



Answering Your Questions

Every three months the Practice and Education (P&E) department reviews and analyzes your consultations/questions. Analysis of this information allows the P&E team the opportunity to identify nursing practice trends, frequently asked questions and/or concerns. This information guides NANB's work to create/amend resources such as, guidelines, fact sheets, and case studies to ensure that as an organization we are responsive to your practice needs, as well as promote public protection. This past quarter the P&E found the following:

1. Many nurses are seeking advice as to which professional development courses are approved by NANB. NANB has the legislated responsibility to set nursing program standards and to approve entry to practice nursing education programs in N.B. NANB has no role in the recognition or recommendation of out of province nursing programs or other nursing care related courses.

Each nurse is responsible for doing their research and determining if the course offered is through a recognized educational institution/accredited program; and determining if the course or program meets their learning needs and professional development goals.

In the situation when the educational requirement is set by the employer, please refer to the employer for guidance.

2. Nurses are inquiring if Pap Tests (also referred to as Pap Smears) are within a registered nurse's (RN) scope of practice. To answer this question it is necessary for the nurse to reflect on if their [Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses](#), specifically indicator 2.4 which states that a nurse "recognizes and practises within own level of competence and seeks additional knowledge and assistance when needed "(p.11). [The Role of Nurse and Scope of Practice Toolkit](#) is another informative resource in helping nurses reflect on their practice.

Completion of a Pap test is a beyond entry-level competency (BELC) which is defined as advanced knowledge, skills, and judgment gained through additional education, training, and clinical experience outside the core competencies obtained through entry-level nursing programs (Nova Scotia College of Nurses, 2020). For more information on this topic nurses are encouraged to review NANB's [BELC Guideline](#), specifically *Appendix A* which provides a decision-making framework for introducing BELCs into nursing practice. Furthermore, nurses are encouraged to follow and/or advocate for employer policy that supports safe, ethical, and competent nursing practice.