



Registered Practical Nurses
Association of Ontario

Research Advisory Council Terms of Reference November 2021

Vision:

WeRPN seeks to promote, sponsor, and lead spirited inquiry, ethically sound, and systematic investigative academic and applied research. The results will contribute to the delivery of a knowledge base that informs:

- the best care and the best outcomes possible for residents, patients, clients, families and/or caregivers,
- health system policy and planning (health human resource and workforce planning and optimization),
- evidence-based nursing practice (care protocols, specialization),
- novel and practical interprofessional collaborative models of care (delivery of care, matching, holistic), and
- role clarity, advocacy, impact and value of RPNs.

WeRPN Research Mandate:

The research mandate is to equip WeRPN with jurisdictional and category-specific RPN evidence that will guide health system and nurse research excellence, and knowledge mobilization to be used to:

- build upon and expand the current RPN research evidence,
- initiate and pursue meaningful health system and workforce policy changes, and
- implement novel and innovative nursing practice/intervention protocols, and collaborative interprofessional models of care.

This mandate will highlight the full empirical, ethical and emancipatory knowing of RPN roles to improve and enhance care outcomes for residents, patients, clients, families and/or caregivers' across the health continuum.

Expected outcomes from the WeRPN research plan and with the support of the Research Advisory Council will enable:

- a celebrated role in the system,
- widely recognized evidence to influence excellence in academia, care and practice,
- improved internal capacity within WeRPN to create, share and use research
- RPN leadership and innovation to inform health system change
- increased evidence-based decisions and initiatives leading to broader professionalism in nursing

WeRPN Research Advisory Council Purpose:

The purpose of the Research Advisory Council is to guide the development of a plan to achieve the WeRPN research mandate.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Establish a methodology/process for identifying important research topic areas/ideas,
- Capture membership opinions, e.g., focus groups, survey, about essential research topics,
- Ensure research priorities are aligned with the strategic plan drivers of impact,
- Prioritize, recommend, and promote RPN research priorities,
- Approve priority areas and project description included in Request for proposals – academic research and fellowships prior to release of the call for proposals,
- Establish a researcher network to support the identification of collaborative opportunities (e.g., Supporting Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) – Ontario SPOR Support unit (OSSU) and access to specific areas of expertise (e.g., research methods, data analysis),
- Review WeRPN Calls for Academic Research Proposals, fellowship applications, external participant recruitment requests, and research partnership requests,
- Recommend funding and approval of research grant and fellowship grant applications,
- Make recommendations to the WeRPN Executive leadership regarding research initiatives,
- Establish an RPN Excellence in research award,
- Establish and maintain a RPN literature database including a review, summary, and ranking of RPN-specific research publications,
- Monitor research expenditures and investments,
- Conduct an evaluation of the research strategy, and
- Identify and recommend new Research Advisory Council members, as necessary.

Role of WeRPN senior leadership is to:

- ensure a senior leader to chair the meetings,
- establish and periodically review the Advisory mandate,
- support and enable the activities with resources from the organization, as appropriate,
- set annual expenditure parameters,
- approve annual goals and objectives, and
- review and consider all recommendations of the Council.

Chair of the Research Advisory Council: The Director of Professional Practice and Research will serve as the chair and will:

- develop meeting agendas, and meeting minutes,
- open and adjourn meetings,
- communicate with council members and the CEO about council matters, representing and speaking on behalf of the council,
- promote all Council voices are heard,
- distribute and action Council activities,
- facilitate development of an annual workplan including goals, objectives, and reporting, and
- ensure regular attendance and representation of Council members, e.g., succession planning.

Reporting:

Under the supervision of the Chair - Director of Professional Practice and Research, the Research Advisory Council will report directly to the WeRPN Chief Executive Officer.

The Advisory will report regularly (quarterly) to the WeRPN senior leadership team

Membership:

The Advisory will be comprised of selected credible advisors including: WeRPN members, patient/resident/client and family representative, ambassadors, professional practice associates and leaders, academic advisors and researchers).

WeRPN senior leadership team will be responsible for membership selection. Members will be invited to participate on the Research Advisory Council and will be asked to serve for a term of two (2) years with acceptance of subsequent terms.

Membership will represent a diversity of stakeholders with representation from the following categories:

- WeRPN executive leadership (4) – CEO, Director of Professional Practice and Research, Director of Finance, and Director of Policy and Communications
- WeRPN Board of Directors (1)
- Professional Practice associate (1)
- RPN member/ambassador (2) who are/have been involved in research, are interested, and/or work in an organization that has pride in research
- Patient/resident/family/care partners representing population(s) served by RPNs (2)
- Academics, e.g., university and college professors (2 – one university; one college)

Adhoc Evaluators - Researchers experienced with evaluation of high quality, ethically sound, publishable study proposals, minimum three (3)

Meeting frequency and decision-making process

The Research Advisory Council Meetings will occur at the call of the chair and/or minimally on a quarterly basis (November, February, May, July). The Council will strive for consensus decision-making and voting on a decision only when they cannot reach a consensus and all informative materials are exhausted.

Compensation

Research Advisory Council volunteers will be reimbursed fairly for their expenses, such as parking or other travel costs. Evaluators of proposal applications for WeRPN research grants will be offered fair compensation for their time and expenses.

Evaluation

The Research Advisory Council will be evaluated for effectiveness on an annual basis through self-assessment. The Research plan will be evaluated formally, as appropriate.