



CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF NURSES UNIONS
LA FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE
DES SYNDICATS D'INFIRMIÈRES
ET INFIRMIERS

POSITION STATEMENT

Internationally Educated Nurses

In an attempt to address the chronic shortage of registered nurses in Canada, some provincial governments and regional health authorities have embarked on aggressive international recruitment campaigns.

The CFNU will respect the ethical recruitment strategies as outlined by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and will encourage employers to do the same.¹

Upon arriving in Canada, a growing number of internationally educated nurses (IENs) find themselves in difficult circumstances, alone, and are provided minimal community support. The CFNU has observed that these nurses may express an exaggerated obligation to the employer, which sometimes prevents them from expressing their concerns, demanding their rights or seeking the assistance of their union.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) and its Member Organizations are committed to representing these nurses.

Further, the employer must demonstrate accountability for third parties contracted to recruit nurses, including the following items:

- Appropriate accommodations
- Relocation allowances
- Demonstrated sensitivity and attention to cultural issues faced by both internationally educated nurses and their co-workers
- Facilitating contact so that internationally educated nurses are assisted in establishing a community

Additionally, the CFNU believes the employer must ensure that any recruitment initiatives do not create additional fees or barriers to IENs obtaining employment in Canada and joining one of its affiliate bargaining units (such as to allow an agent of the employer to charge a fee to the nurse).

Since many IENs have never been unionized, the CFNU in conjunction with provincial nurses unions will provide union orientation, focusing on areas which initially affect their employment, such as seniority, job postings, hours of work, overtime, no discrimination/harassment, etc. to ensure that they are aware of their rights and are able to actively participate in the workplace.

As with all new CFNU members, IENs will be provided contact information for union representatives, who will provide advocacy and support for workplace issues.

¹ International Council of Nurses (ICN). (n.d.). Position Statement. Ethical Nurses Recruitment. Retrieved from <http://www.chpa.co/Documents/ICNEthicalNurseRecruitment.pdf>