

SASKATCHEWAN UNION OF NURSES



**NURSING ADVISORY
LOCAL CHAIR TOOL KIT**

February 2019

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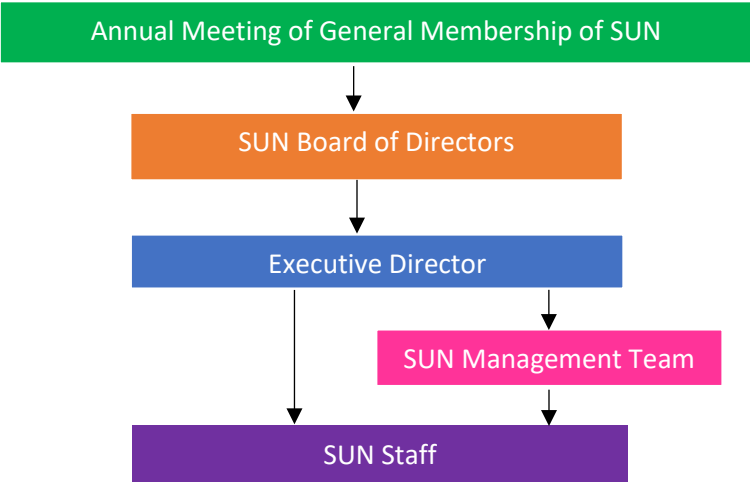
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Member Driven, Member Focused

At the foundation of SUN are the members – registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses and nurse practitioners employed in a variety of settings throughout the province. As the governing body of the Union, each year at the Annual Meeting, members establish all policies, rules and regulations that bind members, Chartered Locals, Committees, and Directors of the Union. It is the input given during the Annual Meeting which provides the Board of Directors and staff with the direction required to implement the strategic focus of the Union for the following year.

Each year, during a Local Annual Meeting, the members elect their Local Executive, as well as establish the governing bylaws and policies for their Local. The Local Executive plays a vital role as the first point of contact for members when they have questions or concerns or require support in addressing professional or workplace issues.

SUN Organizational Chart



Defining the Roles of Leaders

At the core of SUN's strength is our elected leadership – it is their compassion for others, the dedication to protecting the professional and workplace rights of the members, and their commitment to ensuring the safety of patients, that makes our union strong.

How do we make our union stronger? We unite, and we conquer.

At each level of leadership, we each take on key components of providing member and union support and guidance. But with so many moving parts, it can be difficult to know whose job it is to take on which role. The following is a brief overview of key roles Locals, the Board of Directors and SUN Staff play in addressing member concerns.

Local Executive

- Welcomes new members into SUN.
- Administers the affairs of the Locals.
- First point of contact for member concerns.
- Conducts investigation into concerns raised by members.
- Conducts initial, informal meetings with Employer to resolve issues.
- Works with SUN Staff to escalate member concerns at appropriate stages.

Board of Directors

- Responsible for the governance and finances of the Union.
- Sets the strategic direction of the Union on an annual basis.
- Sets key bargaining priorities for contract negotiations.
- Provides support and guidance to Locals regarding day-to-day functions of the Local.
- Maintains communication with the Locals to whom they represent.

SUN Staff

- Provides guidance to Locals regarding nursing concerns and day-to-day functions of the Local.
- Supports Locals in escalating members concerns at the appropriate stages.
- Represents and protects the best interests and rights of members, with the Employer, at the appropriate stages.

Locals: Protecting the Interests & Rights of Members

Local Executive Roles

The primary role of the Local is to provide member support. The Local Executive is also charged with the authority to administer the affairs of the Local and establish policies regarding the administration of the Local (as per Local Bylaws and the SUN Constitution and Bylaws). In addition, the Local is the first point of contact and support for their members.

The composition of each Local Executive is outlined in the Local Bylaws (Local Bylaw 6.01). Typically, executive roles include President, Vice-President, Local SUN District Council (SDC) representative(s), Treasurer, Secretary, and other committee chairs as required for the Local. In addition, depending on the structure of your Local, the Local NAC Chair and OH&S representatives may also be considered active members of your Local Executive.

In smaller locals, it is common for roles to be combined such as a secretary-treasurer or president and Local NAC Chair. **NOTE: The role of President and Treasurer, as per Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) regulations, cannot not be combined.**

The following is a guideline for determining the primary role of each position.

President

- Chairs all meetings of the Local, enforces SUN's Constitution, Provincial and Local Bylaws, and policies, rules and regulations enacted by the Union and the Local. (See Appendix V)
- Primary role is to provide members with advice about workplace issues and problems, to represent members' best interests when meeting with the Employer, and to supply information and answer questions about SUN.
- Responsible for conducting the initial investigation regarding member concerns/issues, and/or referring and escalating labour relations and practice concerns to SUN Staff as appropriate for support and guidance.
- Actively participates in low level resolution meetings to address member concerns.
- Link between SUN Provincial and members in the Local.

Vice President

- Assists the President in carrying out her duties and performs them in her absence.

Treasurer

- Responsible for all the financial affairs of the Local, which includes ensuring the Local has a bank account, depositing cheques, ensuring proper signing authority is in place, payment of approved bills, and recording all transactions.
- Provide financial reports at all Local meetings.
- Maintain financial records for seven years.
- Track and submit local and provincial forms (union leaves, expense claim forms, etc).

Secretary

- Creates agendas in concert with the Local Executive. See Appendix V for tips on creating an effective agenda.
- Keeps minutes of all meetings of the Local. See Appendix V for components of effective minutes.
- Handles the correspondence of the president and executive, keeps the locals mailing list up to date and maintains contact with the SUN offices.
- Submits Local Bylaws to SUN Provincial.

Local SDC Representative

- Attends regional SDC meetings.
- Establishes and maintains communication between local and regional SDC.
- Represents local member concerns at regional SDC meetings.

Depending on your Local structure, the following positions are not necessarily members of the Local Executive; however, play key roles in protecting the interests and rights of members.

Local NAC Chair

- Actively participates in low level resolution meetings to address professional practice concerns.
- Actively participates in initial NAC meetings with the Employer.
- Upon receipt of WSRs from members:
 - investigates the WSRs,
 - ensures the employer has received a copy,
 - submits a copy to SUN Provincial,
 - coordinates NAC meetings,
 - ensures minutes are taken and submitted to SUN Provincial, and
 - maintains a record of the disposition of the WSRs.
- Collaborates with SUN Provincial in the escalation of WSRs via NAC Process within the Collective Agreement.

Local Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Representative

- Represents nursing at facility OH&S meetings.
- Participates in regional OH&S committees.
- Identifies and controls safety hazards.
- Communicates OH&S concerns raised at the Local to SUN Provincial.
- Participates in facility OH&S investigations.
- Promotes OH&S education and knowledge in the workplace.
- Maintains OH&S records and meeting minutes.

