The College of Naturopaths of Ontario

Professional Portfolio Handbook

October 2023

Introduction

As part of a regulated health care profession, Registrants of the College of Naturopaths of Ontario (the College) must participate in a Quality Assurance (QA) Program. It is an important part of maintaining and enhancing their knowledge, skill, and judgment, in order to provide safe, competent, and ethical care to patients. A professional portfolio is an organizational tool that contains all the information related to ongoing participation in the QA Program.

The professional portfolio must be retained for a minimum of six years and is divided into three sections:

1. self-assessment,
2. continuing education and professional development, and
3. peer and practice assessment.

In addition to the required sections, Registrants may wish to include an additional section with other information highlighting ongoing quality assurance activities. Although the College has certain requirements for the content of the professional portfolio, we encourage Registrants to individualize and customize their portfolio.

1. Self-Assessment

Registrants in the General class of registration are required to annually complete the self-assessment component of the College's Quality Assurance Program as part of their Registration Renewal and prior to the March 31 renewal deadline.

The online self-assessment questionnaires are based on various standards of practice and guidelines using questions and scenarios to help Registrants assess their understanding of the standards and guidelines and update their practice where necessary. Each year Registrants are required to complete a total of three self-assessment questionnaires, one mandatory and two of their choosing. Following completion of the self-assessment questionnaires, Registrants are sent a letter of completion.

The following documents related to the completion of self-assessment activities must be maintained in the professional portfolio:

- completed copies of the core competency practice reflection and self-assessment questionnaire (required from 2016-2018)
- completed copies of the learning plan tool (required from 2016-2018)
- letter of completion of the online self-assessments (required from 2020 to present).

2. Continuing Education and Professional Development

Registrants in the General class of registration are required to participate in 70 credit hours of continuing education (CE) and professional development over a three-year period:

- 30 credits of Category A activities (core-activities), and
- 40 credits of Category B activities (self-directed activities).

To monitor compliance with the Quality Assurance Program, Registrants are required to complete and submit Continuing Education and Professional Development Logs documenting completion of these activities.

The following documents related to the completion of the required CE credits must be maintained in the professional portfolio:

- Continuing Education and Professional Development Logs - Category A, Category B, IVIT (for Registrants who are authorized to perform IVIT),
- Proof of attendance/completion of learning activities, e.g., a certificate of completion from a course or lecture attended, a letter confirming participation as a supervisor in a student clinic, a copy of a published article authored, etc., and
- Materials gathered while fulfilling the continuing education and professional development requirements, e.g., course outlines, brochures, receipts, etc.

3. Peer and Practice Assessment

Each year, up to 20% of Registrants in the General class of registration are randomly selected to participate in a peer and practice assessment. During the peer and practice assessment, the assessor engages in a dialogue with the Registrant helping them identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The Registrant is provided with a copy of the Assessor's Report which identifies any areas for improvement and provides suggestions on how to address potential practice issues.

For Registrants who have completed a peer and practice assessment the following documents must be maintained in their professional portfolio:

- Assessor's Report,
- Quality Assurance Committee decision and recommendations letter(s),
- submission(s) provided to the QA Committee (if applicable), and
- documentation to support ways of addressing identified areas of improvement (if applicable).

4. Personal Additions (Optional)

The personal additions section can showcase achievements or items that support competency and ongoing learning but do not necessarily fit into any of the above sections. Examples may include awards, certificates of achievement, volunteer service with a community organization, feedback from patients or peers, copies of College registration documents, lists of useful resources, etc.

FAQs

Who is required to maintain a professional portfolio?

All Registrants who hold a General class certificate of registration with the College are required to participate in quality assurance activities and maintain a professional portfolio. Registrants who hold an Inactive class certificate of registration are not required to participate in the Quality Assurance Program; however, they are required to maintain a professional portfolio for the time they are registered in the General class (if applicable).

How often do I have to update my professional portfolio?

Periodically, at your discretion. The portfolio must contain documents from the past six years, so updating it soon after completing a professional development course or other quality assurance activities is recommended. It is required to be up to date when you go through a peer and practice assessment.

How do I establish a professional portfolio?

It is likely that you already have most of the information to maintain in a professional portfolio, it's just a matter of organizing the information in a manner that makes it more readily available, which can be in paper or electronic form.

Why do I have to keep a professional portfolio?

As part of the Quality Assurance Regulation, the College is required to develop a mechanism to monitor Registrants' participation in, and compliance with the QA Program. As such, every Registrant of the College is required to maintain a professional portfolio, which is to be provided to the QA Committee or peer assessor upon request.

Will the contents of my professional portfolio remain confidential?

The contents can be shared with the QA Committee, peer assessors and staff in the Professional Practice Department.

Can I use my professional portfolio for purposes apart from the College?

Yes – and the College encourages you to do so. The portfolio is your own. It is expected that you will use it for both personal and professional purposes. For example, the professional portfolio may be helpful to showcase your skills to potential employers, business partners, or patients.

How current do items in the professional portfolio have to be?

You must keep mandatory items for six years. Optional items will likely reflect your practice and development and may date back as far as you like. You may choose to include certain items you consider significant (certificates, references, published papers, etc.) regardless of their age.

Contact

Questions about the professional portfolio or any aspect of the Quality Assurance Program can be directed to qa@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca.