

BETWEEN:

COLLEGE OF NURSES OF ONTARIO

- and -

**CHRISTINE WATKINS
REGISTRATION NO. AF178182**

NOTICE OF HEARING

IT IS ALLEGED THAT:

1. You have committed an act of professional misconduct as provided by subsection 51(1)(c) of the *Health Professions Procedural Code* of the *Nursing Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 32, as amended, and defined in subsection 1(1) of *Ontario Regulation 799/93*, in that between on or about April 2020 and November 2021, during and/or following your employment as a Registered Practical Nurse at Brockville Mental Health Centre (the “Facility”), you contravened a standard of practice of the profession or failed to meet the standard of practice of the profession in that:
 - (a) you breached the boundaries of the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship with [the Patient] by engaging in a personal and/or romantic relationship with [the Patient];
 - (b) you engaged in inappropriate flirtatious touching with [the Patient];
 - (c) you spent time with [the Patient] without documenting and/or for no therapeutic purpose;
 - (d) you spent excessive time with [the Patient] on a shift or shifts;
 - (e) you shared personal information with [the Patient];
 - (f) you exchanged text messages with [the Patient];
 - (g) you spoke on the telephone with [the Patient];
 - (h) you failed to document, intervene and/or follow up appropriately when [the Patient] expressed that he had feelings for you;

- (i) you spoke with [the Patient] about spending time together in the future when he was released from the Facility;
 - (j) you expressed to [the Patient] that you had feelings for him and/or cared for him; and/or
 - (k) you bought personal item(s) for [the Patient] and/or brought personal item(s) into the unit for [the Patient].
2. You have committed an act of professional misconduct as provided by subsection 51(1)(c) of the *Health Professions Procedural Code of the Nursing Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 32, as amended, and defined in subsection 1(7) of *Ontario Regulation 799/93*, in that, between on or about April 2020 and November 2021, during and/or following your employment as a Registered Practical Nurse at the Facility, you abused a patient, verbally, physically and/or emotionally in that:
- (a) you breached the boundaries of the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship with [the Patient] by engaging in a personal and/or romantic and/or sexual relationship with [the Patient] that caused harm to [the Patient].
3. You have committed an act of professional misconduct as provided by subsection 51(1)(c) of the *Health Professions Procedural Code of the Nursing Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 32, as amended, and defined in subsection 1(37) of *Ontario Regulation 799/93*, in that, between on or about April 2020 and November 2021, during and/or following your employment as a Registered Practical Nurse at the Facility, you performed an act or acts relevant to the practice of nursing that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional, in that:
- (a) you breached the boundaries of the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship with [the Patient] by engaging in a personal and/or romantic relationship with [the Patient];
 - (b) you engaged in inappropriate flirtatious touching with [the Patient];
 - (c) you spent time with [the Patient] without documenting and/or for no therapeutic purpose;
 - (d) you spent excessive time with [the Patient] on a shift or shifts;

- (e) you shared personal information with [the Patient];
- (f) you exchanged text messages with [the Patient];
- (g) you spoke on the telephone with [the Patient];
- (h) you failed to document, intervene and/or follow up appropriately when [the Patient] expressed that he had feelings for you;
- (i) you spoke with [the Patient] about spending time together in the future when he was released from the Facility;
- (j) you expressed to [the Patient] that you had feelings for him and/or cared for him; and/or
- (k) you bought personal item(s) for [the Patient] and/or brought personal item(s) into the unit for [the Patient].

The allegations respecting professional misconduct on your part will be heard by a panel of the Discipline Committee of the College of Nurses of Ontario (“CNO”), pursuant to the *Nursing Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c.32, as amended, and subsection 38(1) of the *Health Professions Procedural Code*, on **May 14, 2024 at 0930 hours or as soon after that time as the hearing can be commenced**, via electronic hearing by way of teleconference or videoconference.

The details for participating in the electronic hearing will be provided to you by a Hearings Administrator. If you have not heard from a Hearings Administrator at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing, you should contact the Hearings Administration Team at: Admin-Business.Support-Hearings@cnomail.org to obtain the details for participating in the electronic hearing.

If you believe that holding an electronic hearing rather than an oral hearing is likely to cause you significant prejudice, please communicate in writing the basis for asserting such prejudice to the Hearings Administration Team at the email address listed above. To ensure the claim of prejudice can be considered by the Discipline Committee, any such concerns should be communicated to the Hearings Administration Team as soon as possible, and no later than 21 days in advance of the hearing.

Take notice that at least 48 hours before the electronic hearing is scheduled to commence, you must provide notice to the Hearings Administration Team, at the email address listed

above, of the telephone number and email address where you can be reached for the electronic hearing.

If you fail to participate in the electronic hearing in person or by representative, the panel of the Discipline Committee may proceed in your absence and you are thereafter not entitled to any further notice of the proceedings.

Where the panel of the Discipline Committee finds a member has committed an act of professional misconduct, it may make an Order doing any one or more of the following:

1. directing the Registrar to revoke the member's certificate of registration;
2. directing the Registrar to suspend the member's certificate of registration for a specified period of time;
3. directing the Registrar to impose specified terms, conditions and limitations on the member's certificate of registration for a specified or indefinite period of time;
4. requiring the member to appear before the panel to be reprimanded;
5. requiring the member to pay a fine of not more than \$35,000.00 to the Minister of Finance;
6. requiring the member to reimburse CNO for funding provided for a program of therapy and counselling for a person if the act of professional misconduct was the sexual abuse of that person; and
7. requiring the member to post security acceptable to CNO to guarantee the payment of any amounts the member may be required to reimburse CNO for a program of therapy and counselling for a person who was sexually abused by the member.

Furthermore, the panel may suspend the effect of its Order for a specified period of time and on specified conditions and where it makes an Order under paragraph 2 or 3 above, it may specify criteria to be satisfied for the removal of a suspension or the removal of terms, conditions and limitations imposed by the Order on the member's certificate of registration.

Where a panel of the Discipline Committee finds a member has committed an act of professional misconduct, it may make an Order requiring the member to pay all or part of the following costs and expenses:

1. CNO's legal costs and expenses;
2. CNO's costs and expenses incurred in investigating the matter; and
3. CNO's costs and expenses incurred in conducting the hearing.

CNO intends to introduce as business records, under section 35 of the *Evidence Act*, any writings or records that were made in the usual and ordinary course of business. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, and where applicable, CNO intends to introduce as business records medical and hospital charts.