of self-evaluation report:

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the Assessment Team will review the submitted self-evaluation report independently. The RN(NP) education program may be required to submit additional information at the discretion of the Committee and/or Assessment Team. The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall provide the RN(NP) education program with a copy of their tentative approval rating recommendation report to the Executive Director. The RN(NP) education program may provide a response verbally, via e-mail or request a face to face meeting with the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee will forward its report to the Executive Director.

4. Notification to the Program:

The Executive Director shall provide written notification to the RN(NP) education program regarding the approval rating. The Executive Director will notify other stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education of the program's approval status.

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5. Appeal: The program has the right to appeal, in writing, a decision of the Executive Director to the Council within 30 days of the decision.
 6. Annual Updates: All annual updates are to be submitted to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and are due June 1 of each year.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR AN ESTABLISHED PROGRAM

1. Notification of intent to review program: One year in advance of the program approval deadline, the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall provide written notification to the RN(NP) education program. A mutually agreed upon date for the site visit shall be established.
2. Self-Evaluation Report: At least two months in advance of the proposed site visit, a required number of self-evaluation reports shall be submitted to the SRNA Staff Resource. The SRNA Staff Resource shall ensure that each program approval committee member and the Assessment Team receive a copy of the report. The report shall include the following information:
 - i. Previous recommendations made by the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the program's progress toward meeting those recommendations. Copies of annual updates may be provided as evidence.
 - ii. Overview of the RN(NP) education program's ability to meet the standards and criteria for approval:
 - Standard #1 Curriculum
 - Standard #2 Resources
 - Standard #3 Students
 - Standard #4 Graduates
 - iii. Planned changes to the program/curriculum.
3. Review of self-evaluation report: The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the Assessment Team will review the submitted self-evaluation report independently. The RN(NP) education program may be required to submit additional information at the discretion of the Committee and/or Assessment Team. The RN(NP) education program may request to make a presentation to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.
4. Site Visit: The Assessment Team shall conduct a site visit of at least two days. A representative of the SRNA shall accompany the Assessment Team and provide support to the site visit process. The site visit schedule shall be established collaboratively between the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the RN(NP) education program. The nursing education program shall bear the majority of the responsibility for organization of the site visit schedule. The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and the Assessment Team shall grant final

5. Review of the Assessment Team's Report:

approval of the site visit schedule. The Assessment Team will first provide a verbal report to the nursing education program approval committee and then to the RN(NP) education program at the end of the site visit.

The Assessment Team shall provide a confidential written report of their finding to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. The RN(NP) education program shall be provided with a copy of the site visit report. The RN(NP) education program is encouraged to provide feedback related to the factual content of the document.

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall review the Assessment Team's report and the RN(NP) education program's feedback to make a reasoned recommendation regarding the approval rating. A copy of the Committee's draft report will be forwarded to the RN(NP) education program to afford the program an opportunity to respond to the tentative approval rating recommendation. The RN(NP) education program may provide a response verbally, via e-mail or may request a face to face meeting with the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee. Following the program's response, the Committee will make a recommendation concerning an approval rating for the program and will communicate that recommendation with rationale in a written report to the Executive Director.

6. Notification to the Program:

The Executive Director shall provide written notification to the RN(NP) education program regarding the approval rating. The Executive Director will notify other stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education of the program's approval status.

7. Appeal:

If the RN(NP) education program is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, the program has the right to appeal, in writing, a decision of the Executive Director to the Council within 30 days of the decision.

8. Annual Updates:

Annual updates are to be submitted to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee and are due June 1 of each year.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR A SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE TO AN ESTABLISHED PROGRAM

Substantive changes may include but are not limited to:

- Significant changes made to the length of the program.
- Significant changes made to the target student population.
- Significant changes made to the program resources.
- Significant changes made to the implementation of the program.
- Significant changes made to the curriculum.
- Any other changes deemed to make the program significantly different from the program that was originally granted approval.

1. Notification of substantive change:

Determination of substantial change can occur in two ways:

- The RN(NP) education program is responsible to notify the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee of any proposed substantive changes to the established program. This notification must be provided in writing. It is the decision of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee to determine if the change is substantive and therefore, requires a change in the approval rating/status of the program. The RN(NP) education program may be required to submit additional information, at the discretion of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.
- The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee's review of the annual update of the approved program indicates substantial changes have been made.

2. Determination of Substantive Change:

Upon review of the information provided by the program and in consultation with the RN(NP) education program, the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee shall render a decision if the change is substantive and therefore requires a change in program approval status. If there is an unresolved dispute between the RN(NP) education program and the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee as to whether a change is substantial, the matter shall be referred to the Executive Director for resolution.

3. Approval Process:

A RN(NP) education program implementing a substantive change will be required to undergo the approval process of an established program even if it has not yet reached its program approval deadline.

4. Appeal:

If the program is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, the program has the right to appeal, in writing, a decision of the Executive Director to the Council within 30 days of the decision.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR A PROGRAM BEING DISCONTINUED

1. Notification of intent to discontinue a program:

The RN(NP) education program shall provide notification to the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee as to the expected date of discontinuation of the approved program as soon as this date has been determined. The program must also provide rationale for its discontinuation and any transitional or new programming being planned.
2. Determination of discontinuation process:

The Nursing Education Program Approval Committee, in collaboration with the RN(NP) education program shall determine the process to be followed to assess the discontinuing program. The process shall ensure that there is due process and procedural fairness.
3. Implementation of the discontinuation process:

The RN(NP) education program must provide a clear plan that will address how the transition from the old program to the new program will be accomplished OR how the discontinuation of the program will be accomplished. This plan must address each of the program approval standards and criteria. The submission must also include a clear plan that outlines how the needs of those students who do not complete the discontinued program will be addressed. Annual updates will be required to the end of the program when the last cohort of students graduate.
4. Appeal:

If the program is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, the program has the right to appeal, in writing, a decision of the Executive Director to the Council within 30 days of the decision.

VII CONFLICT OF INTEREST & CONFIDENTIALITY

The current Canadian Nurses Association *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*, and the SRNA Council policies *Code of Conduct* and *Conflict of Interest* direct the conduct of the members of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee, the Assessment Team, and Council throughout the Approval Process.

Each member of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee will sign and abide by the code of conduct approved by Council.

The Nursing Education Approval Committee in consultation with the nursing education program shall examine any perceived potential or actual conflict of interests at the outset of each program review. This shall include selection of members of the Assessment Team.

Each member of the Assessment Team will sign and abide by the code of conduct approved by Council. Members of the Assessment Team shall not request materials from the educational programs for their personal use at any time during the assessment process nor use the opportunity of the site visit to sell personal consulting services.

All information, documents, and correspondence regarding a program review shall be considered confidential. The decision of the Executive Director to grant or deny approval shall be a matter of public record.

VIII ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

The SRNA supports a collaborative program approval process. The RN(NP) education program will be provided with opportunities throughout the program approval process to provide input:

- Selection of the date of the site visit
- Selection of the Assessment Team
- Clarification of factual information documented in the Assessment Team's site visit report
- Nursing Education Program Approval Committee's tentative recommendation re approval rating

