

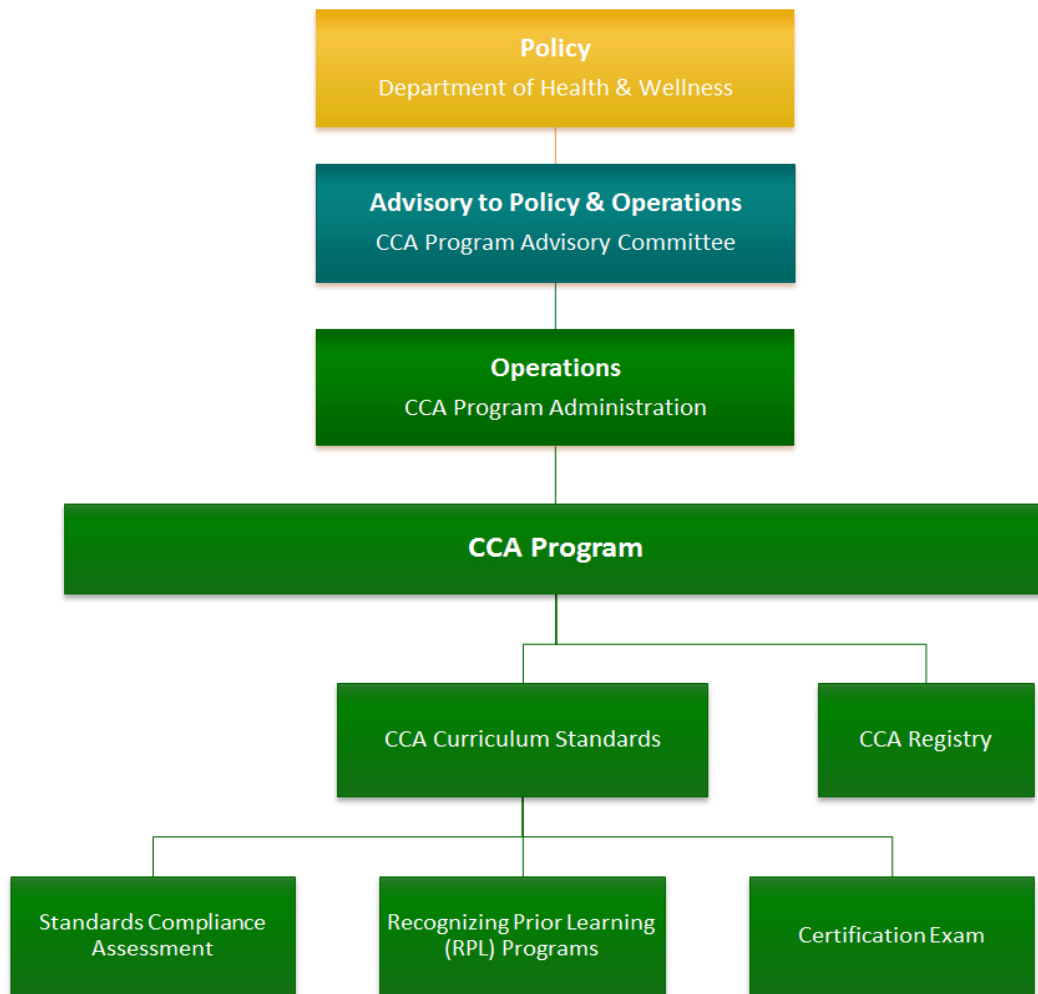


2016

# CCA Annual Report







**Mission:**

Working together to promote excellence in person-centered care for people in Nova Scotia by maintaining standardized education and support for Continuing Care Assistants.

**Vision:**

CCAs contributing to Nova Scotians living well.

**Values:**

Leadership, Integrity, Quality, Growth and Development



## Table of Contents

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Message from the Chair .....	1
CCA Curriculum Standards.....	2
Educator Day .....	2
Certification Exam .....	2
Culture Change.....	3
Lifts and Transfers .....	3
Open Forum .....	4
Standard Compliance Assessment (SCA).....	4
Data Collection.....	4
Curriculum Review .....	5
CCA Program Licenses .....	5
Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) Program.....	6
Data Analysis.....	6
Certification Exam .....	8
Data Analysis.....	9
Exam Administration.....	10
Reinstatement of CCA Certification Exam Candidacy .....	10
CCA Certification Exam Committee.....	10
CCA Registry .....	11
Registry Data Examples .....	11
CCA Program Enrollment and Certification .....	13
Current Enrollments .....	13
RPL Program Enrollments .....	13
Annual Enrollments .....	14
Certified CCAs.....	14
CCA Program Advisory Committee .....	16
CCA Program Administration.....	16

## Message from the Chair

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As my second year as Chair of the CCA Program Advisory Committee (CCAPAC) comes to a close, I am even more impressed with the integrity of the CCA Program and the dedication of all the players: employers, educators, CCAPAC members, and the Administration.