TIP |

When Your Local Executive Changes

Whether it be following an election or when someone vacates a position, you are obligated to advise the following groups of changes to the Local Executive:

- Your members
- Your Employer
- Your bank to update/change the signing authorities for the local finances
- SUN Provincial – visit the LEADERSHIP section of the SUN website for a handy online form

Executive Duties

Within the role of the Local Executive there are a number of duties. To work effectively and efficiently, a Local Executive should divide the duties amongst their elected members, where appropriate. The following is a list of duties the Local Executive is responsible for:

- **Member Support**
 - Welcome new members.
 - Escalate member concerns as appropriate.
 - Listen to member concerns.
 - Initial meetings with management.
 - Initial grievance investigations.
 - Directs members with benefits, Long Term Disability (LTD), or WCB claims/forms to contact SUN Provincial.
- **Administration**
 - Review membership lists with SUN Provincial.
 - Update Local Executive changes with SUN Provincial and Employer.
 - Submit Local Bylaws annually to SUN Provincial.
 - Take local meeting minutes.
 - Ensure local election happens annually and follows process outlined in Local Bylaws.
 - Track and maintain records for Local union leave forms and expense forms.
 - Track and maintain records for provincial union leave forms and expense forms and submit to the provincial office.
 - Authorize Local union leaves.
 - Conduct frequent audits of local dues reports from Employer.
- **Finances**
 - Maintain local financial records.
 - Conduct a yearly audit of the local's financial records.
- **Communication**
 - Notify members of upcoming meetings and/or elections.
 - Notify members of upcoming employer meetings.
 - Provide members with agenda for upcoming meetings.
 - Communicate employer information with members.
- Communicate concerns/issues to other levels of union.
- Share provincial communication with members.
- Meet with local members to discuss resolutions submitted to Provincial Annual Meeting.
- Share local concerns with SDC/BOD/Staff as appropriate.
- **Contract Compliance/Labour Relations**
 - Ensure contract compliance in workplace.
 - Review changes to employer policies for appropriateness.
 - Review new employer policies for appropriateness.
 - Review posting notifications for appropriateness.
 - Review successful applicant notifications for appropriateness.
 - Communicate posting concerns to SUN Provincial.
 - Communicate technological changes to SUN Provincial.
 - Communicate return for service agreements to SUN Provincial.
 - Communicate layoff notices to SUN Provincial.
 - Maintain records of consecutive weekend waivers.
 - Maintain records of standby waiver.
- **Nursing Advisory Process**
 - Submit WSRs to SUN Provincial.
 - Submit NAC meeting minutes to SUN Provincial.
 - Track and maintain records for WSRs filed, including meeting minutes.
 - Initial Nursing Advisory Meetings.
 - Escalate WSRs via NAC process.
- **OH&S**
 - Maintain OH&S records and meeting minutes.

Joint Nursing Advisory Process

Rooted in a foundation of transparency, accountability, respect and open communications, the Joint Nursing Advisory Committee (NAC) process is designed to take a proactive and collaborative approach to concerns regarding patient safety and safe nursing practice.

A key tool for success built into the process, is the ability for registered nurses and nursing managers to engage in low-level discussions and two-way communications to resolve issues in real time based on the needs and acuity levels of the patients.

The role of the Joint NAC is to review, resolve and/or make recommendations regarding WSRs which are not resolved at the unit level. The terms, conditions, and guidelines for the Joint NAC are outlined in the Collective Agreement. It will be up to each Local and their Joint NAC, in concert with SUN Provincial, to discuss how the parties will meet those terms.

JOINT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

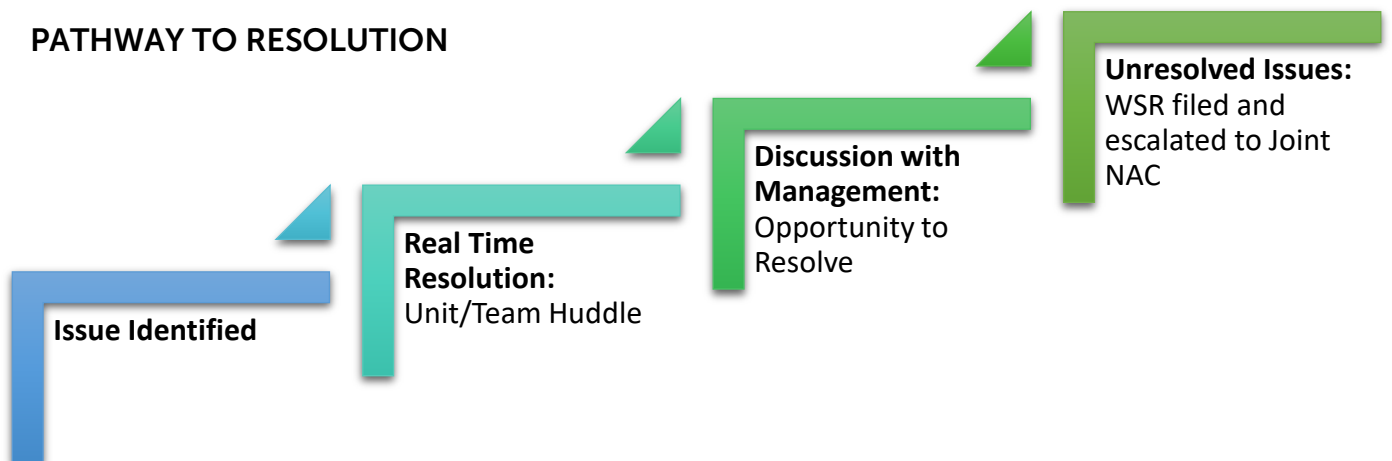
As per the Collective Agreement, the Joint NAC will consist of equal representation from each party (Employer and Union). Members of the Joint NAC will include:

- SUN Members
- Unit Level Manager(s) of the Units under discussion
- Out-of-Scope Representatives
- Resource Personnel, as determined by the parties

There should be a **minimum of two (2) SUN members, including the Local NAC Chair, in attendance** at each meeting. Recommended numbers, based on facility/agency type, include:

- Base Hospital: Six (6) members to be appointed by SUN.
- Regional Hospital: Four (4) members to be appointed by SUN.
- All other Facilities/Agencies: Two (2) members to be appointed by SUN.
- Regional and/or Multi-Facility: One (1) member per Facility or Agency with a minimum of two (2) members appointed by SUN

PATHWAY TO RESOLUTION



ROLE OF THE LOCAL NAC CHAIR

The role of the Local NAC Chair goes beyond receiving WSRs and attending Joint NAC meetings. You are the local expert on the NAC process and play a key role in educating and guiding members effectively through the process, as well as taking an active role in finding appropriate, long term solutions.

