

History of the North Carolina Board of Nursing

The earliest predecessor of the North Carolina Board of Nursing was the Board of Examiners of Trained Nurses of North Carolina. It was established by the General Assembly of 1903 for the purpose of maintaining a satisfactory level of competency within the nursing profession. Primary functions of the board involved the examination and licensing of qualified candidates. For due cause, the board could revoke a license following a full hearing and majority vote by the board. The five-member board consisted of two physicians and three registered nurses who were to be elected by the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina and the North Carolina State Nurses' Association respectively. Members served terms of three years. In 1917 the legislature reestablished the board and made it



1903 Nurse's Certificate

identical in composition to its predecessor. Under terms of the new legislation, however, the board was empowered to frame and enforce regulations and to use its own seal.

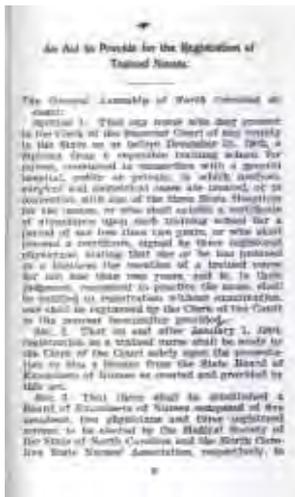
The General Assembly of 1925 repealed the consolidated statutes pertaining to the board and recreated the board under the new name of Board of Nurse Examiners of North Carolina—later referred to in legislation

as North Carolina Board of Nurse Examiners. Composed of five members, the board was to include three registered nurses elected by the North Carolina State Nurses' Association, and one representative each from the North Carolina State Hospital Association and the Medical Society. The new board retained all powers granted its predecessors. Additionally, the legislature established a standards committee to advise the board on matters including he classification and standardization of schools of nursing.

In a legislative act of 1947, the General Assembly enlarged the board to include three practical nurses appointed by the Practical Nurses Association of Durham and the Undergraduate and Practical Nurses Organization, Inc. Their participation on the board however, was limited to matters relating

TIMELINE 1903 - 2003

continued



1903

First state to enact a nurse registration law. No office – staff worked from home. The first meeting was held in Greensboro, NC.

Mary Lewis Wyche was the first person appointed to the NC Board of Examiners and so is recognized as the first registered nurse in the U.S. During her first year on the Board, 35 nurses were licensed. First state-registered nurse, Josephine Burton was licensed in Craven County on June 4, 1903. Also licensed in 1903 was the first African American Nurse, Annie Lowe Rutherford, a graduate of Freedman's Hospital in Washington, DC.



1904

Criteria for license eligibility included having graduated from a school of nursing or having practiced as a nurse for at least five years. Additionally each applicant had to submit two letters of recommendation. The first licensure examination for registered nurses was given in Raleigh on May 24, 25, 1904. Six women successfully completed that examination.

1917

Titled: "The Board of Examiners of Trained Nurses of NC". Five (5) members: 3 RNs 2 MDs – elected by NCNA and Medical Society.

1925

Titled: "Board of Nurse Examiners". Five (5) members: 3 RNs; 1 rep. From Medical Society; 1 rep. from Hospital Association.



to the examination, licensing, and regulation of undergraduate and practical nurses.

In 1953 the legislature repealed all codified statutes pertaining to the current board and created the North Carolina Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education. It consisted of nine members, all of whom were to be appointed and commissioned by the governor. Of these, five members were to be registered nurses who were licensed to practice within the state. Two members were to be physicians experienced in teaching nurses; and two were to be representatives from hospitals, which operated schools of nursing. Under the terms of the legislative act, powers of the board were expanded, particularly in the areas of license regulation and school curriculum development and accreditation. In an act of 1955, the legislature gave the board the new designation of North Carolina Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education Enlarged.



Marion Laurance, first president of the Board of Nurse Examiners.

The legislature of 1965 transferred all functions of the board to a body it named the North Carolina Board of Nursing. Similar in composition to its predecessor, the board's membership was increased to twelve. Its three new members were to be licensed practice nurses. Their participation on the board, however, was limited to actions, which affected practice nursing. Terms of all members were increased to four years.

