



FEE TO SUPPORT PAN-CANADIAN PRA

The National Assessment Collaboration (NAC), a group of national and provincial organizations with a stake in the assessment of international medical graduates (IMGs), has created a pan-Canadian practice-ready assessment (PRA) process that is consistent and comparable across provinces and territories.

To support this ongoing work and ensure sustainability of a pan-Canadian PRA program, the NAC is charging a candidate fee of \$1,750 as of January 1, 2018.

What is pan-Canadian PRA?

Many Canadian provinces have a PRA program, which assesses physicians for up to three months and makes a decision as to whether they are safe and competent to practise. Successful physicians can apply for a provisional licence with their province's medical regulatory authority.

Across the country, PRA programs were set up differently to meet their province's unique needs. The NAC was tasked in 2011 with developing a consistent and comparable pan-Canadian PRA process.

Pan-Canadian PRA involves the development and maintenance of PRA standards, tools and materials.

The project initiative involves:

- The development of clinical assessment tools and a comprehensive clinical assessor training program
- The creation of more rigorous selection assessments, to determine assessment program eligibility
- The launch of an orientation portal focusing on the practice of medicine in Canada, and particularly the communication and cultural competencies required for success
- The development of a research agenda to support evidence-based policy decision making

All of these successes have occurred thanks to the collaboration and dedication of PRA programs, the NAC PRA Committee, medical regulatory authorities, the Medical Council of Canada (MCC), the certification colleges and associated specialty committees as well as other partners from across Canada.

Why is pan-Canadian PRA important?

Pan-Canadian PRA presents several important benefits to candidates. It leads to a comparable, standardized and transparent assessment for all candidates regardless of the province. Additionally, it helps ensure patient safety and supports regulatory authorities in making licensing decisions with confidence.

The entire process provides clear expectations of competence and leverages common standards and materials, which enhance the assessment route's credibility.

Candidates also benefit from improved mobility and ease when applying for medical registration in a different province than the one in which they were assessed. The result has made it easier for IMGs to move to a new jurisdiction and qualify there, and reduced duplication across PRA programs.

Who is charged the pan-Canadian PRA fee?

Up until 2018, Health Canada and the MCC have provided financial support for design and development of the pan-Canadian PRA. In-kind efforts contributed many months of work with involvement from:

- Certification colleges (RCPSC, CFPC, CMQ)
- IMG assessment programs
- Medical regulatory authorities
- Provincial/territorial ministries of health
- MCC

Pan-Canadian PRA participants have agreed that the program needed to continue to be maintained with a flexible fee structure that accounts for different provincial funding models. While some jurisdictions will charge this fee directly to the candidates, others may choose to have a regional health authority or the provincial government defray the candidate cost as part of local recruitment efforts.

Ultimately, the decision to charge the cost to the candidate, health authority, or provincial government, will be made within each province with a PRA program.

How and when is the fee charged?

The fee of \$1,750 is charged whenever a candidate enters the PRA clinical over-time assessment period. The NAC does not charge the fee if:

- Candidates fail the initial screening or selection assessments
- Limited capacity prevents the candidate from being allotted a “spot” in the clinical over-time assessment

The fee was set taking into account projected candidate volumes and the corresponding economies of scale. The program, which has benefited from initial funding from Health Canada for design and development activities, must recoup this fee to be economically sustainable and continue to meet jurisdictional needs on an ongoing basis.

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Practice-ready assessment