The role the Local NAC Chair includes, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring members have access to Work Situation Report (WSR) forms.
- Ensuring members utilize low level resolution to address issues in real time.
- Providing original copy of WSR to SUN Provincial in a timely manner for issues and data to be captured and monitored.
- Conducting follow up investigation on the matter to collect facts and details to further inform the matter and support resolving the issue at the Joint NAC meeting.
- Consulting with Nurse Practice Officer (NPO) at SUN Provincial, as needed, to determine best course of action.
- Co-Chairing Joint NAC meetings with Employer designate. (See Appendix IV for tips on co-chairing a meeting)
- Ensuring an action plan or “next steps” have been documented and completed to reach timely resolution.
- Updating Local President/Executive on NAC activity – they may be able to provide you with additional information, guidance or assistance in addressing issues.
- Referring WSRs/issues to NPO when process has been exhausted or issues are of a significant or critical matter.
- Taking an active role in presenting issues to Executive Oversight Committee or Saskatchewan Health Authority Board of Directors.
- Assisting the NPO, when and where required, in preparation of an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC) presentation.

Team Approach

Similar to how Local Executives are advised to function, the Local NAC Chair is strongly encouraged to adopt a team approach to address member concerns raised through the NAC process, in a timely manner.

To work effectively and efficiently, Local NAC Chairs for large or multi-site locals, should consider calling on their Local Executive or recruiting members to assist them at appropriate stages in the process. For example, the Local NAC Chair may enlist the assistance of Unit or Site Representatives to help with the collecting and forwarding original Work Situation Reports (WSRs) to SUN Provincial, taking minutes during a Joint NAC meeting and forwarding a copy to SUN Provincial, or conducting the background investigation required when preparing for a Joint NAC meeting.

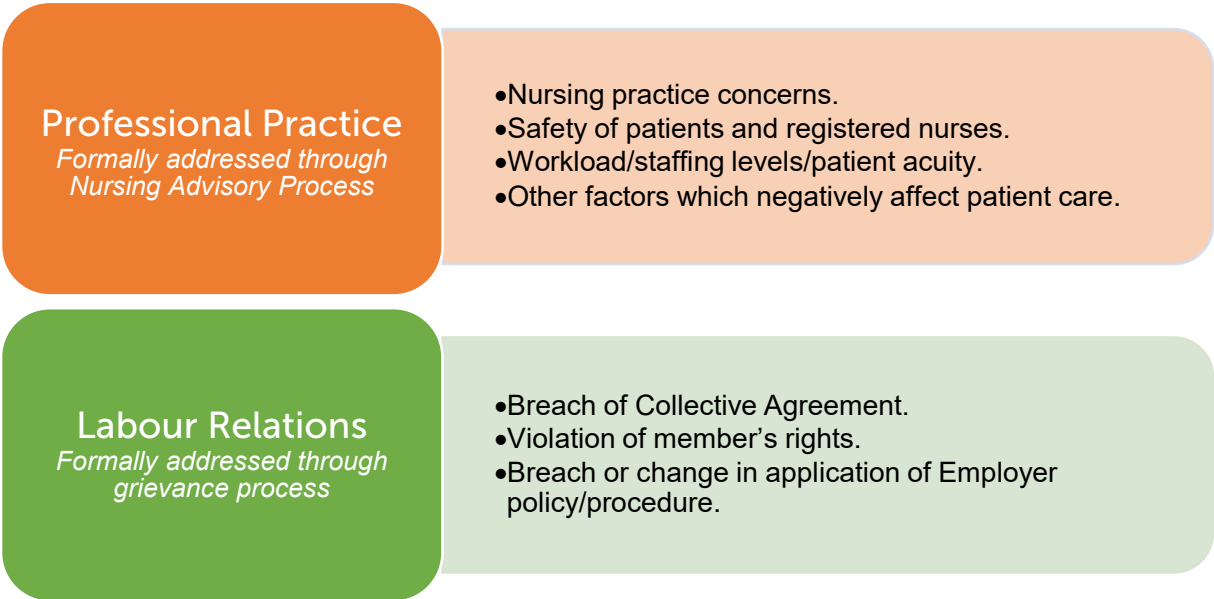
It is important to remember, you are not alone. This can be an overwhelming list of duties for one person; but if you divide the work into smaller tasks, the job becomes less daunting.

Member Concerns: Identifying the Issue

From time to time, members will raise questions, concerns and/or complaints regarding the workplace, professional practice and/or their rights under the Collective Agreement. Depending on the issue, it is the Local Executive or Local NAC Chair’s job to investigate, assess and determine the best course of action to address the issue raised.

Not every issue raised will be a violation of the members rights, the Collective Agreement or professional practice standards; deciphering a complaint from a violation can be difficult. No matter the case, the first step is to listen to the members concerns and conduct a fact-finding investigation into the issue raised, to determine the best course of action taken.

Understanding the types of concerns raised, will assist you identifying and assessing the issue.



Issues which have a labour relations component or have the potential to develop a labour relations component at any time, should be brought to the attention of the Local President for further assessment and investigation.

Professional Practice or Workload?

At any given time, there will be a variety of issues raised through the Joint NAC process. In order to effectively address the concerns raised, it will be key to recognize the difference between a professional practice issue and workload concern.

Simply put, a professional practice issue or workload concern can be defined as when a nurse or nursing team is:

- asked to perform more work than is consistent with proper client care (in terms of safety for the nurse(s) and clients, competence and quality evidence-based care) OR
- asked to perform work that violates professional responsibilities as a registered nurse.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ISSUES

The most obvious professional practice issue is not being able to uphold professional standards, competencies or code of ethics, policy/procedure/work standard or OH&S legislation. For example, think about your inability to complete all the steps in the nursing process, teaching, communication and other areas that arise in your own personal experiences past or present – these situations would qualify as a professional practice issue.

WORKLOAD CONCERNS

Workload concerns can stem from a number of factors:

- Were there too many patients for the staff on shift?
- Was baseline staffing not met or appropriate for the clients being cared for?
- What was the acuity and complexity of clients?
- Was the Junior/Senior mix or overall skill appropriate?
- Was there a lack of appropriate supports and/or resources?
- Was the unit in overcapacity?

All of these workload factors directly impact the ability to provide safe, quality care.

There is great deal of overlap between the two (2) categories, as increased workload directly affects a nurse's ability to meet their professional responsibilities and puts their ability to provide safe patient care at risk. It is through the Joint NAC process, the root cause of the issue can be uncovered and adequately addressed to bring out long term solutions.

WSR: What Is It & Why Do We Need It?

WHAT IS A WORK SITUATION REPORT (WSR)?

A Work Situation Report (WSR) is a SUN document developed to be key documentation of a patient safety and/or nursing practice issue/concern raised and the steps taken to reach low level resolution.

Most importantly, and vital to the Nursing Advisory process, a WSR in its simplest form, is a communication tool for the nurse, manager, and Joint NAC, to track and monitor professional practice issues and workload concerns.

