College of Dietitians of Ontario
Ordre des diététistes de l'Ontario

Quality Assurance Program
Peer & Practice Assessment Handbook

Behaviour Based Interview
Record Keeping Chart Review

2025

Contact Information

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Introduction

The Peer and Practice Assessment (PPA) Handbook, prepared by the Quality Assurance (QA) program of the College of Dietitians of Ontario (CDO), allows dietitians to understand the purpose and process of the PPA.

The QA program aims to foster and support dietitians' continuing competence and quality improvement through education and assessment. This prioritizes emerging dietetic knowledge and practice areas that pose the highest risk to public safety.

The PPA is an educational and supportive process designed to help dietitians reflect on and enhance their practice. It provides constructive feedback to support professional growth and continuous learning and improvement.

The Behaviour-Based Interviews (BBI) tools are based on the *Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice* (ICDEP) and were developed in consultation with practicing dietitians. Many dietitians who have participated in the BBI found it valuable in refining their practice and gaining professional insights.

What's new?

As part of the PPA relaunch, the following key updates have been implemented:

- Removal of the Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) component of the PPA
- Transition to a fully virtual assessment process
- Updated Behaviour-Based Interview (BBI) questions aligned with new competencies
- Risk-based selection using practice indicators
- New virtual chart review process

Professional Obligation

Under *Section 82 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*, Registered Dietitians (RDs) are required to participate in the College's PPA.

Why Participation Matters

- Ensures compliance with professional standards
- Fosters continuous learning and quality improvements
- Reinforces public confidence in the dietetic profession.

If you have concerns about participation, the College is available to provide guidance and support.

Selection Process

Dietitians are selected using proportional stratified sampling based on practice indicators to ensure representation across practice settings and risk levels. **Selection does not imply a dietitian is "high risk"**; rather, it means certain practice indicators are present in their practice.

Practice indicators include:

- Performing controlled acts or delegations
- Temporary or casual employment
- Three or more employers
- Solo practice or self-employed
- More than 20 years since graduation
- Recently registered (2-5 years since registration).

Dietitians with more practice indicators may benefit from an assessment to reflect on and refine their practice. However, being selected does not mean there are no concerns about competency.

Protective Factors

Protective factors reduce risk by ensuring that dietitians have structured support in place. Examples include:

- Active participation in mentorship programs
- Regular ongoing professional development
- Established peer collaboration and networking
- Detailed and consistent record-keeping practices

Behaviour-Based Interview (BBI)

Purpose

The Behaviour-Based Interview (BBI) is a **supportive process** designed to help dietitians reflect on their practice, meet professional standards, and identify growth opportunities. Key focus areas:

- **Risk mitigation** – Identifying and addressing areas where practice may not align with expectations.
- **Accountability** – Ensuring dietitians adhere to professional requirements and maintain high standards of care.
- **Safe, ethical, and effective care** – Supporting Dietitians in continuous professional growth and excellence.

Your College Peer Assessor is there as a **supportive colleague** - not to test or penalize you, but to guide a meaningful discussion to enhance your practice.

Assessment Components:

1. **Pre-Assessment Questionnaire** – Identifies the most relevant areas of your practice for assessment.
2. **Interview** – Conducted virtually with a peer assessor to discuss practice scenarios.
3. **Chart Review** – Required for dietitians providing direct patient[1] care (in-person or virtual). The review supports registrants in reflecting on their documentation[2] and identifying areas for improvement.
4. **Feedback Report** – Summary of strengths, insights, and suggested improvements.

Virtual Chart Review Process

- **Select five individual patient health records**[3] (must be either current or discharged patients) from their practice.
- **Before the BBI**, complete the Reflective Record-Keeping Questionnaire based on these records.

[1] While the handbook refers to "patients" in the context of population health dietitians, this term includes consumers (clients) seen individually or in groups as part of the PPA process.

[2]. Documentation: Information in an electronic or paper format that provides evidence of the actions, events, facts, thought processes, and/or decisions within dietetic practice. Patient health records are one component of documentation.

[3]. Individual Patient Health Record: Documentation created or gathered that provides information regarding the care that was provided to an individual by a Registered Dietitian and others, as applicable.

- **During the review**, the peer assessor will ask questions related to each record. If the registrant answers "Yes" to key questions for at least three records, they will not need to discuss all five.
- **Confidentiality Measures**: Registrants must ensure patient information is de-identified patient if they opt to share health record notes on-screen. This includes removing patient names, health card numbers, or other identifying details.

