



Covenant Health / United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) Professional Responsibility Concern Process

Vision

The Covenant Health and UNA Professional Responsibility Concern (PRC) process promotes excellence in care at all stages of life, and caring for the whole person – body, mind and soul.

Principles

1. Professional Responsibility Concern Committees (PRCCs) are joint committees focused on **joint problem-solving** through **collaboration** in an environment of **mutual respect** to resolve issues as close to the point of care as possible. Aligning with the principle of **Subsidiarity** – “Decisions...ought to be handled by the least centralized competent authority,²” so as close to the point of care as possible. Front line managers and UNA members should work to resolve issues (At times this may need to include additional resources, e.g. Local presidents, HR, etc). Issues should be elevated for review, learnings of others or if resolution is not achieved.
2. Both Covenant Health and UNA representatives have an obligation to establish, organize and participate in the PRCCs to maximize their effectiveness and to seek opportunities for resolution throughout the entire process.
3. Full, consistent disclosure of **agreed upon, available, relevant** information by both parties to support decision-making and enhanced learning.
4. Every step of this process should occur within a **just culture**, which is supported and actively fostered by both UNA members and all levels of Covenant Health management. A just culture improves **safety of care** and services as it encourages the reporting and discussion of adverse events, close calls, near misses and hazards. A just culture acknowledges error as fact, and does not punish individuals for system failures of which they have no control over but reinforces the need for **professional accountability**.¹
5. **Professional Responsibility** - The PRC process is in alignment with the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CARNA) Practice Standards for Regulated Members, the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta (CRPNA) Code of Ethics and Practice Standards, and the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) Code of Ethics. All three documents emphasize the professional responsibility Registered Nurses (RN) or Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPN) must demonstrate to ensure safe, competent, and ethical nursing care.
6. This process is also regulated by the steps outlined in *Article 36: Professional Responsibility* of the **UNA/Covenant Health Collective Agreement** and the approach taken by both UNA and Covenant Health in addressing a Professional Responsibility Concern (PRC) should not violate the terms of this article.
7. **Organizational Engagement** should be considered in every step of the process. This involves both UNA and Covenant Health identifying and engaging the appropriate individuals from their respective organizations to assist in problem-solving discussions.

¹Covenant Health, *Building a Just Culture*, Corporate Policy & Procedure Manual – Policy no. III-35, September 13, 2011.

²Catholic Alliance of Canada, *Health Ethics Guide*, 3rd Ed, Appendix 1, Making Moral Judgements, p.116