

# Code of Ethics

## For Registered Psychiatric Nurses

**College of Registered Nurses and Midwives of  
Prince Edward Island**

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This document has been adapted from British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives and College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba with permission.

## ***Introduction***

The Code of Ethics for Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) is a statement of the ethical values of RPNs in Prince Edward Island. This Code articulates the ethical principles and values that guide all members of the psychiatric nursing profession. It sets out the framework for professional responsibility and accountability while promoting high ethical standards in practice and providing a benchmark for RPNs to use for self-evaluation. RPNs are bound to their code of ethics as part of a regulatory process that serves and protects the public and maintains the professional reputation of the discipline of psychiatric nursing.

## **Safe, competent, and ethical practice to ensure the protection of the public.**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse:

- Knows the difference between personal and professional relationships and assumes responsibility for those relationships.
- Commits to building therapeutic relationships and behaves in a manner that protects the integrity of those relationships.
- Ensures that the vulnerabilities of others are not exploited for one's own interests.
- Practices within one's own level of competence and seeks out additional information or guidance when required.
- Strives to ensure evidence-based practice while ensuring continuing competence throughout one's professional career.
- Strives to maintain a level of personal health, mental health, and well-being in order to provide competent, safe, and ethical care.
- Ensures that one neither initiates nor participates in any practice that is considered harmful to the welfare of others.
- Protects the confidentiality of all information gathered in the context of the professional relationship.
- Practices within relevant legislation that governs privacy, access, use and disclosure of personal information.
- Conducts one's self in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity, reliability, impartiality, and diligence.
- Recognizes the expertise and limitations of co-workers/ colleagues or students when delegating responsibilities.
- Reports, in good faith, any incompetence or unethical behaviour of health care

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providers to the appropriate authorities.

- Accepts responsibility and accountability for one's own actions taking all necessary steps to prevent or minimize harm.
- Refrains from permitting one's professional designation to be used for personal gain in connection with the endorsement of products or services.
- Conducts one's self in a manner that promotes a positive image of the profession at the local, community, provincial, and national levels.
- Practices according to provincial and federal statutes/acts/regulations/by-laws and the Standards of Practice for Registered Psychiatric Nurses.
- Understands, promotes, and upholds the ethical values of the profession.

## **Respect for the inherent worth, right of choice, and dignity of persons.**

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse:

- Respects people's autonomy and their right to choose by recognizing them as full partners in decision-making.
- Strives to ensure that a person's choices are understood, expressed, and promoted.
- Respects the unique, inherent worth and dignity of all persons and strives to ensure that the rights of individuals are upheld.
- Recognizes and respects diversity and that a person's culture may influence health practices and decision making.
- Upholds the person's legal and moral right to refuse treatment and to choose to live at risk as long as those decisions are in keeping with the law.
- Knows, applies, and upholds the elements of informed consent.
- Ensures psychiatric nursing decisions are consistent with the person's choices or the choices of a substitute decision maker, where applicable.
- Provides opportunities for persons to make choices and decisions even when the capacity for self-determination is reduced.
- Advocates for justice and fairness and stands against stigma and discrimination.
- Recognizes fluctuations of diminished autonomy and empowers the person to act independently in areas of personal strengths.
- Commits to collaborative and respectful relationships with Indigenous clients through efforts to understand and implement the recommendations relevant to health care made in the report *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*.

## Health, mental health, and well-being

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse:

- Respects the needs and values of each person within the physiological, psychological, developmental, socio-cultural, and spiritual dimensions.
- Understands that physical health and mental health are interconnected and are a dynamic process that fluctuates across the lifespan.
- Recognizes the complex relationships between emotional, developmental, physical, and mental health and the influence of social factors on physical and mental health and on illness.
- Understands that perception, lifestyle, and expectations influence physical and mental health.
- Recognizes the role of culture and spirituality in health promotion, illness prevention, and in recovery.
- Strives to ensure equality in physical and mental health services.
- Recognizes the impact of historical traumas on populations and works to mitigate the impact.

## Quality Practice

The Registered Psychiatric Nurse:

- Recognizes that community, socio-economic, and political systems influence all aspects of health.
- Ensures that approaches to physical and mental health are collaborative, holistic, and dynamic and include promoting health, preventing illness, and ensuring interventions that promote rehabilitation and recovery.
- Uses and contributes to research that promotes the ongoing development of psychiatric nursing knowledge, evidence-based practice, and improvements in mental health care.
- Contributes to quality practice by promoting positive, healthy, and ethical working environments.
- Contributes to promoting and maintaining safe practice environments.
- Ensures that safe and competent practice is a priority by advocating for human and material resources.
- Advocates for fair and equitable access to services and benefits and for equal treatment and protection of all persons.
- Respects and values the knowledge and contributions of other health care

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providers and works in collaborative partnerships with others.

- Recognizes the relationship between the environment and determinants of health and is committed to social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

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