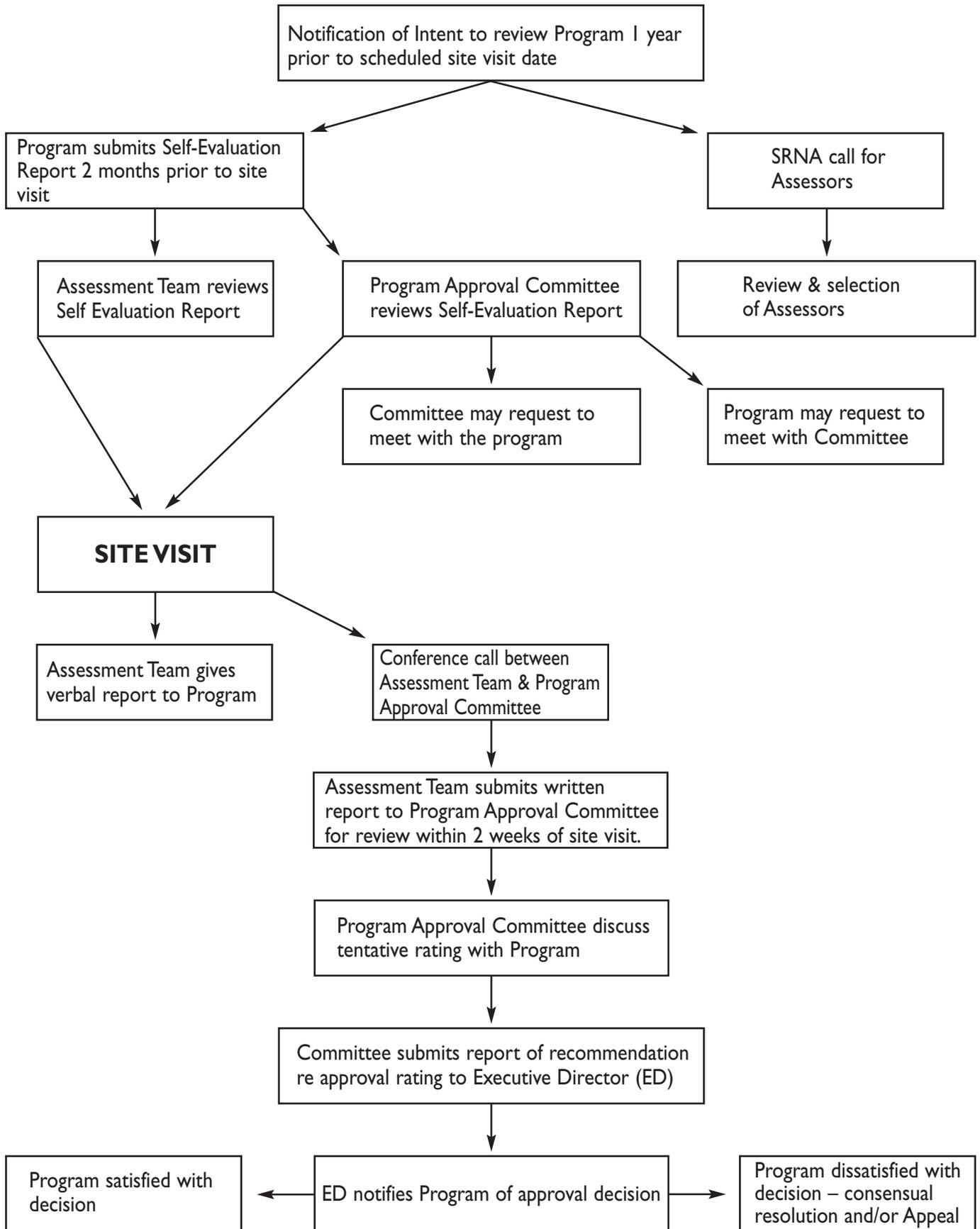
At any point in the approval process if the RN(NP) education program is not satisfied with a decision of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee, the program may request a meeting with the committee. At the discretion of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee, the Registrar and/or Executive Director may be asked to attend any such meeting in an attempt to accomplish low level resolution.

The final recommendation of the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee will be forwarded to the Executive Director in a written report of recommendations, including rationale. The Executive Director will notify the program, in writing of the final approval rating.

The RN(NP) education program has the right to enter into a consensual resolution process with the Executive Director and/or designate. Terms and undertakings may be agreed upon by consensus. A breach of this agreement will result in the reinstatement of the previous program approval rating or decision in dispute given by the Executive Director.

If the RN(NP) education program is dissatisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, the program may appeal, in writing, to Council within 30 days of the decision.