In working towards our mission and vision, the CCAPAC has employed a number of strategies: continuously evolving the CCA Program to meet the needs of the stakeholders; promoting total participation in the CCA Registry; and promoting professionalism provincially and nationally through advancing recognition of scope, role and curriculum of the CCA.

This year the CCAPAC spent some time revising its Terms of Reference and setting an operational plan for the next three years to support our mission and vision. With a focus on the next evolution of the CCA Program, the operational plan centers on data collection and analysis. We are pleased to distribute a CCA Readiness Survey this year to Certified CCAs and employers seeking their perception of how prepared newly Certified CCAs are to meet the health system expectations. The CCA placement structure will be evaluated for effectiveness and efficiency. To build better tools for data collection, we plan to conduct a systems analysis of the CCA Program's information management tools. In addition, we will revise the Standards Compliance Assessment data collection and management tools. Refining our communication processes by developing and implementing a communication strategy will also be a priority.

There are many groups I would like to thank for the CCA Program's continued success, including the stakeholders who work to strengthen the CCA Program through continuous feedback, participation in committees, and support for student placements; the CCA Program Advisory Committee (CCAPAC) for its dedication and guidance; education providers who strive to instill in students a passion for the industry and the role of the CCA; and industry for the ongoing recognition of the role of the CCA as a vital part of the health care team.

I would also like to thank the CCA Program Administration at Health Association Nova Scotia in operationalizing the strategic directions of the Committee, providing quality services, and managing the day-to-day activities of the Program. The energy and commitment from these people help to maintain and enhance the CCA Program and, thus, promote excellence in person-centered care for people in Nova Scotia.

Thank you,

Carolyn Maxwell  
Chair, CCA Program Advisory Committee

## CCA Curriculum Standards

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The CCA Curriculum Standards identify the learning outcomes required to ensure Certified CCAs have the competency to deliver appropriate, timely, and respectful person-centered care in a variety of practice settings. Industry has been instrumental in the CCA Program's evolution by providing guidance during the Program revisions as well as feedback between revisions. The guidance industry provides is pivotal to clarify learning expectations and promote education consistency, enhancing the Program's ability to meet industry's needs.

As we evolve, we strive to improve consistency of education. Examples of how we improve consistency include the Standards Compliance Assessment (SCA) process and the Educator Day, both discussed in greater detail below, as well as regular CCA Program review and revisions. Through a variety of methods we collect data that helps measure the effectiveness of the curriculum to validate the education meets industry's expectations.

This coming year, using the Program's learning outcomes and the industry developed generic job description as a base, we intend to examine the level of preparedness of Certified CCAs to meet current and emerging health care expectations. A CCA Readiness Survey will be released in late spring to CCAs who graduated with the 2009 and 2013 Curriculum. The survey data will provide us with a summary of the CCAs' perception of their readiness to deliver appropriate, timely, and respectful person-centered care in a variety of practice settings. Employers will also be asked for input on the CCAs preparedness to perform the duties required through facilitated table work at the Stakeholders' Forum and a CCA Readiness Survey focused on gathering the employers' perspective. Our goal is to address any urgent discrepancies in the curriculum and subsequently guide the next Program review and revision process.

### Educator Day

On November 13, 2015 we hosted our second annual Educator Day. The goal in bringing primary instructors together is to promote consistency in education through open discussion, collaboration, and shared resources. The theme this year was working together for success in educating CCAs.

By all accounts the day was a success with representation from almost every education provider and campus. The key topics included the Certification Exam, Culture Change (Eden Philosophy), and Lifts and Transfers education.

### Certification Exam

The Certification Exam session was well received with 100% of survey respondents rating the topic as relevant and informative. The session covered components of the exam's operational procedures, most notably, setting the pass mark and the item analysis procedures. Item analysis is a main component of the continuous improvement process for the overall exam operations. The procedure includes examining the results of each question after every exam sitting, determining if the question is effective and



## **Open Forum**

An open forum was held to discuss education, promote consistency, and share resources. Discussions covered placements, teaching resources, and teaching approaches. Eight-two percent (82%) of survey respondents indicated it was relevant and informative, 5% - neutral and 14% - blank.

Part of the discussion focused on the Mosby's Canadian Textbook for the Support Worker, the required textbook for the Program. Elsevier, distributors of the textbook, approached us requesting feedback on areas the textbook may not provide sufficient and/or accurate information for NS and how they might be able to support the CCA Program. Educators found the opportunity to compare notes regarding the textbook and strategies to address the inconsistencies beneficial. Based on the discussions feedback was provided to Elsevier.