Under this legislation, known as the Nurse Practice Act, the board's functions now included monitoring all courses, which prepared students for licensing examinations. It also empowered the board to employ an executive director and other personnel and agents deemed necessary to carry out provisions of the act. In 1973 legislation was passed permitting the board to work with the Board of Medical Examiners in establishing regulations for registered nurses performing certain medical procedures.

In an effort to reform state licensing and regulatory agencies, the General Assembly of 1977 created the Governmental Evaluation Commission, also known as the Sunset commission. In its review, the commission concluded that the Board of Nursing should continue, but with certain modifications. Several of its recommendations were implemented in a legislative act of 1981. Under that legislation, the governor was to appoint two lay members to represent the public at large. Terms of office were

T I M E L I N E

1928

Office for Education Director established in Mt. Airy.

1929

The first man, Ben Harrison, was licensed as a registered nurse in NC by endorsement from Pennsylvania.

1936

Office moved from Mt. Airy to Raleigh – 2 Professional Building Annex.

1937

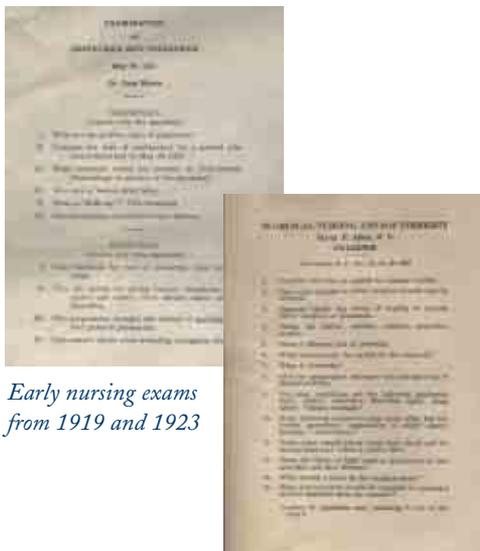
State Board License Examination – handwritten by staff.

1940

Office moved to McDowell Building, Raleigh.

1944

Exam – Test Pool Series National League of Nursing Education.



Early nursing exams from 1919 and 1923



changed to three years and limited to two consecutive terms. Immunity from criminal prosecution and civil liability was granted to those who in good faith reported any violation of the Nurse Practice Act. With the exception of those protected by the preceding provision, all in violation of this legislation could be charged with a misdemeanor. The legislation of 1981 made other significant changes in the board's composition and its appointment procedures. Position once held by physicians and hospital administrators were abolished as soon as incumbents had completed their terms of office. In addition to the two public members, the board would now consist of nine registered nurses and four licensed practical nurses. These were to be selected in a statewide election in which all registered nurses and licensed practical nurses could vote for representatives from their respective fields. Those elected were then commissioned by the governor. The General Assembly of 1983 provided for



Adeline Orr, first trained nurse to practice in NC.

regulation of midwifery under the Midwifery Practice Act. It would be administered by a joint midwifery committee including the joint sub-committee of the Board of Nursing and Board of Medical Examiners, plus two practicing certified nurse-midwives and two physicians practicing in obstetrics. In 1989 the Board of Nursing was empowered to establish and maintain a Nurses Aides' Registry, and in 1990 all legislation relevant to the board was consolidated and recodified as the Nursing Practice Act.

The General Assembly of 1999

amended the Nursing Practice Act to include legislation that would protect the title "nurse". This legislative states that no one may use the title nurse unless the person is currently licensed as a registered nurse or licensed practice nurse as provided by this Act.

The General Assembly of 1999 provided for implementation of the Nurse Licensure Compact, Article 9G of Chapter 90. This extends the "privilege to practice" nursing in North Carolina to nurses licensed in other states that have enacted this compact.

The General Assembly of 2001 provided for additional regulation in the Nursing Practice Act, which required criminal background checks of applicants for licensure.

During the General Assembly of 2003, there is pending legislative related to Board composition and tenure, mandatory employer verification of licensure status, and creation of a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse retired licensure status.

