



In The Matter of: The Regulated Health Professions Act, S.M.2009, c. 15

And in The Matter of: Lynda Seewald, a member of the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (CRNM# 122696)

To: Lynda Seewald

TAKE NOTICE that the Complaints Investigation Committee (**the “Committee”**) of the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba resolves and hereby Censures you with respect to:

- While providing footcare services to the Patient, footcare nurse Linda Seewald, made inappropriate comments related to Indigenous Canadians and the Residential School system.

On May 12, 2025, in accordance with section 102(1)(d) of *The Regulated Health Professions Act (the “RHPA”)*, **the** Committee decided to censure you as a record of its disapproval of the deficiencies in your conduct.

Censure creates a disciplinary record which may be considered in the future by the Committee or an Inquiry Committee when determining the action to be taken following an investigation or hearing.

I. The Relevant Facts Are:

On December 22, 2023, the Patient had a footcare appointment with you, Ms. Seewald.

During this conversation, you and the Patient engaged in a conversation related to **Canada’s residential schools and** your experiences with Indigenous people.

The comments made by you during this conversation were interpreted by the Patient as a denial of the harms of the residential school system and caused the Patient to feel unsafe. As such, the Patient dissolved the nurse-client relationship immediately.

You stated that with hindsight, you understand that your comments had a significant negative impact on the therapeutic relationship, as evidenced by the Patient no longer wanting to receive footcare services from you.

You stated that you **completed the College's jurisprudence module related to Indigenous people** and have incorporated this into your practice.

The Investigator asked you how these comments created a culturally safe environment for the Patient. You provided:

- i. You did not think this was an unsafe environment.
- ii. You believed that the concern was more from the Patient's **partner**.
- iii. the Patient's **partner "did not like what [you] said, for that [you] were sorry"**.

You were asked, since this interaction, what continuing education have you engaged in to ensure you are providing culturally safe care? You provided:

- i. You **completed the jurisprudence module on "Indigenous Rights"**. The Committee noted **there is no jurisprudence module called "Indigenous Rights"**.
- ii. It was noted that on November 15, 2023, you **completed the "Health Equity and Cultural Humility" jurisprudence module**; and
- iii. On November 13, 2024, you **completed the "Treaty Essential Learnings"** jurisprudence module.

II. Practice Directions and Code of Ethics

The Committee is reasonably satisfied that the information before them supports that the following practice expectations apply in this circumstance.

Professional Practice

Registered nurses are accountable and responsible to demonstrate professional behaviours, attributes and values that uphold trust in the profession of registered nursing. As an RN, you must:

1. Demonstrate understanding of legislation governing registered nursing practice and your practice of registered nursing including but not limited to the Regulated

Health Professions Act (RHPA), the College's General Regulations, Practice of Nursing Regulation, and any/all other applicable legislation (e.g. The Personal Health Information Act).

- a. Identifying issues which could have an injurious effect on clients or others.

Competent Practice

Registered nurses are accountable and responsible to demonstrate competence in registered nursing practice. As an RN, you must:

3. Apply the entry-level competencies for registered nurses in your practice.
4. Develop your continuing competence to maintain and enhance your nursing knowledge, skill and judgment so your practice is both safe and relevant to your clients' health-care needs.

Professional Communication

Registered nurses are accountable and responsible to effectively communicate with the client, other health care providers, and the public, integrating the nursing perspective into professional communication. As an RN, you must:

5. Establish and maintain therapeutic nurse-client relationships, and end nurse-client relationships as necessary.
6. Engage in active listening and other evidence-informed communication skills to demonstrate respect, compassion and empathy for clients' experiences, cultures, preferences and goals.
12. Take steps to manage communication barriers including the modification of your communication so that it is understood by clients of varying needs, abilities, cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Ethical Practice

Registered nurses recognize, promote, and uphold the ethical standards of the nursing profession. As an RN, you must:

13. Practise in accordance with the values outlined in the Code of Ethics (2017).

Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility and Anti-racism in Practice

Registered Nurses reflect, learn, act, and work collaboratively to create an environment to promote cultural safety and anti-racism in all domains of registered nursing practice. As an RN, you must:

16. Reflect on your values, assumptions, beliefs, and privileges embedded in your own knowledge and practice, and consider how this may impact therapeutic relationships with Indigenous Peoples and with clients vulnerable to discrimination and health inequity.
17. Continue to improve your ability, through continual education, to provide culturally safe care for Indigenous Peoples and for clients vulnerable to discrimination and health inequity.
18. Take active steps to identify, address, prevent, and eliminate any form of racism including Indigenous specific racism.
19. Create an environment to promote culturally safe health care experiences where clients' physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and cultural needs can be met.
20. Develop and apply knowledge about different types of traumas and its impact on both Indigenous Peoples and clients vulnerable to discrimination and health inequity, including:
 - a. How intergenerational and historical trauma affects clients, and
 - b. The benefits of a focus on the resilience and strength the client brings to health care encounters.

*Client-centered Practice

The practice of registered nursing encompasses several domains such as clinical practice, education, administration, and research. Your client may be an individual, a family, a group of people, a community, or a population. Depending on your domain(s) of practice, a client may be a patient, a nursing student, a research participant, another member or other health-care provider. As an RN:

21. When engaging in the practice of registered nursing in a clinical practice setting, you must provide nursing care that includes:
 - a. an assessment to determine the needs and circumstances of the client;

The Committee is reasonably satisfied that the information before them supports that the following Values and Ethical Responsibilities from the Code of Ethics (2017) apply in this circumstance.