PROGRAM APPROVAL FLOW CHART – ADR PROCESS



IX APPEAL PROCESS

The RN(NP) education program has the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Director regarding the approval rating granted. The notice of appeal, including rationale, must be filed in writing to Council within 30 days of the program being notified of the approval rating.

Council shall hear the appeal in accordance with policy whereby they shall:

- Review the notice of appeal.
- Determine if the approval process was conducted according to the SRNA Approval Process for Nursing Education Programs.
- Review any documents Council deems necessary that relate to the approval submitted to the Nursing Education Approval Committee.
- Hear representation from both the nursing education program and the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee.
- Solicit expert advice as required.
- Make a reasoned decision to uphold the original rating or to recommend an alternate decision stating the rationale for the decision.
- Notify the RN(NP) education program and the Nursing Education Program Approval Committee of its decision, in writing.
- The appeal decision of Council is final.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Glossary

Approval: The term used to designate that an education program has met the prescribed standards set by the appropriate provincial body. It is a compulsory process and is based on standards and competencies required for nurse registration.

Association: The term used to identify the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association.

Attrition: The loss of students from an education program prior to graduation.

Client: The beneficiary of care; may be an individual, family, group, population or entire community.

Clinical: Refers to the time students spend in NP practice with clients. NPs integrate their in-depth knowledge of advanced nursing practice and theory, health management, health promotion, disease/injury prevention, and other relevant biomedical and psychosocial theories to provide direct comprehensive health services. The NP practice context is any setting where a NP-client relationship occurs with the intention of responding to the need or requests for NP service.

Collaboration: Client care involving joint communication and decision-making processes among the client, RN(NP) and other members of a health-care team who work together to use their individual and shared knowledge and skills to provide optimum client-centred care. The health-care team works with clients toward the achievement of identified health outcomes, while respecting the unique qualities and abilities of each member of the group or team.

Community: The population residing in the immediate area and in the country where the program is based.

Competence: The integrated knowledge, skills, judgment and attributes required of a registered nurse to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting.

Competency: The specific knowledge, skills and personal attributes required for a RN(NP) to practise safely and ethically in a designated role and setting.

Council: The governing Council of the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association as described in *The Registered Nurses Act, 1988*.

Criterion: Standard or test by which something can be judged.

Curriculum: The planned process by which a nursing program achieves its intended outcomes. It includes philosophical foundations, intents, content, sequencing of learning experiences, and evaluation.

Discontinuing Program: A program in which the last class of students has been accepted or the date for the last student intake will occur within a year of the scheduled approval review date.

Environment: A mosaic composed of cultural, social, technological, psychological, political, economic, occupational, and physical influences.

Graduate: One who has successfully completed the requirements of an approved nursing education program.

Interprofessional Education: Refers to occasions when students from two or more professions learn together during all or part of their professional education with the object of cultivating collaborative practice for providing client centered care. (Curran & Sharpe, 2007)

New Program: This refers to a program being offered by a new institution and/or the implementation of a new curriculum.

Nurse Practitioner: A registered nurse who provides comprehensive nursing services in a specialized area of practice based on further knowledge and decision-making skills in assessment, diagnosis and health care management including but not limited to prescription of drugs. A RN(NP) practice is based on in-depth knowledge of nursing and other related fields gained through additional education and practice.

Nursing Faculty: Those registered nurse (nurse practitioner) or registered nurse faculty that have been hired by the nursing education program and teach nursing content. Nursing faculty does not encompass cross-appointments from other faculties and/or sessional/guest lecturers.

Outcome: The end result of goal directed activities.

Preceptor: Refers to an experienced practitioner who is authorized to supervise a NP student during clinical experiences. Preferably a NP, the preceptor is familiar with the NP competencies and standards of practice and the objectives of the clinical experience. In conjunction with the faculty member, the preceptor provides supervision, support, and feedback related to their area of expertise. (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 2009)

Program: The program is a patterned combination and sequence of courses in a variety of subjects. Some courses extend over one term or semester, some over two. A program covers a period of one or more, usually three or more years.