As suggested during the day, instructors will have an opportunity to set the agenda for the next Educator Day in the fall of 2016.

## **Standard Compliance Assessment (SCA)**

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Education providers obtain a CCA Program license through the SCA process before delivering the education. A goal of the SCA process is to promote and enhance consistent delivery of the CCA Program education across the province. The process promotes consistency in a number of ways including data collection, curriculum reviews, and campus visits.

### **Data Collection**

As a part of the SCA process, we collect a significant amount of data, for example, an annual Satisfaction Survey completed by placement sites. Currently, the survey has a low response rate; averaging 23% over the last three years. Higher participation would greatly improve our ability to enforce consistency, to meet the needs of industry, and implement course delivery improvements.

According to survey respondents, placement sites reported being 100% satisfied with the majority of the placement experience including the process to address concerns and the students' preparedness for placement. The feedback indicated three areas for improvement: onsite supervision during the placement, regular check-ins during mentorship, and increased information sharing between the educator and placement site during placements. We will work with schools and placement sites to find ways to improve these outcomes.



## Curriculum Review

The SCA also enforces curriculum compliance which in turn promotes consistency in education and standardized deliveries. During the licensing process, each campus submits a complete curriculum which includes lesson plans, teaching material, and assessment tools. The SCA team randomly selects two modules for a curriculum compliance review; pending the results from the random selection the curriculum review will stand or involve further investigation. The education provider's curriculum is retained for the duration of the license and can be referenced in the event detailed clarification is required.

## CCA Program Licenses

There are currently 29 licensed campuses delivering the Program on a regular basis and another 6 satellite sites (one time deliveries) established to accommodate employer/educator partnership deliveries. This year, 18 licenses were renewed and one new school successfully completed the SCA licensing process and has started teaching courses. Another new school is currently engaged in the licensing process and intends to deliver the course at two campuses this coming year.

In the past fiscal year there were 11 course deliveries across the province starting under partnerships between education providers and employers and we are aware of another partnership scheduled to start in late spring. The feedback gathered from the employer partner indicated:

- They recommended partnering with other organizations
- The clear guidelines and expectations to keep students and clients safe was a key to success
- Funding was a significant contributor to the success of partnerships; without the funding, the partnerships would not have been viable<sup>2</sup>

The SCA Process will be revised this year to incorporate the feedback to expand the data collection and management tools and include the addition of a five year maximum license timeframe. The five year license will be available for schools that successfully complete the SCA Process on a go forward basis; it will not be retroactively issued.

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<sup>2</sup> A number of past deliveries received funding from Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

## Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) Program

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The CCA Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) Program is a competency-based, rigorous, and structured assessment and education process which assists participants to gain recognition for their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. If participants can prove they possess certain knowledge and can perform certain skills, they should not have to repeat the learning. The RPL Program ensures the successful participants meet all the CCA Program standards including the CCA Certification Exam.

*RPL was a good investment of our company's time and effort. Education sometimes leans towards a cookie-cutter approach, but the RPL process has the ability to adapt to candidates' needs and coach them through to success.*

– Nancy Mann RN DOC, Ivy Meadows

Discussions with industry, participant surveys, and facilitated navigator sessions report positive experiences with a strong satisfaction for the program's structure, method, feedback, and rates of response. The participant and navigator evaluations also provided us with productive suggestions for improvement.

Phase I: Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) workshops were revised to give more time for the completion of the Competency Assessment Tool (CAT). The Skills Demonstration & CAT assignments were moved to the beginning of Workshop 1, which resulted in other workshops being rearranged to accommodate the change. The new workshops were rolled out April 1, 2016.

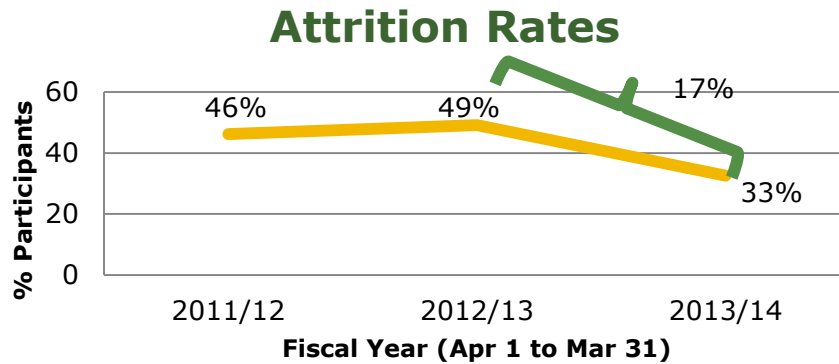
Components of Phase II were revised to better meet the needs of the participants and increase success rates. The Self-Directed Learning (SDL) modules were adjusted, adding voice-over audio for each module and the module quiz questions were refined. In addition, the exam preparation process was improved; it now includes hosting mock exam sessions for RPL participants. Numerous mock exams are also available for the RPL participants in addition to the study tools the CCA Program has made available.

