



CANADIAN NURSE REGULATORS COLLABORATIVE ANNOUNCES UPDATED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY CUTSCORES/BENCHMARK LEVELS

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Communicating effectively in English or French is critical to providing safe nursing practice in Canada. The Canadian Nurse Regulators Collaborative (CNRC), consisting of organizations that are responsible for ensuring nurses provide safe and ethical care in Canada, reviewed the language proficiency requirements originally established in 2011 for the regulated nursing professions. The project, funded in part by the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program, is expected to be completed by May 2023. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

Led by Dr. Eunice Eunhee Jang, IntelliEval was retained to work with a Steering Committee consisting of subject matter experts from regulatory authorities across Canada to complete the research and provide recommendations to the CNRC. This included hosting three independent standard-setting workshops involving 44 panelists representing various professional designations, roles, and regions who were knowledgeable of, familiar with, and confident about the candidate population, test materials and standard-setting methods. The recommended cutscores result from the panelists' dedicated work to ensure appropriate standards for English and French language proficiency. "Taken together, the updated language proficiency cutscores are scientifically defensible and better aligned with language demands required for safe, ethical, and effective nursing practice at the entry-level," commented Ryan Shymko, Chair of the Language Proficiency Steering Committee.

Based on the research, CNRC unanimously approved the updated cutscores for the currently accepted tests, Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic, and Test d' D'Évaluation de Français (TEF) Canada. The updated cutscores take effect immediately. Nursing regulatory authorities across the country will put in place the necessary policies for implementation within their jurisdictions.

"There are some important differences between the updated 2022 cutscores and the previous 2011 cutscores, mainly revisions to all three listening tests and revisions to the IELTS Academic writing test", said Shymko. The 2022 updated cutscores are available at: <https://ccpnr.ca/regulators-collaborative/>.

A further announcement about the results of the current research exploring alternative approaches to assess language proficiency will be made in early spring 2023.

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