

2.0 Individual/Team Recommendations

The following recommendations are organized using the Healthy Work Environments framework and reflect physical/ structural, cognitive, psychological, social, cultural and professional and occupational components of managing and mitigating conflict in the workplace that must be addressed at the individual level to ensure best practice. The individual factors that are identified in the various components include:

Physical/Structural components

- Work demands;
- Work design;
- Work characteristics; and
- Workforce composition.

The Cognitive/Psychological/Social/Cultural components

- Cognitive, psychological and social capabilities, and effort;
- Cultural competency;
- Gender;
- Working relationships – communication patterns, decision-making, conflict resolution and member mentoring;
- Role clarity;
- Role strain;
- Emotional demands;
- Job security;
- Clinical complexity; and
- Clinical knowledge, coping skills communication skills.

Professional/Occupational components

- Experience, skills and knowledge;
- Personal attributes;
- Communication skills; and
- Motivational factors.

Excerpt from RNAO *Managing and Mitigating Conflict in Health-care Teams* (Sept 2012), pages 39-41.

2.0 INDIVIDUAL/TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Nurses and Health-care teams acknowledge that conflict is normal and seek to understand through self-reflective practice how their behaviours, values, beliefs, philosophies and perceptions affect relationships with others, and how the behaviour of others influence conflict by:
- Identifying personal behaviours and/or attitudes that may have contributed to conflict, and strive to alter this behaviour;
 - Acknowledging and understanding their personal conflict management style;
 - Developing conflict resolution skills by taking advantage of education offered. Where education is not offered, the individual should bring this need to the attention of their manager/director; and
 - Understanding the importance of emotional intelligence⁶, lived experiences and their relationship to conflict.

	<p>2.2 Nurses and Health-care teams contribute to a culture that supports the management and mitigation of conflict by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking resolutions when necessary through counseling (employee assistance programs), accessing support (occupational health) and education offered in their organizations or settings; • Utilizing problem-solving techniques • Acknowledging and discussing the issue at forums such as staff meetings; • Demonstrating accountability for their actions, and commitment to managing and mitigating conflict; • Actively and constructively participating in their Health-care team initiatives; • Being accountable for, and respectful in the manner in which they communicate to patients/clients, families and members of the Health-care team; • Seeking opportunities and assuming the responsibility for sharing knowledge and best practices in nursing and health care.
	<p>2.3 Nurses, Health-care teams and Health-care professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that conflict is addressed in different ways, depending on the relationship of the person one is having conflict with; • Understand how they uniquely contribute to the client’s experience of health or illness and the delivery of Health-care services, in addition to facilitating the paramount importance of improving health outcomes, which is guided by the philosophy of patient/client-centered care; and • Understand and respect the roles, scope of practice and accountability of all members of the Health-care team⁶.
	<p>2.4 Nurses and Health-care teams practice and collaborate with team members in a manner that fosters respect and trust by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring open communication related to the provision of patient/client care and other work related activities; • Setting clear and objective goals for patient/client care; • Utilizing processes for conflict resolution and problem-solving; • Participating in a decision-making process that is open and transparent; • Being an active, engaged member of the Health-care team⁶ while demonstrating respect and professionalism; • Contributing to a positive team morale; • Understanding that the work environment is in part constructed by each member of the team; and • Supporting each individual team member working to their own full scope of practice.
	<p>2.5 Individuals contribute to the development of clear processes, strategies, tools and structures that promote the management and mitigation of conflict with emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, honest and transparent communication; • Constructive and supportive feedback; and • Clear goals and objectives that foster professionalism, respect and trust.
	<p>2.6 Individual nurses and Health-care teams actively participate in education to achieve a constructive approach to the management and mitigation of conflict.</p>

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2.7 Consult organizational and professional guidelines, policies and procedures related to the management and mitigation of conflict by:

- Seeking support;
- Obtaining information; and
- Providing support to others.

2.8 Utilize management tools/strategies for management and mitigation of conflict such as the following:

- Listen empathetically and responsively;
- Allow the other person to express their concern;
- Search beneath the surface for hidden meanings;
- Acknowledge if you are at fault and reframe emotions;
- Separate what matters and what gets in the way;
- Learn from difficult behaviours;
- Lead and coach for transformation; and
- Negotiate collaboratively to resolve an issue.