A WSR is not an incident report – rather a mechanism that provides evidence of issues/concerns in the work environment which are making it difficult for registered nurses to provide quality care and uphold their professional responsibilities.

Consistent use of the WSR provides management with the evidence and documentation they require to escalate the matter within their own internal channels, in an effort to resolve the issues identified by the frontline nurses.

WHY IS A WSR IMPORTANT?

Registered nurses have the professional responsibility and accountability to ensure the delivery of safe, quality care. Completing and submitting a WSR to the Joint NAC process, provides registered nurses with:

- Documentation they attempted to address concerns impacting their ability to provide safe, quality and ethical care;
- Evidence of issues and concerns in the work environment making it difficult to achieve or maintain professional standards of care; and
- If required, evidence of documentation and management notification of an issue to protect their license.

The nursing saying “if it is not charted, it was not done” holds true for the Joint NAC process and WSRs as well.

By not raising nursing practice, workload or patient safety concerns/issues, nurses are giving the impression that we accept the unsafe or unethical situations we are faced with. By tolerating such situations, we are telling the Employer we accept the situation and are able to uphold our professional responsibilities and accountabilities – even if this is not the case.

By remaining silent and not activating the Joint NAC process by filing a WSR, we are allowing a precedent to be set, which makes it difficult to undo the wrongs and create positive change in the future.

TIP |

Completing a WSR

- Low level resolution must be attempted prior to filing of WSR.
- Ensure steps taken for low level resolution are documented.
 - Remember, if actions are not documented, they are considered “not done”.
- Complete all areas, check boxes, and narrative boxes as relevant to your situation.
- WSR should clearly outline all of the critical elements of the event.
- Avoid emotional or personal commentary. Be objective, specific and factual.
- Avoid including any patient identifiable information. HIPA and Employer privacy policies must be maintained at all times.
- Document the impact on patient safety and ability to maintain professional standards and competencies.

A WSR Is Filed – What Do You Do?

STEP 1: Member Submits WSR

Once a WSR has been filed, following up with the member will be key to ensuring vital steps in the process have not been overlooked. Follow up questions to ask the member include, but are not limited to:

- Has the member taken the appropriate steps?
 - Was there an attempt to find resolution at the Unit level (Step 1 of the process)?
 - Has the member properly notified the Manager or designate (Step 2 of the process)?
 - Was the method of communication documented?
 - Face-to-face conversation?
 - Email or text message?
 - Phone call?
 - Voicemail?
 - Was the Manager or designate provided adequate time to resolve the matter before the WSR was filed?
- Has the member provided a copy of the WSR to the manager in question?
 - Was the WSR given directly to the Manager?
 - Hand delivered paper copy?
 - Scanned/emailed?
 - Faxed?
 - Left in mailbox?
 - Interoffice/region mail?

LISTENING TO & RECEIVING MEMBER CONCERNS

- Remind members of their obligations as they relate to HIPA.
- Avoid distractions (cell phone, busy location, rushed for time, etc).
- If possible, find a private and comfortable location to have the conversation.
- Remain engaged and unbiased in the conversation. Try not to personalize the issue or provide personal input – this may cloud your assessment of the issue.
- Take detailed notes and seek clarification of the facts concerning the issue; ask the member to state what they know to be true, not their perception of the matter.
- Clarify what actions/steps the member took prior to raising the issue with the Local
- Has this issue been raised before (JUMM, NAC process, etc)?
- Are there other factors influencing the situation?
- What remedy is the member seeking to resolve the matter (if appropriate)?
- Advise member of your next steps – investigation and assessment; Joint NAC meeting(s) with the Employer to resolve the issue (if appropriate).

TIP |

STEP 2: File WSR with SUN Provincial

When a WSR is submitted, it is the member's responsibility to:

- (1) Provide the Local NAC Chair with the **original** WSR form
- (2) Provide a **copy** of the WSR to the manager or designate
- (3) Keep a **copy** for their own records

As the Local NAC Chair, it is your responsibility to:

- (1) Keep a **copy** of the WSR(s) for the local files
- (2) File the **original** WSR with SUN Provincial

It is recommended that you **file the WSR(s) with SUN Provincial within fourteen (14) days** of receipt, so they may be assessed and tracked in the provincial database. In the interest of time, you may scan the WSR(s) and email the file to wsr@sun-nurses.sk.ca

In the subject line include your Local # as well as local/facility and/or unit name (if applicable).

Keeping Local Files

It is recommended that current/active WSR files are kept in an organized and easy to follow system.

TIP |

For larger Locals, consider organizing your WSRs by department or area.

Create binders, or a similar system, for ACTIVE, RESOLVED and WITHDRAWN files and organize/move accordingly.

To assist Locals in keeping track of on-going issues on a unit or in the facility, SUN has developed an internal tracking form (for local use only). This document is intended to provide Locals or members with a tool to document issues and keep a record of their status under the new NAC process without unnecessarily using a WSR form.

To download a copy of the tracking form, visit the LEADERSHIP section of SUN's website.

If Locals require additional support and/or guidance in developing a filing system, please contact your Nurse Practice Officer (NPO).

STEP 3: Investigate the Issue

In preparation for a Joint NAC meeting, where the matter will be formally raised, it is important that you have reviewed the issue with the member to seek additional clarification regarding the context in which the situation occurred.

The information gathered during your conversations with the member(s) will assist you in determining the best course of action to be taken, structuring your presentation to the Employer regarding the issue, preparing responses to Employer statements/positions and develop recommendations for resolution.

During this initial fact-finding stage, it is crucial to **confirm a significant attempt at low level resolution was made** by the member(s).

It is also important to stress that **HIPA must be maintained at all times** during your conversations and documentation of the issue. Remind the member to avoid providing patient specific information.

Information to consider during initial investigation:

- Name of members involved
- Contact information
- Member status
- Worksite or unit
- Issue presented/identified
- Date, day of the week, time and shift affected
- Management representatives involved
- Policies
- Past practices
- Patient impact
- Breach of standards, etc
- Is this a trending or reoccurring issue?
- Relevant forms (leave requests, overtime request forms, WSRs, etc.)
- Relevant documentation (emails, assignments/roster, communication book, unit meeting minutes, etc.)
- Casual call-in logs
- Shift information such as notice of shift cancelation, scheduling of shift
- Evidence corroborating members concerns
- Notes from follow/investigation with members
- Relevant previously settled disputes/WSRs
- Resolution sought by member

The above list is not an exhaustive list, nor would it apply to every scenario. To assist you in your investigation, a collection form has been developed for your convenience. (Appendix II – WSR Investigation Sheet)

If at any time during your investigation, you believe or suspect there has been a violation of the member's rights, a breach of the Collective Agreement, or breach or change in application of Employer policy/procedure, **notify the Local President immediately** to further investigate the potential labour relations issue.