### Data Analysis

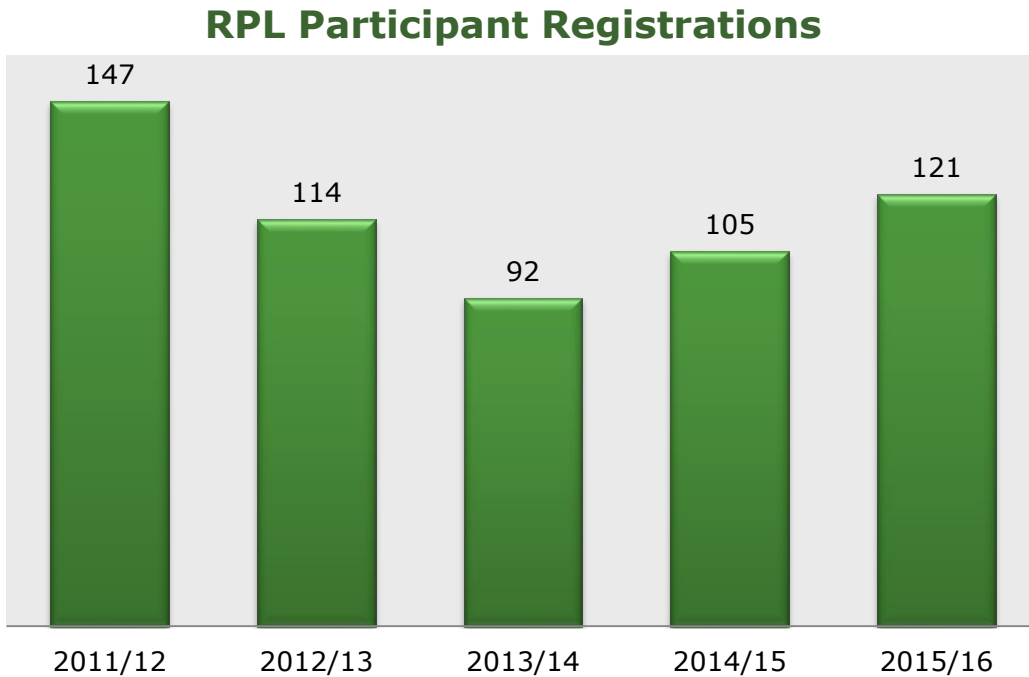
Data collection and analysis supports the RPL Program in monitoring quality, gauging success, and determining areas for improvement.

One area in the RPL Program with noticeable improvement is the attrition rates. We examined the attrition rates for the past five years and noted the rates are decreasing. In the Attrition Rate graph on the next page, you can see between 2011/12 and 2012/13 the attrition rate fluctuated between 46% and 49%. The following year, 2013/14, the rate dropped by 17% substantiating the changes made April 1, 2013 which focused on increasing motivation and improving success rates. Participants enrolled in 2014/15 and 2015/16 are still actively working toward completion. Therefore, we have not included these years in the graph below as we cannot accurately demonstrate success or attrition rates at this

time. Indicators point to a continued drop in attrition rates. We will continue to advance the process in response to stakeholder feedback and needs with the expectation this will translate to higher success rates.



Over the last three years the RPL Program has experienced an increase in demand. Anecdotally we are hearing the increase is in part due to employers utilizing the conditional hire option of the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) Education Entry to Practice Policy. The chart below shows RPL Program registrations for the last five years; as you can see there was a dip in registration between 2011/12 and 2013/14. Since then there has been a steady increase in registrations, averaging 13% each year.



In 2013, the RPL Program started tracking participants requiring a conditional hire to be employed in the role of CCA under the Education Entry to Practice Policy.

**Figures A:** Conditional Hire 2014/15

74% of all RPL participants required conditional hire and 26% of the RPL participants were able to be hired without employment conditions.

**Figure A: Conditional Hire 2014/15**



**Figure B:** Conditional Hire 2015/16

93% of all RPL participants required conditional hire and 7% of the RPL participants were able to be hired without employment conditions.

**Figure B: Conditional Hire 2015/16**



A highlight for the RPL Program this year was being recognized as an example of excellence. Over the past year the Program was examined by a number of groups exploring successful RPL models. The Early Years Branch Childhood Development, Department of Labour and Education examined the RPL Program seeking a comparable model to accommodate the early childhood education certification process. Health System Quality Branch reviewed the RPL Program model to extrapolate lessons learned which could be applied to the certification of Medical Device Reprocessing Technicians. Collective Wisdom Solutions, a consulting company contracted by Department of Labour and Education to complete an environmental scan of RPL processes in Nova Scotia, selected the CCA RPL Program as one of the highlighted success stories.