Resources for Preparation

- Review the assessment questions on your CDO registrant page.
- Review *The Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice* (available on the College's website).
- Complete the **Reflective Record-Keeping Questionnaire** for three to five recent patient records.

What Questions Will I Be Asked During the Peer and Practice Assessment?

The **Peer and Practice Assessment (PPA)** is a structured and supportive process designed to help you reflect on your practice, demonstrate your competencies, and identify opportunities for professional growth. The interview consists of approximately **9–10 questions**, based on the *Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice* and the seven interrelated **Domains of Competence**.

1. Core Questions (Common to All Registered Dietitians)

These questions assess **foundational competencies** that apply to **all** RDs, regardless of their area of practice. They focus on:

- **Professionalism and Ethics** – Demonstrating professionalism, ethical decision-making, and accountability.
- **Communication and Collaboration** – Effectively communicating and working within interprofessional teams.
- **Management and Leadership** – Applying leadership skills, professional judgment, and self-regulation in dietetic practice.
- **Food and Nutrition Expertise** – Using evidence-informed knowledge to support practice.

2. Practice-Specific Questions (Approximately 6 Questions)

The interview will also include **practice-specific questions**, tailored to your role and aligned with one or more of the following **Domains of Competence**:

- **Nutrition Care** – Assessing, planning, and implementing individualized patient care to support health and recovery.

  If you work in **Nutrition Care**, the first six questions will be based on a **patient chart as a case scenario** to guide discussion.
- **Population Health Promotion** – Providing professional services to **promote health and prevent disease** in communities and populations.
- **Food Provision** – Applying **principles of food service systems management** to ensure the provision of safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods.

How Are My Questions Determined?

Your responses on the **renewal form** and **Pre-Assessment Questionnaire** help the College customize the interview to your specific practice area. This ensures that the questions are **meaningful and relevant** to your role, making the discussion a valuable opportunity for **self-reflection and continuous learning**.

All information collected is kept confidential between the College's Quality Assurance Program and the RD. The RD is not obligated to share their results or the outcome of the assessment with their employer. The College will not advise the employer of a RD's participation.

Key Takeaways

- The PPA is not a test but a supportive and structured conversation that assesses how you apply professional competencies in your practice.
- The process helps dietitians demonstrate accountability, align with professional standards, and reflect on risk mitigation strategies.
- Your peer assessor is a fellow dietitian who understands your field and is there to facilitate a constructive, reflective discussion.

What are the possible outcomes of the PPA?

- No further action is required.
- Recommendations for practice improvement.
- Participation in a remediation program if significant gaps are identified.

Registrants have **14 days** to respond to the assessor's report before it is reviewed by the QA Committee. The QA Committee does not have the authority to revoke a dietitian's registration with the College. The assessment questions are available on the CDO registrant dashboard once the pre-questionnaire is completed by the registrant.

Appeals Process

Dietitians may submit an appeal within 14 days of receiving their assessment report. Appeals must include:

- A detailed explanation of concerns.
- Any supporting documentation.

How to submit an appeal:

- Email: quality.assurance@collegeofdietitians.org
- Subject Line: "PPA Appeal – [Your Name] and [Registration Number]
- Attach supporting documents

You will receive confirmation of receipt within 5 business days

Remediation Process

If improvements are identified, dietitians may be required to complete:

1. Learning activities (mentorship, formal education, self-study).
2. A follow-up assessment to ensure competency improvement.

Failure to complete the remediation process may result in a referral to the College's Inquiries, Complaints, and Reports Committee (ICRC).

Steps to Access the PPA–BBI

Purpose of Pre-Assessment Questionnaire

1. To assist the College QA Staff in identifying which set of questions would best be suited to assess your practice.
2. To assist the Peer Assessor in understanding your practice; and
3. To help the College QA Committee better understand your practice, and potential barriers that affect your practice and put into context your Peer and Practice Assessment responses.

How to complete the Pre-Assessment Questionnaire

1. Log into the CDO registrant dashboard.
2. Click *Pre-Assessment Questionnaire*.
3. Complete the questionnaire online.
4. Submit the declaration confirming the accuracy of your responses.

Choosing a Peer Assessor

The College will assign an assessor after reviewing your pre-assessment questionnaire.