STEP 4: Schedule Joint Nursing Advisory Committee (NAC) Meeting

As per the Collective Agreement, **Joint NAC meetings will take place at least once a month** unless the parties mutually agree there are no agenda items. If either party cancels or postpones a scheduled meeting, a clear rationale should be provided, especially if there are outstanding WSR(s) to address.

Joint NAC meetings will be **jointly co-chaired** by SUN and an Out-of-Scope Representative. As co-chairs, you will jointly prepare an agenda of items, including a list of WSRs, to be **circulated to all members of the Joint NAC at least five (5) business days prior** to each meeting.

Documented and unresolved issues (WSRs) are to be discussed at a **minimum of two (2) Joint NAC meetings** in an effort to find resolution. WSRs resolved prior to the Joint NAC meeting shall be brought forward to the Joint NAC meeting for information purposes and documentation in the minutes.

STEP 5: Conduct Joint Nursing Advisory Committee (NAC) Meeting

The Joint NAC is intended to be a collaborative problem-solving mechanism involving SUN members and the Employer working together to resolve professional practice, workload or patient safety concerns raised by registered nurses. Refer to the Collective Agreement for the Joint NAC Terms of Reference.

As the Local NAC Co-Chair, you will play an active role in conducting these meetings by ensuring discussions remain collaborative and solution-focused. Refer to Appendix V for a list of resources and tips to support you in co-chairing a meeting.

During the Joint NAC meeting all unresolved WSRs should be discussed and documented within the meeting minutes. Meeting minutes should include the status of each WSR (resolved, abeyance, withdrawn, etc) and/or the agreed to “next steps” or action plan for reaching a resolution. (see Appendix IV for status definitions)

TIP |

During the meeting, keep a “To Do List” (or action plan) for each WSR discussed to track Local responsibilities between meetings.

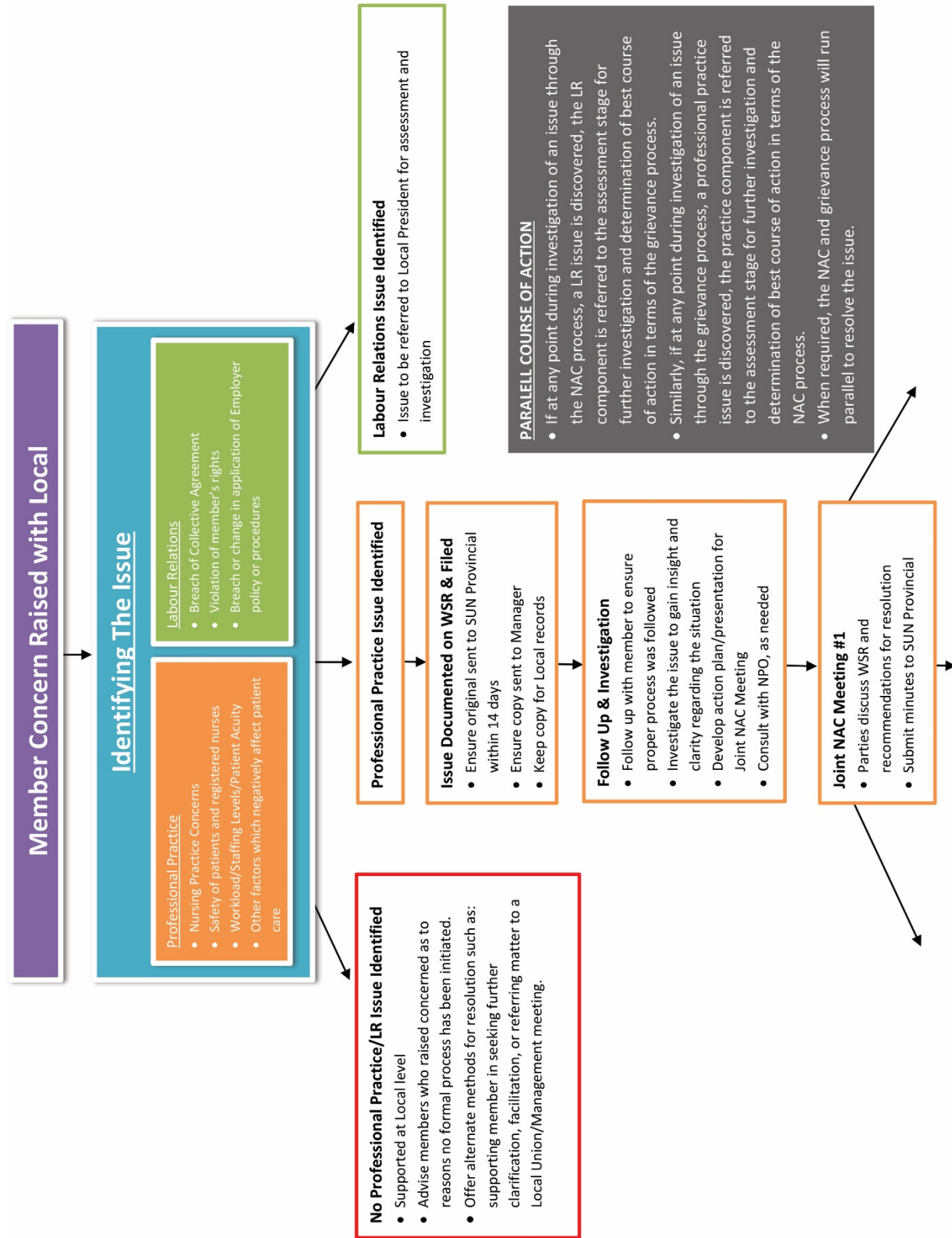
Following the meeting, send SUN Provincial a copy of the meeting minutes for review. Remember, if at any time during your preparation for a Joint NAC meeting you have questions or require guidance, your NPO is available to provide you with the assistance needed.