## Certification Exam

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The goal of the CCA Program is to ensure newly Certified CCAs possess the competencies required to practice safely and effectively in the role, at entry level. The role of the certification exam is to perform a final assessment of competencies to provide reasonable assurance to employers and the public an individual has met the required competencies to work in the role of Certified CCA.

The current exam process, initiated in 2012, has strengthened the exam's ability to perform its role in the certification process. The process has increased the exam's validity and reliability as well as enhanced our ability to respond to factors which may impact the exam including evolving curriculums.

## Data Analysis

The exam has a strong success rate; looking at the last five years, just over 96% of exam candidates<sup>3</sup> became Certified CCAs.

We have been asked if the failure rate has increased over the years and the answer is yes, the rate has increased slightly. As noted previously, the exam process increased the validity and reliability of the exam's performance and factors which may unjustly impact failure rates are immediately addressed. Although not statistically proven, a factor that appears to be impacting the exam failure rate is the increased complexity of the learning requirements.

In response to the changing health care environment, the Program has been required to evolve to meet industry expectations and accommodate the expanding role of the CCA. Over the years the complexity of care in which a CCA is expected to perform has increased; however the entrance requirements remain constant. The demand for an increase in the curriculum's complexity is demonstrated with each curriculum review and revision, most notably in the last two revisions.

The 2009 curriculum underwent a significant change to meet the increasing complexity of care required by the clients in continuing care. To meet the demand the learning outcomes were refined, the content was enhanced with a higher level of theory and applied comprehension, and the aptitude for problem solving and critical thinking increased. The curriculum was further intensified in 2013 in response to industry's feedback, including the requirement for a broader understanding of the full continuum of care; branching into acute care competencies.

A grouping of the exam results for the past 16 years revealed:

- Prior to the 2009 curriculum the failure rate averaged at 1.6% (9 years).
- During the 2009 curriculum the failure rate averaged at 2.4% (4 years).
- Currently the 2013 curriculum failure rate is averaging at 4.5% (2 years). The data is incomplete for the two years. Once all students/candidates complete their opportunities for certification we estimate the rate will settle between 3% and 4%.

Given the increase in the reliability of the exam's performance, the increase in the complexity of the curriculum, and the competency expectation for Certified CCAs, it would be expected, even desired, that the exam failure rate increase slightly. At a 96% success rate (4% failure rate) the CCA Program is within an acceptable range when compared to other certification or regulatory exam rates.

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<sup>3</sup> Exam candidate: CCA graduate who has successfully completed the program through a NS CCA licensed education provider.

## Exam Administration

Standard policies and procedures ensure each exam is developed and administered in the same way under the same conditions so all candidates receive equal opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities. The CCA Certification Exam Handbook is available on our website at [www.novascotiacca.ca](http://www.novascotiacca.ca) (Resource section; Exam folder). The Exam Handbook is a required tool for CCA students, provided to them through their education provider.

One exam standard, noted below, was reviewed by CCAPAC this past year.

“To be eligible to write the CCA Certification Exam, candidates must meet all the requirements of the CCA Program prior to being granted a seat at the exam. Candidates are eligible to write the exam a total of three times within the 12 months following eligibility to write. Eligibility begins with the first available exam date after completion of the course. If the candidate requires an extension to the 12 month eligibility period he/she must apply to the CCA Program Administration by completing the application for Extension of Eligibility to Write Exam within the 12 month eligibility timeframe.”

### *Reinstatement of CCA Certification Exam Candidacy*

The CCA Program Advisory Committee (CCAPAC) received a number of requests to write the exam after the eligibility period had expired. In a few cases a considerable amount of time had passed. To accommodate this situation, while remaining reasonably assured the person had the necessary competencies to practice safely, the CCAPAC applied our recognizing prior learning philosophy to develop a course recognition pathway for persons in this situation. The process respects the persons past education and experience, the industry’s human resource needs, as well as the integrity of the CCA Certification including the exam’s policies and standards. The Reinstatement of CCA Certification Exam Candidacy process and application form can be found on our website [www.novascotiacca.ca](http://www.novascotiacca.ca) (see Resources; Exam folder).