- If you have a conflict of interest (e.g. current or previous close professional or personal relationship with the assigned peer assessor), you must declare it.
- How do I indicate a conflict of interest with a peer assessor? You will receive an email from the QA Staff, indicating the names of the peer assessors. You will then indicate whether you have a conflict with any of them.

Scheduling the Virtual Assessment

- The peer assessor will contact you via email to decide on a mutually agreeable time for the assessment.
- The virtual assessment must be completed by October 1 unless alternative arrangements are made with the QA program.
- You will receive a Microsoft Teams or Zoom meeting link for the virtual interview.
- Arrange for a quiet, private space for the interview, which will take 2-3 hours.
- Consider discussing the meeting time with your employer if warranted. Employers are not required to provide paid time for QA activities, so you may need to schedule time outside of work hours.

Technical Requirements

- A desktop or laptop computer. This assessment cannot be taken on a tablet or mobile device.
- Stable and reliable high-speed internet connection (Minimum 1 Mbps upload and 10 Mbps download (please click here to conduct a speed test to confirm your connection speed).
- Hard wired ethernet connection is strongly recommended to ensure the best assessment experience and to reduce the risk of interruption to your internet connection (click here for more information on connecting to the internet via ethernet).
- Microphone and webcam (external or built-in)

- Knowledge of video conferencing software. You may want to learn more about and/or familiarize yourself with Microsoft Teams or Zoom before the interview.
- Update to the latest version of Google Chrome.
- A quiet, private space with a table and chair to ensure confidentiality of the assessment, with no additional people in the room.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Dietitians with medical, parental, or other personal circumstances may request accommodation, such as:

- Additional time.
- Use of assistive technology.
- Rescheduling for extenuating circumstances.

Requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

How to request accommodation:

- Email: quality.assurance@collegeofdietitians.org
- Deadline: Requests must be submitted at least **30 days before** the scheduled assessment.

Next Steps

- If selected, review the handbook to understand the process.
- Complete the Pre-Assessment Questionnaire by the deadline.
- If you provide patient care, select five chart records and complete the Reflective Record-Keeping Questionnaire to prepare for the BBI.
- Review relevant documentation and competencies to prepare for the BBI.
- Expect assessment results by mid-October.
- Reach out if you have questions or require accommodations—we're here to support you.

Who to Contact for Questions

For assistance, you can contact:

- Your peer assessor (when identified)
- QA administrator at **Quality Assurance**
  quality.assurance@collegeofdietitians.org
  416-598-1725 / 1-800-668-4990, ext. 297

Final Note

Thank you for your cooperation in the Peer and Practice Assessment process. This is an opportunity to reflect on your practice, receive valuable feedback, and continue developing as a dietitian. If you have any concerns or need support, please reach out to the College. We are here to help you.

