



Building a Fair, Transparent, Timely and Consistent Licensing Process for All Applicants

Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium

One of the key challenges that immigrants face when trying to secure employment in their fields is the lack of license or registration they need to practice in Canada. This is particularly critical in health care professions, since it is impossible to work as a pharmacist, nurse, dentist or dental hygienist without a license or a registration from the corresponding regulatory body. It is also important in fields such as engineering or accounting, given that having a license makes a significant difference to one's employability and, ultimately, income.

MultiCultural Business Solutions (MCB) has worked extensively with the staff of a number of regulatory bodies in order to ensure that they can process the applications of Internationally Educated Professional (IEP) applicants in a fair, transparent, timely and consistent manner. In particular, the Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium engaged MCB to design and facilitate a training program for the staff and board members of regulatory bodies and develop on-line self learning materials for immigrants seeking licensing or registration in Ontario. The project went through the following phases since 2007:

- MCB conducted a needs assessment through a series of meetings with ORAC committee members, who represented a wide range of professional associations and regulatory bodies and designed a five-hour classroom training session with a participant manual.
- MCB piloted the training sessions with members of various regulatory bodies and professional associations, as well as members of the provincial government funding ministry. Following the pilot, revisions were made to the content of the program.
- ORAC submitted a final report on the effectiveness of this training program to the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. This resulted in the extension of the program (ORAC is offering this workshop four times a year to participating regulatory bodies and professional associations). In addition, many regulatory bodies and professional associations, in Ontario and other provinces, have brought this workshop in-house, including OCSWSSW (social workers), ICAO (accountants), CMTO (massage therapists), CDHO (dental hygienists), CDO (denturists), CRTO (respiratory therapists), OCP (pharmacists), COO (optometrists), CRNBC (nurses in British Columbia), HRMAM (human resources professionals in Manitoba), and CPO (psychologists).
- In 2009 and 2010, ORAC expanded the project to build an on-line orientation, through which immigrants can learn Ontario's regulated professions before they come to Canada. partnered with the web designer, Open School BC, and developed the content to orient immigrants in regulated professions through the Ontario licensing / registration process.
- Using interactive learning technologies, the on-line orientation targeted the building of knowledge on the licensing / registration process, from the immigrants' vantage point, and helping them understand the roles of regulatory bodies and how to work with them in order to get licensed or registered. The website was piloted among various stakeholders and was launched in August 2010. http://www.regulators4access.ca/online_orientation/