Part I. Nursing Values and Ethical Responsibilities

Nurses in all contexts and domains of practice and at all levels of decision-making bear the ethical responsibilities identified under each of the seven primary nursing values. These responsibilities apply to nurses' interactions with all persons who have health-care needs or are receiving care as well as with students, colleagues and other health-care providers. The responsibilities are intended to guide nurses in applying the Code to their practice. They also serve to articulate nursing values to employers, other health-care providers and the public. Nurses help their colleagues implement the Code and they ensure that nursing students are acquainted with it.

F. Promoting Justice

Nurses uphold principles of justice by safe guarding human rights, equity and fairness and by promoting the public good.

Ethical responsibilities:

2. Nurses respect the special history and interests of Indigenous Peoples as articulated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Calls to Action (2012).

The Committee is reasonably satisfied that the information before them supports that the following competencies from the Entry Level Competencies apply in this circumstance.

Items with a * indicate a critical competency.

2. Professional

Registered nurses are professionals who are committed to the health and well-being of **clients. Registered nurses uphold the profession's practice standards and ethics and are** accountable to the public and the profession.

- 2.5 Identifies the influence of personal values, beliefs, and positional power on clients and the health care team and acts to reduce bias and influences.

3. Communicator

Registered nurses are communicators who use a variety of strategies and relevant technologies to create and maintain professional relationships, share information, and foster therapeutic environments.

- 3.4 Uses conflict resolution strategies to promote healthy relationships and optimal client outcomes.
- 3.5 Incorporates the process of relational practice to adapt communication skills.

6. Leader

Registered nurses are leaders who influence and inspire others to achieve optimal health outcomes for all.

- 6.1 Acquires knowledge of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- 6.4* Participates in creating and maintaining a healthy, respectful, and psychologically safe workplace.
- 6.7 Takes action to support culturally safe practice environments.
- 6.11* Adapts practice to meet client care needs within a continually changing health care system.

7. Advocate

Registered nurses are advocates who support clients to voice their needs to achieve optimal health outcomes. Registered nurses also support clients who cannot advocate for themselves.

- 7.3 Advocates for the use of Indigenous health knowledge and healing practices in collaboration with Indigenous healers and Elders consistent with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- 7.4 Advocates for health equity for all, particularly for vulnerable and/or diverse clients and populations.
- 7.14 Uses knowledge of health disparities and health inequities to optimize health outcomes for all clients.

9. Scholar

Registered nurses are scholars who demonstrate a lifelong commitment to excellence in practice through critical inquiry, continuous learning, application of evidence to practice, and support of research activities.

- 9.2 Translates knowledge from relevant sources into professional practice.
- 9.3 Engages in self-reflection to interact from a place of cultural humility and create culturally safe environments where clients perceive respect for their unique health care practices, preferences, and decisions.
- 9.8 Engages in practices that contribute to lifelong learning.

III. On these facts of the Complaints Investigation Committee records its disapproval of the **Registrant's** conduct.

You overwhelmingly failed to act and meet your professional standards and obligations when communicating with the Patient, a patient of Indigenous decent.

You are not a novice RN and as a foot care nurse you are invited by clients into their homes to provide care. The comments you made while providing care to an Indigenous patient were shocking, appalling and insensitive.

The Committee identified that you completed the CRNM jurisprudence module titled *Health Equity and Cultural Humility* on November 15, 2023. You had your interaction with the Patient on December 23, 2023.

You were provided with continuing education by your regulator roughly six (6) weeks before your interaction with the Patient, and you were unable or unwilling to apply that education to your practice.

The information in the Investigation Report is that on November 13, 2024, you completed a CRNM Jurisprudence module titled *Treaty Essential Learnings*. On December 13, 2024, you were interviewed by the Investigator.

You were again provided with continuing education by your regulator related to this matter, and a month later when provided with an opportunity by the Investigator to demonstrate insight and learning, you were unable to do so.

Registered nursing is a self-regulated profession in Manitoba. RNs must recognize that self-regulation is a privilege, and that each RN has a continuing responsibility to meet the *Standards of Practice* and the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (2017)*.

On these facts, the Committee records its disapproval of your lack of professionalism and failure to adhere to the ethical values and standards of practice required of you.

Registered nursing is a self-regulated profession governed by *The Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*. In accordance with the RHPA, registered nurses must comply with Practice Directions established for their profession. As such, registered nurses are

required to comply with the *Practice Directions: Practice Expectations for RNs* and the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (2017)*.

Although the conduct is sufficiently serious to refer to the Inquiry Committee, the Committee is mindful of the fact the Registrant does not have a disciplinary record.

The Censure will provide adequate regulatory force necessary to **protect the public's** expectations of **an RN's inappropriate** communication and lack of judgement.

Based on these facts, the Committee believes that the Censure should be published to serve as a specific deterrence to you, the Registrant, and as a general deterrence for other Registered Nurses.

On these facts, the Committee ordered the Registrant to pay costs of \$1000 Canadian dollars.