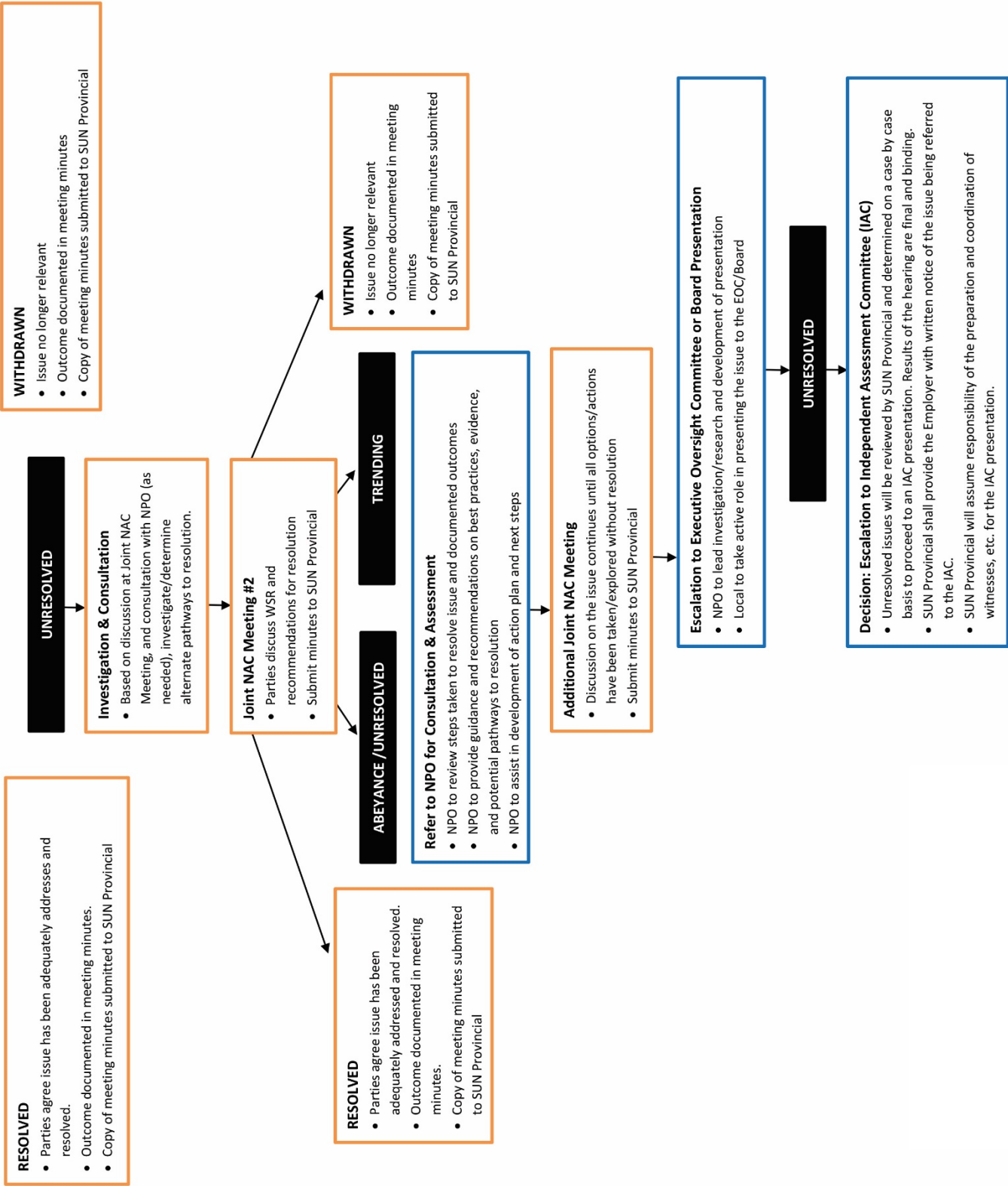
TIP |

MEETING WITH THE EMPLOYER

- Stay calm.
- Take notes during the conversation.
- Identify the facts of the situation as determined by your investigation.
- Avoid personalizing the issue.
- Listen to the Employer’s position, ask questions to seek clarification as needed,
- If necessary, caucus with your member(s) to discuss the Employer’s position and/or possible resolution.
- Remember: you do not have to agree to anything presented during the meeting. You can reserve the right to step away from the meeting and respond later. This provides you with the opportunity to seek guidance

Addressing Member Concerns: Flow Chart for SUN's NAC Process





Consulting with Your Nurse Practice Officer

While representing members and working to resolve concerns, the duties, role or abilities of the Local NAC Chair may be exceeded. It is at such time your Nurse Practice Officer (NPO) would take a more active role in the Joint NAC process.

What is a Nurse Practice Officer (NPO) & What Do They Do?

SUN's Professional Practice team consists of five (5) NPOs and one (1) Nurse Research and Practice Advisor, who are well versed in nursing standards and competencies, best practices, code of ethics, and healthcare research and evidence. Together they bring a wealth of knowledge, expertise and clinical experience to the practice team, creating a strong support system for Locals and their members.

NPOs are individually assigned to a group of Locals to provide direct support and guidance to the Local NAC Chair throughout the NAC process.

How can an NPO help?

NPOs are available to provide Local NAC Chairs with assistance and guidance:

- Setting up Local Nursing Advisory Committees
- Consultation during the investigation stage
- In preparation for Joint NAC meetings
- With research on best practices and evidence to support recommendations to resolve issues

When appropriate, NPOs will take an active role in escalating an issue at the Joint NAC level, to the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) or Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Board, or to an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC).

When to consult with an NPO

NPOs are always available to provide the Local NAC Chair with advice and assistance. Depending on the issue or the experience level of the Local NAC Chair, Locals may require the support of the NPO at different stages and to varying degrees.

Key times to consult with your NPO, include but are not limited to:

1. WSR is unresolved

- NPO is available, as needed, for consultation on best practices and research, as well as guidance on further investigation and next steps.
- NPO is available for ongoing planning to address or develop action plan.

2. WSR has exhausted the process

- All possible options or actions have been explored without reaching resolution
- NPO to take active role in escalating issue to EOC or SHA Board level
 - NPO leads investigation, research and development of presentation
 - Local NAC Chair takes active role in presenting issue to EOC or SHA Board.

Referral of WSR Files To NPO

While working to resolve concerns, the duties, roles or abilities of the Local NAC Chair may be exceeded, or the Joint NAC process may be exhausted. It is at such time the file would be referred to your NPO for further review and assessment.

Prior to referring WSR files to SUN Provincial, it is important to discuss the matter with your NPO to ensure all avenues for resolution have been explored.

The following list has been developed to assist Local Chairs in referring WSR(s) file to their NPO. (See Appendix III - Professional Practice File Referral memo).

Provide all pertinent information available including, but not limited to, the following:

- WSR Fact Sheet
- NAC meeting minutes
- Local meeting minutes
- Policies
- Rotations
- Notes from follow/investigation with members
- Employer documents
- Relevant previously settled disputes
- Professional association communication
- Incident reporting forms, work situation reports
- Other relevant legislation or statutes
- Any other relevant information gathered through Local investigation

Appendix I - Fact Finding: Tips for Talking with Members

If the speaker is a “Compulsive Talker”: You will need to phrase your questions in such a way that will limit the range of responses. Avoid questions that allow the speaker to launch in a lengthy monologue – in this case, use close ended questions. There may be a time when you ask the speaker to refocus their attention on the main issue – a good way to do this without alienating them in the process is to say “That’s very interesting and I would like to hear more about it if time permits, yet there are points we need to cover if we’re both to profit from our interview. Do you mind if we come back to this and move into the area of ____?”

What about the non-talker? Use open ended questions and short probes such as “tell me more,” “Oh?” “Could you clarify this for me?” “I’m not sure I follow you there.” “That’s interesting – what makes you feel that way?” Non-talkers may be lacking confidence or experiencing anxiety. If you detect this in the early stages of the interview, spend more time on rapport building. Stories about similar experiences or backgrounds between the two of you may help. If you detect nervousness, start your interview with relatively easy questions.