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continued

1947

Registration of Practical Nurses enacted. There were two Boards: NC Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education (Article 9) and NC Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education, Enlarged (Article 9A, which included three (3) LPN members to address practical nurse matters). The first nurse was licensed as a Licensed Practical Nurse, Myerl R. Allen. Ms Myerl also served on the Enlarged Board. Requirement of annual renewal of license (Fee: \$1.00) Exam: Test Pool 2 subjects (Nutrition and Medical Nursing).

1949

Exam – Test Pool (10 Parts).

1950

Exam – Test Pool (6 Parts).

Office moved to Warren Building (306 S. Dawson Street, Raleigh).



1953

Nine (9) members: Five (5) RNs; Two (2) representatives from Hospitals operating nursing schools; two (2) MDs with experience in teaching nurses. All appointed by the Governor. Renewal fee: \$2.00. Executive Secretary to be employed.



1954

Exam – Test Pool (5 Parts).

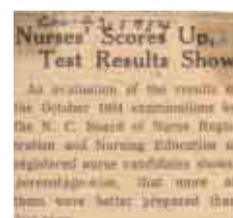
1959

June – First Bulletin issued.



1964

Office destroyed by fire.



703
 First Business meeting of the 1911-1912 Board.
 Dec. The members elect of the Board of Examiners of Graduated Nurses of North Carolina, met in the Selection of Officers in the Banks Hotel, Greensboro, N.C. Dec. 11-1911.
 Members present, Mr. C. A. Julian, Miss Clara Hobbs, and Miss Ann Ferguson.
 Mr. Julian, was made Chairman of the meeting. The Chairman stated that the election of Officers was the first order of business. Miss Hobbs, was unanimously elected President and Miss Ferguson, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board.
 The next business was the selection of subjects for the several members of the Board and are as follows:
 Pharmaceutical and Medical Nursing—Miss Hobbs. Dietetics and Hygiene—Miss Ferguson. Practical Nursing, Miss M. B. Allen. Quackery and Heresies—Mr. C. A. Julian. Surgical Nursing and Maternity medicine—Mr. Oscar Mc Mullin.
 The Board of Examiners, was invited to meet at Weychester Beach and on motion of Miss Hobbs, seconded by Miss Ferguson, it was unanimously carried that we meet, for our first examination of nurses at Weychester Beach, Seashore Hotel, the same date in June 1912 of the North Carolina

at Weychester Beach, N.C.
 Treasurer's Book
 Board of Examiners of Graduated Nurses of North Carolina
 Money received from the first application before the Board at Weychester Beach, N.C. May 24th 1912

Miss Clara Hobbs	2.00
Miss Ann Ferguson	2.00
Miss M. B. Allen	2.00
Miss C. A. Julian	2.00
Miss Oscar Mc Mullin	2.00
Miss Clara Hobbs	2.00
Miss Ann Ferguson	2.00
Miss M. B. Allen	2.00
Miss C. A. Julian	2.00
Miss Oscar Mc Mullin	2.00
Miss Clara Hobbs	2.00
Miss Ann Ferguson	2.00
Miss M. B. Allen	2.00
Miss C. A. Julian	2.00
Miss Oscar Mc Mullin	2.00

 Mary L. Myrtle

First business meeting minutes of the 1910-1912 Board

Excerpt from 1904 Board of Examiners' Treasurer's Book.

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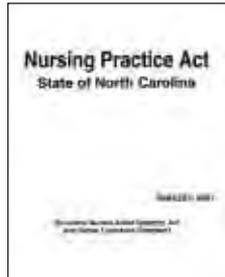
1994
 Exam – NCLEX – Computer Adaptive Test (CAT).
 Discontinued Temporary License for exam applicants.
 Alternative Program for Chemical Dependency established.

1995
 Collaborative Practice Act passed: allows advanced practice RNs to form corporations.



1996
 Plastic license.
 Website established.

1999
 The term "Nurse" becomes a protected title for licensed nurses. Health care providers must wear identification. Fifth state to enact the Nurse Licensure Compact for multistate privilege to practice. Renewals by birth month instead of 12-31.



2000
 July, Implementation of Nurse Licensure Compact.



2001
 On-line Renewals
 Mandatory Criminal Background Checks for initial licensure.
 Re-design of Bulletin/ logo/website.



2002
 On-line Endorsement Applications
 Established the Foundation for Nursing Excellence.