

New combined adult and pediatrics CTAS course

National CTAS Working Group, represented by the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians, L'Association des medecins d'urgence du Québec, National Emergency Nurses Association, Canadian Pediatric Society and Society of Rural Physicians of Canada

Background information

Over the past six years, the Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale National Working Group (CTAS NWG) has collaborated and worked very hard to develop consensus to support and promote CTAS as the national standard. CTAS NWG consists of representatives from the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians (CAEP), the National Emergency Nurses Association (NENA), l'Association des Médecins d'Urgence du Québec (AMUQ), the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), and the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC). Committee members also worked on developing Pediatric CTAS in 2001, the CEDIS presenting complaint list in 2003, and the Adult CTAS revisions in 2004. To support nurses to more accurately apply CTAS, an adult, pediatric and, most recently, a combined teaching package has been developed to ensure that a high-quality, consistent educational experience can be provided to nurses across the country and internationally.

Evolution of combined program

Several years ago, the Ontario Hospital Association embarked on a project to evaluate and standardize triage across the province. In an effort to ensure integrity of CTAS and to ensure that another triage process was not introduced to the country, Ontario members of the CTAS NWG approached the OHA with a proposal to work with them to develop a CTAS-based teaching package. This teaching package would be licensed to OHA to teach nurses in Ontario. Along the way, there were project delays that led to delay in the development of the education package. However, after much discussion, many meetings and a lot of work, the combined education package was developed.

It is important to note that the new adult/pediatric combined CTAS educational package remains under copyright to CAEP and the CTAS NWG. However, the OHA has the right to use the materials to provide province-wide training to their emergency nurses. The one significant positive is that CTAS will remain the national standard without a competing triage scale in the country's most populous province.

Moving forward

To be able to continue the work of ongoing review and revision, developing and maintaining an updated list of CTAS instructors, providing the teaching materials for instructors and students, responding to feedback from nurses and physicians across the country, and continuing to meet annually, income needs to be generated to offset expenses primarily borne by CAEP and NENA. CAEP will be responsible to organize the meetings and teleconferences, maintain on-line access, and help with the distribution of teaching materials. NENA will be responsible for informing its members, maintaining a current instructor list, and promoting and assisting in the delivery of CTAS educational courses across the country. To do so, the

following charges will be made for CTAS education. CTAS NWG expenses and income will be monitored to determine whether these charges can be modified.

**It is hoped and expected that all instructor and most student fees will be paid for by their employers.

1. New CTAS instructor – \$90 registration when becoming a certified instructor. This provides the instructor with access to instructor and student teaching materials and course organization materials.
2. Ongoing instructor fee – \$20 annual fee to ensure that we are able to maintain a list of active instructors to support educational requests. In return, not only will all new educational materials be passed along, but also instructors will receive e-mail summaries of ongoing CTAS NWG plans and activities to help keep them current and the triage leaders in their regions.
3. Student fees – \$20 registration fee for every student taking a CTAS course, whether they are nurses, paramedics, physicians, or other caregivers. This will allow us to maintain a record of student numbers by region. There is no annual fee as this is not a certification program, purely an educational one.
4. CTAS posters and pocket cards, based on order form, revisions, and user interest.

To become an instructor

An emergency nurse who wishes to become an instructor must meet certain prerequisites, which are:

- Must be a current NENA member
- Attends the specific provider course that will be taught as an instructor, i.e., adult and/or pediatrics
- A minimum of two (2) years of emergency/triage experience
- Current and/or previous experience in teaching TNCC, ENPC, PALS, ACLS or other emergency program is an asset
- Attends the "how to organize a course" following the provider course
- Submits initial \$90.00 registration fee

Program materials

The program materials are located on the CAEP website under **Policies/Guidelines**, and click on CTAS and follow directions

E-mail jlafreniere@caep.ca to submit request for password. Your status as a NENA member and as an instructor must be verified prior to being awarded a password. You will be asked to fill out a form and to submit your registration fee to CAEP office.

Significant changes to programming and to program delivery such as the changes that have occurred with the development of the combined CTAS program and the housing of materials on-line can lead to glitches and hiccups in the system. This can happen no matter how detailed the plans may be. NENA thanks you for your patience as we move along this journey and we continue to work together to ensure a smooth transition in teaching the combined program to Canadian emergency nurses. 