

Assessing the Continuing Education Needs of Nurse Practitioners in Rural Ontario

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Context

Provincial monitoring of NP education

- a) **CRaNHR**
- b) **NP tracking study**
- c) **Support for continuing education**

Project Objectives

- **Guide continuing education strategy**
- **Determine perceived needs of NPs**

Overview

1. Survey
2. Re-analysis of NP tracking study*
3. Key informant information
4. Literature Review

*** FOR MORE INFO...**

www.laurentian.ca/cranhr

Research Team

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- **Kate Tilleczek, B.Ed., PhD (candidate)**
- **Raymond Pong, PhD**
- **Isabelle Michel, RN, MA**
- **Sandy Lemieux, BA**
- **Mark Richards, BA**

Key Lessons from Literature

- Both clinical and professional content
- Content defined by current practice context
- Prior learning assessments are useful
- Utilize existing infrastructure and supports
- Enhance networking and mentoring
- Delivery that is flexible, practical and short
- Most satisfied with face-to-face approaches
- Increased comfort with distance technologies

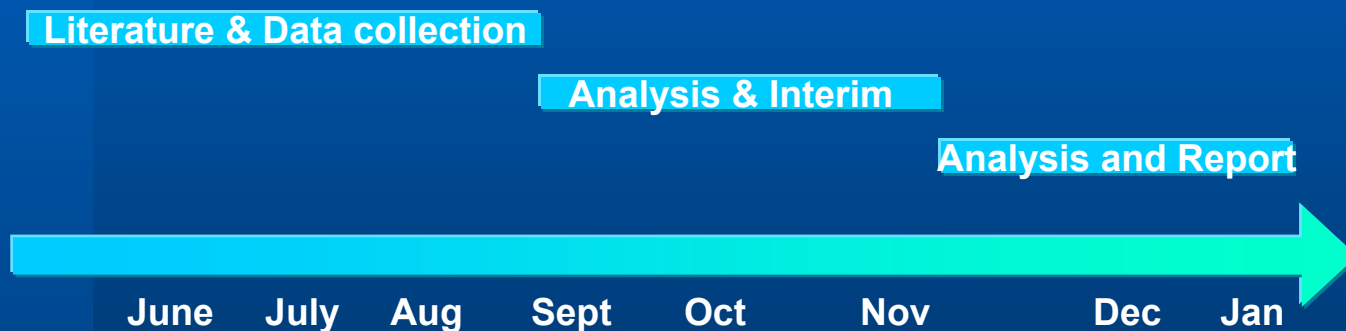
FOR MORE INFO...

See reference section and literature review

Procedures

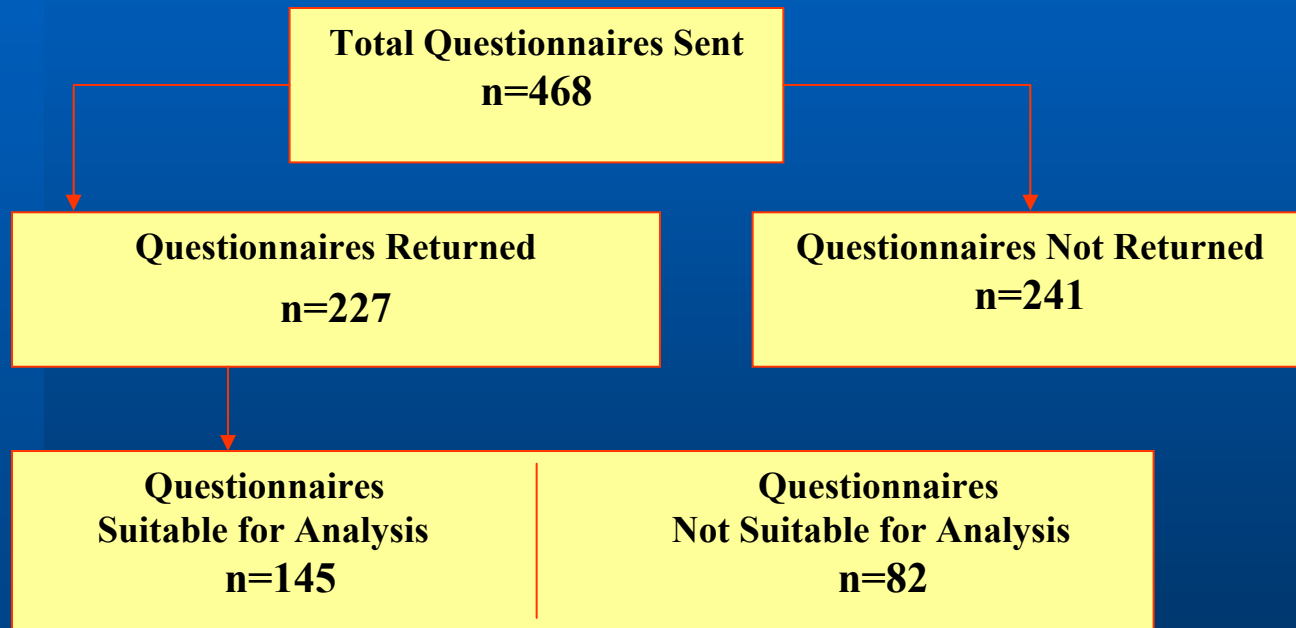
- **Ethics Review**
- **Questionnaire development**
- **Complex Sampling Frame**
(combined 4 lists and approached Health Canada)
- **Data collection**