Appendices

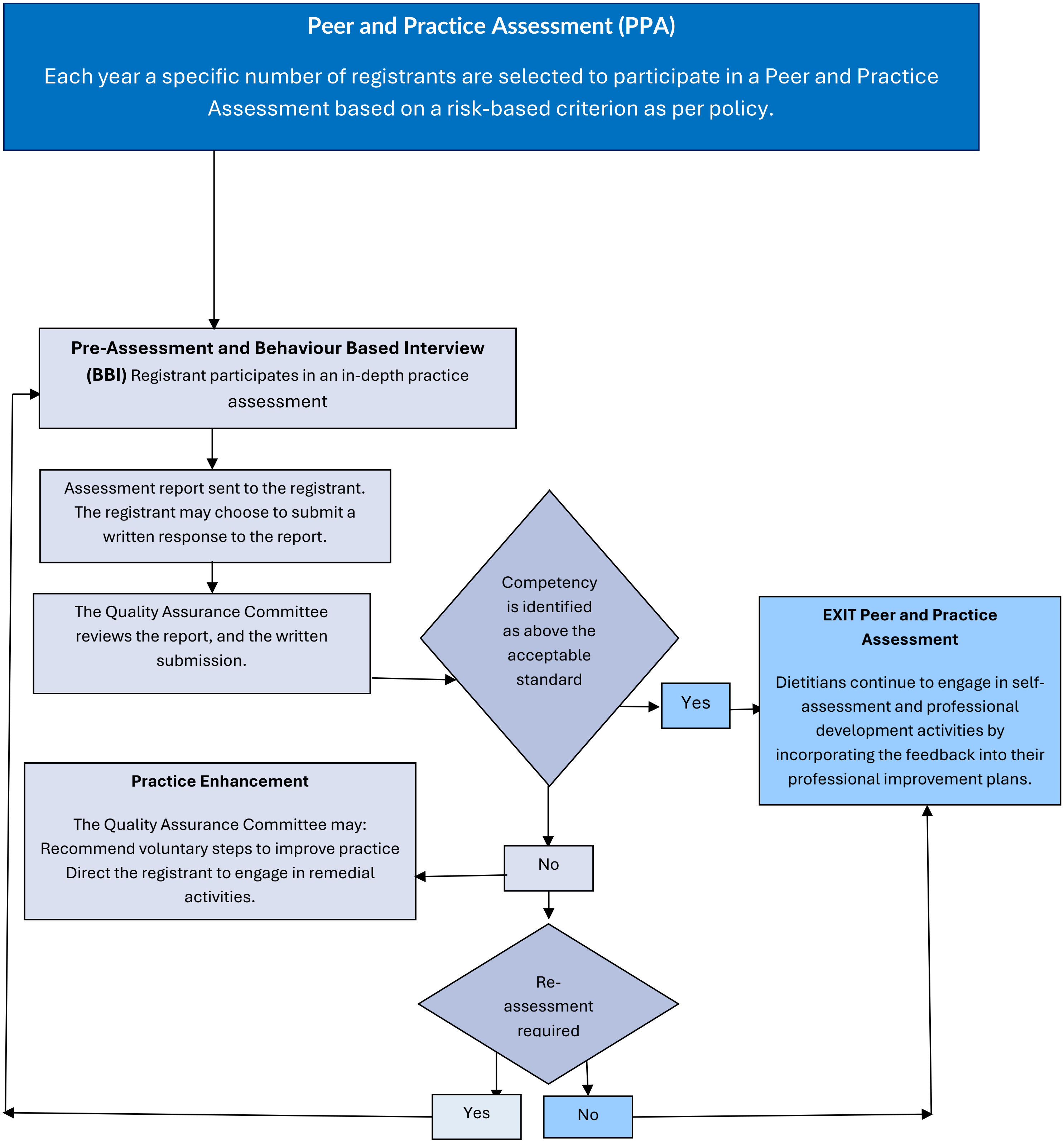
Appendix I: The Peer and Practice Assessment (PPA) Flow Chart

Appendix II: Virtual PPA Process Flow Chart

Appendix III: Access to Patient Chart, if needed

Appendix I

The Peer and Practice Assessment (PPA) Flow Chart



Appendix II

Virtual Peer & Practice Assessment (PPA) Process

Notification of Selection to participate in the PPA

Registrant completes Pre-Assessment Questionaire by accessing registrant dashboard

Registrant/Assessor declare any conflict of interest

QA Staff assigns assessor to complete assessment

Assessment questions are visible on registrant dashboard

Registrant and Assessor determine date and time for virtual assessment via Zoom

After College review, registrant receives a copy of the assessor's report via the registrant dashboard

Registrant has 2 weeks from receipt of the report to submit any clarifications to the College

Assessor report and registrant submission are reviewed by the QA Committee

Registrant is notified of the QA decision

QA Decision

Assessment met criteria -No further action; removed from random selection for 5 years	Assessment did not meet criteria-2nd assessment or directed remediation

Appendix III

Access to Patients' Records

Does the College have the authority to access patients' records?

The College has the authority to access patients' records as part of the Peer and Practice Assessment (PPA) process. This authority is outlined in the Health Professions Procedural Code under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA), sections 82(1)(c), 82(2), and 82(3)*. These sections allow the College and its assessors to access premises, inspect records, and request relevant information.

While **assessments are typically virtual**, **in-person assessments may be required** in specific cases. If this occurs, the College will coordinate with you to ensure the process is clear and accessible.

The ***Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA)***, clause 9(2)(e), further supports the College's right of access, ensuring that PHIPA does not interfere with the College's regulatory activities under the RHPA.

Cooperation with the Quality Assurance Committee

As an RD, you are required to cooperate with the Quality Assurance Committee and any assessor it appoints. This includes:

- Allowing assessors to enter and inspect the premises where you practice.
- Providing access to patient records for assessment purposes.
- Cooperating with the Committee or assessor by providing information and participating in any evaluation programs, if requested.

Support for Access to Patient Records

We encourage you to follow any applicable policies set by your practice setting to ensure access to patient records. If your practice setting requires notification before accessing patient charts for non-treatment purposes, please make an arrangements as needed.