## CCA Certification Exam Committee

- Carol Anne Cowan, Nova Scotia Community College
- Jody MacDonald, Shannex Inc.
- Vanda Newton, CCA Program Administration
- Pam Shipley, CCA Program Administration

### **Welcoming** New Members

- Callie Kerr, Island Career Academy
- Corey MacKenzie, We Care Home Health Services

### **Thank you** to our outgoing members for their dedication to the CCA Program Exam Committee

- Helen Marsh, New Waterford Homecare Service Society
- Christel MacAloney, FutureWorx
- Virginia Vacheresse, Primary Exam Marker

## CCA Registry

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The CCA Registry is a list of Certified CCAs/counterparts<sup>4</sup> in Nova Scotia. To maintain current data, members are required to renew their membership annually. Although our active membership renewal period is between September 1 and October 31, we accept renewals and new members throughout the year.

The CCA Registry is about building a stronger workforce for quality client care and CCA quality of work life. The Registry's objectives include gathering input from members to influence positive change in the role of the CCA and gathering data for human resource planning. The aggregate data collected from members can identify trends in the current workforce which can be used for human resource planning; see below for a number of examples.

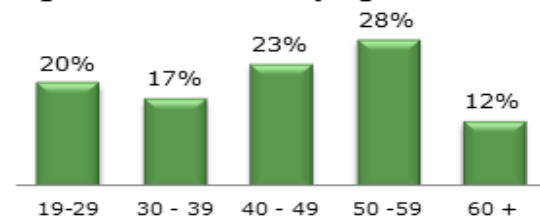
As of March 31, 2016, the CCA Registry had 1261 members. The following are examples of single level data reports from the Registry. The data in the Registry can also be reported in a multiple level format, for example age groups or estimated retirements could also be reported by Zone and/or employer type.

### Registry Data Examples

**Figure 1:** Members by Age.

Membership in the Registry ranges from age 19 to 72. The dispersion of ages in the registry shows the highest percentage being ages 50-59 at 28% and the lowest being age 60 and over 12%.

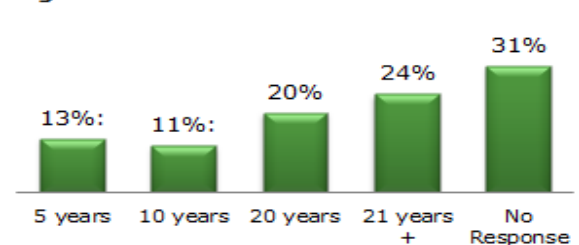
**Figure 1: Members by Age**



**Figure 2:** Estimated Retirement Date.

The Registry gathers information on the expected retirement date of members. 13% of the members of the registry report they will be retiring within 5 years. The majority of the 31% No Response is the result of new graduates not reporting an estimated date of retirement.

**Figure 2: Estimated Retirement**

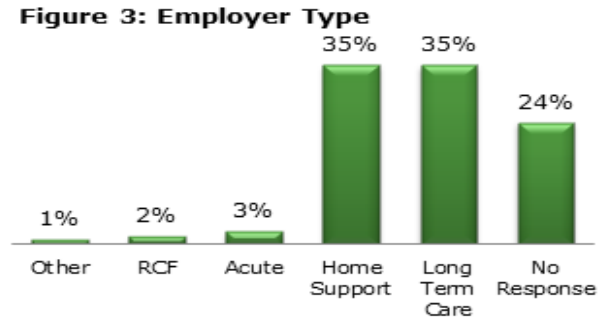


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<sup>4</sup> Counterparts include PCW, HSW, HHP and OTJ trained prior to 2006 direct care and support providers

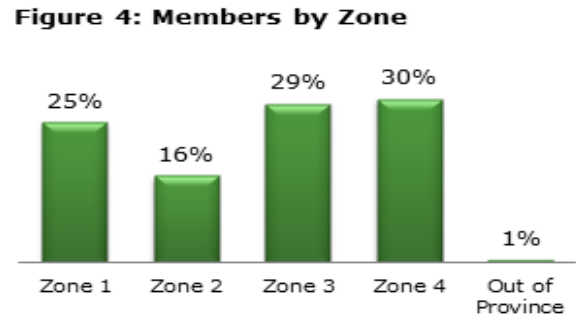
**Figure 3: Members by Employer Type.**

70% of members are employed in either Home Support or Long Term Care organizations with Acute, RCF and Other making up only about 6%. The majority of new graduates did not report employer type resulting in the 24% no response rate.



**Figure 4: Members by Location.**

Registry members are employed across the province with the lowest membership being Zone 2 with 16% and the highest being Zone 4 at 30%.



Each year the CCA Registry engages in a number of activities to promote the Registry, including promoting registration at the exam sittings, employer communications, renewal notifications, Facebook postings, email reminders, and the “Caring Matters” newsletter. We have also conducted registration sessions at employment sites and this year we provided onsite registration and renewal at the Home Support Conference in Cape Breton.