If the person is hostile:

- Your initial response to anger should be one of calm neutrality yet sincere interest.
- Allow the person to speak, register a complaint, etc. uninterrupted.
- Follow up by repeating the facts as you heard them, asking for clarification and probing.
- After you have listened to the facts, do not be afraid to confront the viewpoints if they are founded on incomplete or distorted information.
- Remember, the anger may be directed at you or at someone else. If the anger is directed at you, avoid becoming defensive. After the person has calmed down, strive to understand the nature of the anger or complaint – restate to get clarification.
- If the anger is focused towards you, you may be able to either:
 1. See his/her point of view and rectify your own behavior, or,
 2. Provide him/her with your own interpretation and intent of the behavior.
- Help the person to see the conflict is not between the two of you, but rather between two points of view regarding a specific action or behavior. An area of objectivity may develop where actions are divorced from personalities. Rational discussion can then replace the emotional exchange.
- If the member’s anger is directed at someone else, remain calm and probe for understanding and clarity. The greatest pitfall during this kind of interview is to “line up” on the side of the person to whom the anger is directed, especially if the anger is directed at a fellow union member.

If, during your conversation, you both agree on the interpretation of the events, determine what you believe should be done about the problem in the short- and long-term. Determine next steps and how you plan to address or escalate the situation.

Appendix II – Work Situation Report (WSR) Investigation Sheet



Work Situation Report (WSR) Investigation Sheet

WSR #: _____

LOCAL INFORMATION

Facility/Agency Name _____ Local # _____
 Prepared By _____ Position _____
 Contact Information Phone # _____ Email _____

OUT-OF-SCOPE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

Name (Last, First) _____ Designation _____
 Title _____ Phone _____
 Email _____

FACTS OF THE ISSUES

<p>1. Unit/Department</p> 	<p>2. Shift Details</p> <p>Date (DD/MM/YY) _____</p> <p>Day of the Week _____</p> <p>Shift _____</p>
---------------------------------------	--

3. Issue as Identified by Member

Is this a trending issue? Yes No If yes, please identify: Systemic issue Reoccurring at unit level

4. Discussion with Member

Date & Time _____

5. Witness Discussions

Witness _____ Date & Time _____
 Notes _____

Witness _____ Date & Time _____
 Notes _____

FACTS OF THE ISSUE (continued)

6. Root Cause of Issue

7. Impact on Safety/Risk of Harm (check all that apply)

Patient Safety Actual Potential
Nurse Safety Actual Potential

ISSUE TYPE/VIOLATION

- Reoccurring Event
- Breach of Professional Standards/Competencies
Concept/Competency Impacted _____
- Breach of Employer Policies/Procedures/Work Standards
- Breach of Code of Ethics
- Other: _____

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS *Collect and attach relevant information*

- Employer Policies
- Employer Communication
- Communication with Professional Association
- Shift Schedule/Master Rotation
- Other: _____

POTENTIAL RESOLUTION IDENTIFIED BY MEMBER

LOCAL PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATION

Date _____ Time _____
Discussion &
Next Steps

Method Phone call Face-to-face E-mail

CONSULTATION WITH NURSE PRACTICE OFFICER (NPO)

Date _____ Time _____
Discussion &
Next Steps

Method Phone call Face-to-face E-mail

FOLLOW UP WITH MEMBER

Date _____ Time _____
Discussion &
Next Steps

Method Phone call Face-to-face E-mail

DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE

Visit the LEADERSHIP section of the website to print copies of the WSR Investigation Sheet.

APPENDIX III – Professional Practice Referral Checklist



PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE REFERRAL

Refer to Nurse Practice Officer (NPO):

From:

- Barb Abele, RN BSN (Saskatoon)
- Dana Lamers, RN BScN (Regina)
- Melissa McGillivray, RN BSN (Saskatoon)
- Carrie Simpson, RN BScN (Saskatoon)
- Erika T. Vogel, RN BN MSN (Regina)

Phone:

E-mail:

Local:

Facility:

Date Referred:

WSRs Referred to NPO – please list:

Prior to referral, was the status of the above noted WSR(s) discussed with the NPO?

- Yes Date: _____ No

Has the Local President been advised of the status of the above noted WSR(s)?

- Yes Date: _____ No

This file contains the following information (only check those which apply):

- Copy of WSR(s)
- Copy of WSR Investigation Sheet(s)
- Meeting minutes and/or documentation from meeting
- Action plans and outcomes
- Employer Policies/Procedures/Work Standards
- Master Schedules/Rotations
- Witness investigation interview notes (if applicable)
- Professional association communication(s)
- Copy of incident reporting forms, etc
- Other relevant documentation:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

***If in doubt, send information to NPO for review

***Maintain HIPA – do not send patient identifiable information

NOTE: Remember to keep a copy of all supporting information and/or documentation for the Local file.

DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE

Visit the LEADERSHIP section of the website to print copies of the Referral Memo.

APPENDIX IV – WSR Status Definitions

Discussions during a Joint NAC meeting will determine the status of each WSR raised. The status of each WSR should be clearly documented within the meeting minutes. The following WSR status definitions can be found in the Collective Agreement.

Resolved:

The matter is considered resolved when both parties agree to a mutually acceptable solution to the documented issue(s). The solution to the documented issue(s) shall be recorded in the Joint NAC minutes.

Unresolved:

In the event that an item(s) remains unresolved after two (2) meetings of the committee, unless mutually agreed otherwise, either party may request and shall have the right to present the item(s) to the Board of the Employer.

Trending:

Trending is the collection and analysis of shared data for the purpose of resolving WSR issues. When larger systemic issues are identified within a WSR, for which the parties are unable to reach resolution, these issues will come off the active agenda, and move to Trending. These Trending issues will be collaboratively discussed with the Executive Oversight Committee for potential resolve. Issues remaining unresolved shall be returned to the Joint NAC with recommendations for further discussion and to proceed through the process.

Abeyance:

Matters that need further investigation or information will be held until a mutually agreed upon date. Ensure that this is reflected in the minutes as well as the reason why the abeyance is occurring. All items in abeyance remain on the active agenda.

Withdrawn:

A WSR may be withdrawn when an issue is no longer relevant. When a WSR is withdrawn, the minutes should reflect that it has been withdrawn.

- *If throughout the course of discussions at the Local NAC level or with the broader Joint NAC, a matter is deemed to be no longer relevant or has been resolved through a different mechanism/WSR on file, the WSR in question may be withdrawn from the process.*
- *In this event, Local NAC Chairs are advised to contact their Nurse Practice Officer (NPO) at SUN Provincial for further review, guidance and instruction.*

APPENDIX V – Running A Joint NAC Meeting

As per the Joint Nursing Advisory (NAC) Terms of Reference, **meetings shall be scheduled at least once per month** to discuss all WSRs.