Rating: A status given to a nursing education program as a result of the approval process.

Registration: A process whereby graduate nurses are declared by the SRNA to be currently eligible to practice in Saskatchewan and which includes a listing of qualified individuals as maintained on an official roster.

Standard: A desired and achievable level of performance against which actual performance can be compared. It provides a benchmark below which performance is unacceptable.

Supervision: The active process of directing, assigning, delegating, guiding, and influencing the outcome of an individual's performance of an activity. Supervision (adapted from American Nurses Association, 1997) is generally categorized as direct (being physically present or immediately available while the activity is being performed) or indirect (provision of direction through various means of written and verbal communications).

Appendix B

Self-Evaluation Report

An essential part of the process for approval of nursing education programs is the self-evaluation report prepared by the program. The report is the result of a review carried out by the nursing education program and is based on criteria outlined in this document. Included with each standard are criteria that are used to provide evidence that the standard has been met. Additional indicators that reflect the unique characteristics of the program in meeting each criterion/standard may also be included.

The report should include the following sections:

1. Table of Contents
2. Purpose and goals of the new program:
 - Historical development
 - Rationale for program change/development
 - Financial and budgetary arrangements for the establishment of the nursing education program and for its continued operation
3. Program intents
4. Program description including:
 - Length, admission requirements
 - Entry and exit points
 - Planned enrolment numbers
 - Collaborative/partnership agreements (if relevant)
 - Proposed date of commencement
5. Overview/blueprint of the proposed program curriculum and the ability of the nursing education program to meet the standards and criteria for approval:
 - Standard #1 Curriculum
 - Standard #2 Resources
 - Standard #3 Students
 - Standard #4 Graduates
6. A description of strategies used to obtain systematic and ongoing evaluation
7. Expected student numbers and nursing education program faculty required to ensure program intents are met:
 - Including faculty/student ratios in clinical settings
 - Including faculty selection process criteria
8. Nursing education program committee structure:
 - Nursing education program advisory committee
 - Nursing education program evaluation committee
 - Other committees
9. Recommendation: Recommendation regarding each standard/criteria is stated as specifically as possible, including projected dates and plans for addressing identified problems or deficiencies.
10. Summary: Conclusions reached and recommendations made throughout the report are summarized at the end of the report.

If aspects of the nursing education program are not completely developed at the time of submission, the plans for development must be included.

Program documents providing evidence that standards/criteria are met should be referenced throughout the self-evaluation report, and may be included as appendices or made available for the Assessment Team site visit.

Appendix C Assessment Team Report

The Assessment Team report will address each approval standard using the tool provided below.

Standard 1: Curriculum

Curriculum - The Curriculum provides learning experiences necessary for students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria: 1. A philosophy of nursing and education, and a conceptual framework together guide the development and implementation of the curriculum. a) Evidence that the philosophy, conceptual framework, and curriculum are congruent.	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Criteria: 2. RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice are systematically introduced and measured through theoretical courses, laboratory experiences, and clinical practice. a) Evidence that RN(NP) standards and competencies are embedded throughout the curriculum to support entry level NPs to provide safe, competent, and ethical care.	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>3. In addition to RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice, the curriculum also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Measurable course and program objectives; b) Logical course sequencing; c) Responsiveness to current and emerging trends; d) A method for tracking and monitoring clinical hours (a minimum of 700) and placements for each student to ensure that all students have clinical practice with clients appropriate to the specialty/program category across the life span in a variety of clinical settings within the program category; and e) Formative and summative evaluation processes in place that includes students, faculty, and key stakeholders to ensure the ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of the curriculum. 	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>4. The program has learning opportunities to enable students to apply the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) That consolidate theory with practice; b) To provide comprehensive care, relevant to RN(NP) practice; and c) That involves interprofessional education and provision of collaborative care. 	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>5. Nursing faculty supervise clinical learning activities with qualified preceptors.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria: 6. There is systematic and continuous evaluation of the curriculum including opportunities for feedback from stakeholders, which is used to inform ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of the curriculum.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Standard 2: Resources