The CCA Registry developed tools to assist with the registration process including a “How to Renew” document and video demonstrating the renewal process step by step. We have simplified the renewal process by providing pre-populated forms with the members’ current information requiring only an update of changed information.

We held a number of contests to increase registrations. Congratulations to Heather Winters for winning early registration contest and John Seale for winning the renewal contest for inactive members; each received a \$100 gift card!

This year we distributed examples of Registry reports to employers when five or more of their employees were members of the Registry. These reports can be generated to meet the employer’s needs and can include basic employee information, a breakdown of employee data with statistics on age, credentials, expected retirement date, and position type.

Please encourage CCA/counterparts to become active members of the CCA Registry. With stronger membership, the value of the data would be significant and provide evidence to guide decisions for health human resource planning and the role of the CCA.



## CCA Program Enrollment and Certification

### Current Enrollments

As of March 31, 2016 the CCA Program has 39 course deliveries in progress across the province. The course deliveries are at different stages with the majority well underway and a number just starting. Currently there are 774 participants in the 39 active courses. Based on an estimated 18% attrition rate for total enrollments, 82% of the enrollments will become exam candidates. Of the 635 exam candidates, if we estimate 96% will become Certified CCAs we can project at least 609 Certified CCAs will be ready to enter the workforce from the current course enrollments by March 31, 2017. The following table breaks down the enrollments by Zones and provides estimated certification numbers (exam sittings in June, October, and March) over the next 12 months. There are no consistent delivery dates for courses therefore, the enrollment numbers fluctuate continuously and the table represents a snapshot in time at March 31, 2016.

<b>CCA Program Current Enrollments at March 31, 2016</b>				
<b>Zone</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Enrollment	219	137	168	250
<b>Estimated Certification from Enrollments</b>				
Exam Candidates (82%)	180	112	138	205
Certified CCAs (96%)	172	108	132	197
<b>Exam Sittings:</b>				
June 2016	156	83	98	83
October 2016	17	0	26	31
March 2017	0	25	9	83
<b>Total Certified</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>197</b>

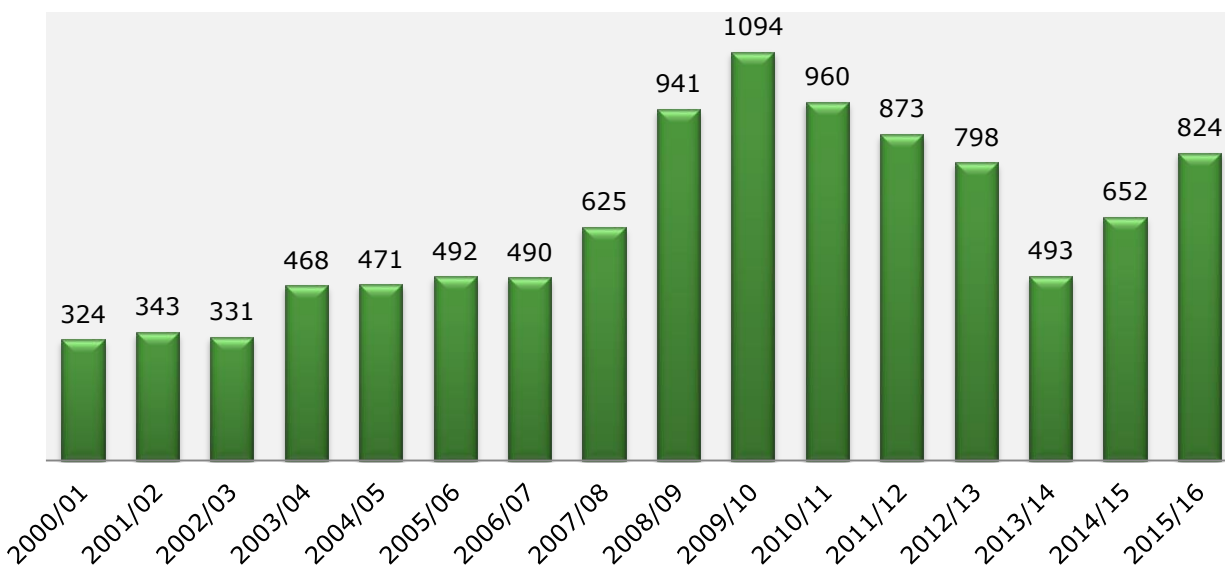
### RPL Program Enrollments

In addition to the traditional classroom enrollments the CCA Program has 190 participants active in the Recognizing Prior Learning Program process. As of March 31, 2016 there are 138 people working through Phase I (assessment) or Phase II (education), 10 exam candidates, and 42 people in the registration and/or transitioning from Phase I to Phase II stage. Because of the independent nature of the RPL process we cannot track group completion dates.