Meetings will be jointly co-chaired by SUN and the out-of-scope representative. At your first or next meeting as co-chair, determine how meetings will be co-chaired.

TIP |

At your first or next Joint NAC meeting determine how meetings will be co-chaired. e.g. SUN will chair every 2nd meeting or other options that are agreeable to both parties.

An agenda of items, including a list of WSRs, shall be circulated to all members of the Joint NAC at least five (5) business days prior to each meeting, but this shall not restrict the right to raise issues without prior agenda notice.

TIP |

At your first or next Joint NAC meeting establish a process, including who is responsible, for circulation the agenda. e.g. The chairperson, the minute taker, etc.

Minutes of committee meetings shall be recorded, circulated and approved at the next Joint NAC meeting.

TIP |

At your first or next Joint NAC meeting establish who is responsible for recording and circulating the official minutes of the meeting. e.g. minute taking may alternate between the parties, when the Union chairs the Employer is responsible for the minutes and vice versa.

Chairing the Meeting

The role of the Chair is not to do all the talking, but to ensure the discussion is on track and that everyone who wants to speak has a chance to do so. The Chair also ensures the minutes, motions and recommendations are recorded.

Some steps to follow when running a meeting:

1. **Determine the purpose of the meeting.**
2. **Develop an agenda and post a meeting notice.** The meeting notice should clearly state the date, time and location of the meeting (see page 29 for a sample agenda). The Collective Agreement states the agenda will be jointly developed and will be circulated five (5) business days prior to the meeting. You may want to include an anticipated time of adjournment.
3. **Arrive early** and get yourself organized.
4. **Start the meeting on time**, by saying, *“I call this meeting to order.”*
5. **Adoption of the agenda.** This is a chance for others to add topics to the agenda. The Chair calls for a motion to accept the agenda as presented or as amended.
6. **Reading and adoption of the minutes of the last meeting.** Ask if there are any errors or omissions. Again, the Chair calls for a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting as read, circulated or as amended.
7. **Discussion and documentation of concerns WSRs brought forward to the Committee.** Discussions relating to the outcome and progress of issues raised through the filing of a WSR and/or progress made regarding WSRs raised at the previous meeting.
 - Next steps/action items or recommendations providing direction should be made and recorded in the minutes.
8. **Next meeting.** If not already scheduled, the next meeting date, time and location should be set before the current meeting adjourns.
9. **Adjournment.** It is a good practice to set an agreed-upon time to end the meeting. Adjourn at or before then. Members will be encouraged to attend future meetings when they know they are well organized and efficiently chaired. A motion is required to adjourn a meeting.

Creating an Agenda

An effective agenda sets clear expectations for what needs to occur before and during a meeting. It helps team members and management prepare, allocates time wisely, quickly gets everyone on the same topic, and identifies when the discussion is complete.

Components of an effective agenda:

- Meeting time and date
- Meeting location
- Local name and number, facility name
- Meeting participants
- Additions or deletions from agenda
- Approval of agenda
- Additions or deletions from previous minutes
- Approval of previous minutes
- Materials required for review
- Next meeting date

Nursing Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda <i>[EMPLOYER NAME]</i> and SUN Local <i>[XX]</i> <i>[DATE]</i>	
Attendees:	Employer: _____ SUN: _____ Chair: _____ Recorder: _____
1.	Introductions
2.	Call to order
3.	Approval of agenda
4.	Approval of minutes
5.	Review of NAC process
6.	First Meeting WSRs:
6.1	WSR # _____
6.2	etc
7.	Second Meeting WSRs:
7.1	WSR # _____
7.2	etc
8.	Next meeting date and time
9.	Adjournment

Tips for Developing an Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek input from your Local NAC members.• Estimate a realistic amount of time for each topic.• Propose a process for addressing each agenda item.• Identify who is responsible for leading each topic.• Make the first topic “review and modify agenda as needed.”

Taking Minutes

Minutes reflect the dialogue that occurred during a meeting and are a tool to ensure action items are followed up on. It is recommended meeting minutes follow the outline created by the agenda. It must be determined at the beginning of the meeting who is assuming responsibility to take and circulate official meeting minutes.

Verbatim documentation is required for recording motions or resolutions. The mover and seconder of any motions or resolutions must be recorded, as must the outcome of any vote.

Components of Effective Minutes

- Meeting time and date
- Time meeting called to order
- Meeting location
- Local name and number, facility name
- Meeting participants
- Additions or deletions from agenda
- Motion to adopt the agenda
- Additions or deletions from previous minutes
- Motion to adopt previous minutes
- Materials discussed
- Action items and responsible party
- Next meeting date
- Time meeting adjourned

Notes vs Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes capture the essential information of a meeting. The name of the meeting, the date, who was present, who was absent, start and end times, motions made, who seconded them, the outcome of the motion, action items, and a brief description of the discussion. Minutes will be shared and be subject for approval by the parties at the next meeting.

Notes are your expanded version of what occurred at the meeting. These written records are used by you to help you remember the discussion and by others to gain a better understanding of what was discussed, important quotes, the tone, etc.

APPENDIX VI - Establishing a Collaborative Working Environment

Ensuring there is open, honest, and transparent two-way communication between the Employer, the registered nurses and amongst the Joint NAC will be key to fostering a strong, positive and productive Joint NAC process.

The Joint NAC Process is intended to be a collaborative approach to problem solving, involving SUN members and management working together. Using the goals, parameters and principles outlined in Appendix "D" of the SUN/SAHO Collective Agreement, the Joint NAC will work together to resolve issues of mutual concern to ensure patient safety.

Moving to a collaborative problem-solving environment may take some time. Setting some ground rules at your first or next meeting which describe what the expectations are for the Joint Committee will help build a focused and effective Committee.

The best ground rules come from the members of the Committee as they will meet the particular needs and challenges of the Joint Committee. Once ground rules are established, Committee members should agree to abide by them, enforce them and refine them when necessary.

Here are some sample ground rules to help you get started.

1. Everyone participates; no one dominates.
2. Try hard to understand the views of those with whom you disagree.
3. Keep discussions focused.
4. It is okay to have friendly disagreement.
5. No cell phones.
6. Ability to call a time out.
7. Be on time.
8. Quorum is at minimum two SUN members and two committee members representing management.
9. Structure of the Joint NAC must follow the parameters identified in the Collective Agreement.
10. Equal representation of SUN members and management is an expectation.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict occurs when there is an increased level of emotion attached to the discussion. Here are some tips to consider when you react or someone else reacts negatively to a statement that is made:

- Respond with a thoughtful question
- Paraphrase back what you heard
- Count to ten
- Try to understand why the statement evokes such a strong reaction
- Try not to use negative body language, facial expression or sounds
- Try to keep an even tone
- Request a short break