Resources – Sufficient human, physical, and clinical resources to enable students to meet the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

<p>Criteria: I. Faculty possesses the theoretical knowledge and clinical expertise appropriate to their RN(NP) teaching responsibilities. a) A dean/director of the education program who: i. Is registered with the SRNA ii. Has a Masters degree (required), Doctoral degree (preferred) iii. Is a RN(NP) preferred b) Nursing faculty who: i. Are registered with the SRNA, as a RN(NP), in a specialty appropriate to the program category ii. Has a Master's degree, Doctoral degree preferred</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria: 2. Preceptors possess the expertise appropriate to their clinical teaching and relevant to the student's area of RN(NP) practice.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>3. There are sufficient faculty to ensure optimum student learning and safe client care.</p> <p>a) There are approved policies and procedures for all full time and part time faculty related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Faculty selection including clinical expertise, teaching ability, research and scholarly activities. ii. Ongoing evaluation of teaching, scholarly activities, and clinical competence in the settings where nursing faculty supervise students. iii. Professional development. <p>b) There are policies and procedures for faculty to provide input and feedback regarding the educational program's ability to meet (a).</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>4. There are sufficient physical resources to support a variety of learning modalities.</p> <p>These resources may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Library services; b) Virtual classrooms; c) Technology; and d) Laboratories 	<p>Met</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>5. Clinical placements provide suitable learning opportunities for students to achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There are contractual agreements between the educational institution and the clinical placement agencies. There are clients from appropriate to the speciality/program category across the lifespan who present with a variety of health issues. There are measures in place to ensure the safety of students and clients. There is a minimum of 700 clinical practice hours. 	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>6. There are sufficient financial resources to support the program.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Standard 3: Students

Students – Students demonstrate progress toward the achievement of the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>1. Students are currently registered and practising as a RN with the Association.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>2. There are policies and procedures in place for student selection and admission.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>3. There are policies and procedures related to academic progression. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Withdrawal; b) Probation; c) Failure; d) Appeals; e) Student discipline; f) Readmission; and g) Graduation 			
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>4. There are measures to ensure student and client safety. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensuring that the student's immunization status meets the requirements of the clinical facility; b) Ensuring that the students have a security clearance completed; and c) Ensuring that students have current life support certification appropriate to the specific practice population. 			
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>5. Students receive well-timed, formative, and summative feedback about their learning from faculty using a variety of evaluation methods to facilitate their achievement of the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice.</p>			
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>6. Students have access to services that increase their potential to successfully achieve the RN(NP) standards and competencies of practice. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Student health services; b) Financial support; c) Academic and personal counseling; and d) Learning resources. 	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>7. Student trends including enrollment, transfers, withdrawals, and graduation are tracked and inform admission criteria.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

<p>Criteria:</p> <p>8. There are policies and procedures related to maintaining student records related to relevant legislation.</p>	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Standard 4: Graduates

Graduates – Graduates successfully achieve the RN(NIP) standards and competencies of practice.

Criteria: 1. Results from the registration exam are monitored, analyzed and used to inform ongoing program development and program decisions.	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Criteria: 2. There is a post-graduate evaluation with stakeholder feedback.	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
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Discussion:

Recommendation:

Appendix D

Nursing Education Program Annual Update

Date: _____

Program: _____

Person completing the Annual Update: _____

Information to be included in the annual update is as follows:

1. Any changes, revisions, or other updates since the previous submission. This may include program and faculty achievements.
2. Description of the progress and ongoing development in meeting identified recommendations from the Approval Report
3. Description of the analysis of program evaluation data (course evaluations, student and faculty feedback) as well as an identified plan regarding how the program intends to integrate this data into the future program development.
4. Description of challenges and opportunities for improvement in the ongoing delivery of the nursing education program which reflect current trends.
5. Impact of change on ability of graduates to meet the *SRNA RN(NP) Standards and Core Competencies*.

SASKATCHEWAN



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