Project Schedule



See Methods Section

Return Rate



Survey Results

Respondent Profile

Major Health Problems

Key Continuing Education Issues

Content and Modalities

Geographic Location

Rural Southern Ontario

25% (n=36)

Mean population 5,030

Northern Ontario

75% (n=109)

Urban-(27%)

Rural- (46%)

Remote- (27%)

Practice Settings

	Frequency	Percent
Nursing station/Outpost nurse clinic	34	23%
Community health centre	31	21%
Physician's office/Family practice unit	18	12%
Aboriginal health access centre	17	12%
Other community health agencies	12	8%
Public health unit	9	6%
Long-term care facility	7	5%
Hospital emergency	5	3%
Hospital ambulatory	4	3%
Health service organization	4	3%
Community care access centre	2	1%
Hospital inpatient	2	1%
TOTAL	145	98%***

Professional Designation

- **59%** (n=85) **RNs(EC)**
- **22%** (n=32) **RNs in FNIHP**
- **19%** (n=27) **RN** expanded role or medical directives

Clientele

Combination of age groups and health needs.
Focus on health promotion, disease prevention,
treatment and health maintenance.

81%

Major Health Problems/Issues

- 1. Diabetes (57%)**
- 2. Cardiovascular Disease (56%)**
- 3. Psycho-social Problems (47%)**
- 4. Lack of access to health services (55%)**

Key Continuing Education Issues

- **Importance**
- **Access**
- **Barriers**

Importance

- **Virtually all had previous CE experience especially in clinical topics**
- **Virtually all rated CE as highly important**

Voices

“Continuing education is critical in maintaining and expanding my professional competence. With the constant development of new treatments and guidelines, it is difficult to stay current without continuing education....”

“Both to meet the College of Nurses of Ontario requirements and from a sense of professional responsibility, I feel it is very important”

Access and Barriers

Lack of access

Only 27% had high levels of access to courses.

However, they could access learning technologies

Main barriers

- **Distance to travel**
- **Travel costs**
- **Work obligations**
- **Tuition costs**
- **Lack of employer funds**
- **Family obligations**

Content Area Needs

Clinical
&
Professional

Clinical Content Needs

1. **Drug Prescriptions and interactions**
2. **Interpreting laboratory tests**
3. **Assessment, diagnosis and differential diagnosis**
4. **Advanced counseling skills**
5. **Endocrine health**
6. **Women's health**

Professional Content Needs

1. **Community development and mobilization**
2. **Program planning**
3. **Proposal writing**
4. **Program evaluation**
5. **Evidence-based practice**
6. **Health promotion models**

Voices

“I need a community advisory team and must work politically within the new city (recently amalgamated) to develop the NP role”

“I am interested in empowering people to improve their health and lifestyles and take control of their health...”

“I need to know more about the administrative and organizational and political structure of Health Canada, FNIHB and First Nations Bands”

Preferred Modalities

1. **Workshops**
2. **Seminars**
3. **Conferences**
4. **Print-based course materials**
5. **Face-to-face lectures**
6. **Web-based & Internet**
7. **CD-Rom**
8. **Videoconferencing**
9. **Networking**
10. **Computer conferencing**
11. **Teleconferencing**

Differences in Northern Ontario

Modality	Mean Helpfulness Score*		
	Urban	Rural	Remote
Face-to-Face lectures	4.0	4.2*	3.5*
Conference	4.5*	4.1	3.6*
CD-ROM	3.4	3.0*	4.2*
Seminar	4.3*	4.2*	3.8*
Workshop	4.4*	4.4*	3.8*
Teleconferencing	2.9*	3.4*	3.6*

* *Significance level = $p < .05$*

** *Rating scale from 1 “not at all helpful” to 5 “extremely helpful”*

Convenient times to participate

<u>Time of Day and Year</u>	<u>% Yes</u>
Evenings	62%
In the fall	60%
In the winter	58%
During work hours	57%
In the spring	48%
During weekends	43%
In the summer	19%

NP Tracking Study

Secondary Analysis

Continuing Education Activities

Clinical

Women's health
Psychosocial health
Emergency care
Endocrine health
Integumentary health
Cardiovascular health

Professional

Professional and regulatory
issues
Leadership and management
Research and evidence-
based practice

Key Informant Information

Three themes

Three themes

- 1. Content Areas**
- 2. Issues and Strategies**
- 3. Delivery of Continuing Education**

Corroborative Evidence

Literature, Survey, NP Tracking
Study and Key Informants

Summary

**Describe Continuing
Education Needs**

Context

Issues

Content

Modalities

**Guide Continuing Education
Strategy**

Context

Issues

Content

Modalities

Recommendations

1. **Paradox of modality and barriers**
2. **Focus on current NP practice and context**
3. **Consider modules**
4. **Existing provincial strategies**
5. **Formative and summative evaluation**

Initiatives

- ✓ **Strategies**

Constructivist model

- ✓ **Modalities**

Mixed

- ✓ **Content Areas**

Both clinical and professional

- ✓ **Implementation and Evaluation**