## Annual Enrollments

CCA Program enrollments have increased by approximately 67% over the last two fiscal years after a significant decline in 2013/14<sup>5</sup>. The graph below shows enrollments over the life of the Program. Note the increase in the enrollments starting in 2007/08; the enrollments increased when industry demonstrated a stronger demand for CCAs to staff the new LTC beds. Starting in the year 2007/08 and peaking in the years 2009/10, industry initiated a significant number of employer/educator partnerships and on-site course deliveries which contributed to the increased enrollments. Over the last two years, once again, a number of employer/educator partnerships have been initiated by industry, supporting the increase in enrollments we are experiencing today.

### CCA Program Enrollments (Fiscal Year April 1 - March 31)



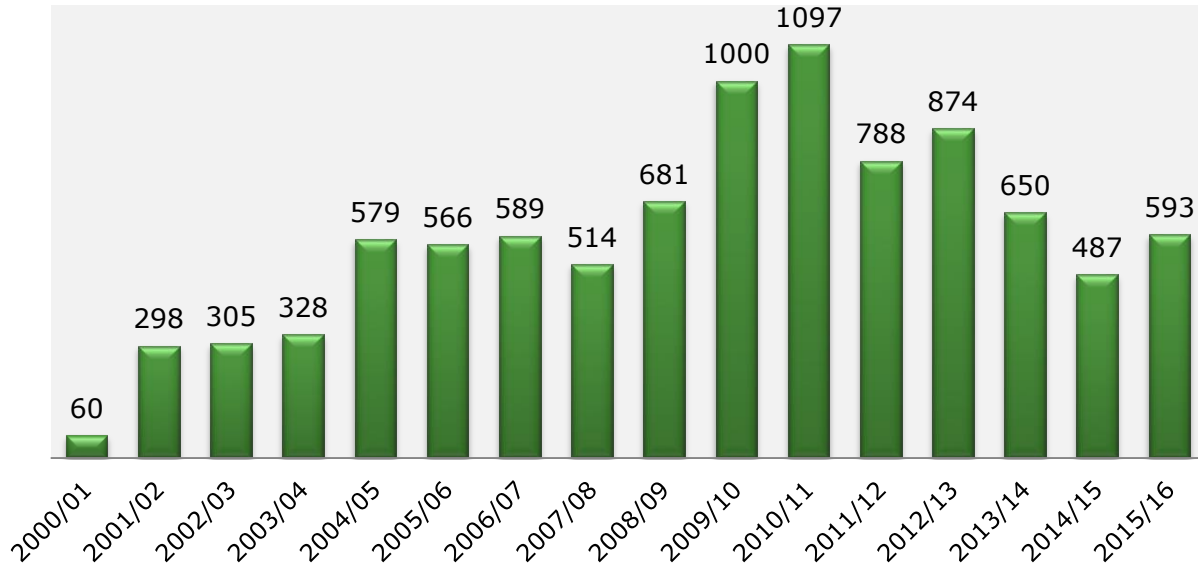
## Certified CCAs

Given the length of time between enrollment and certification (approximately 9 to 24 months), this year we are just starting to see the results of the increased enrollments over the last two years. The fiscal year 2015/16 produced 593 certified CCAs across the province of Nova Scotia, an increase of 22% over 2014/15. As the above table, *Current CCA Program Enrollments at March 31, 2016*, indicates we are already predicting an increase in certifications based on current enrollment in the traditional deliveries

<sup>5</sup> Although no quantifiable evidence is available to explain the decline in enrollments, 2013/14 was the first year without the bursary program from DHW. In addition the federal Labour Market Agreement renewal process and the resulting Canada – Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement, limited the provincial skills and training funding through Department of Labour and Advanced Education: Skills and Learning Branch.

alone. Given the pattern from past years, we can expect the number to increase with the addition of spring/summer courses and RPL Program graduates.

### **Certified CCAs** (Fiscal Year April 1 - March 31)



In total the CCA Program has produced 9409 Certified CCAs since its conception in 2000. Above is a graph of certifications from the beginning of the CCA Program.

## CCA Program Advisory Committee

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- Doug Bungay, College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia
- Eric Doucette, Seaview Manor
- Tammy Jeffers, RJF Healthcare
- Beth Kelly, Department of Health and Wellness
- Callie Kerr, Island Career Academy
- Nancy MacConnell-Maxner, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Jody MacDonald, Harbourstone Enhanced Care
- Trent MacIsaac, College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia
- Carolyn Maxwell, Department of Health and Wellness, Chair
- Ann McInnis, Nova Scotia Community College, School of Health and Human Services
- Catherine Peori, City Homemakers Service Society
- Sharon Preston, Windsor Elms
- Pam Shipley, Health Association Nova Scotia
- Katherine Swindell, VON Annapolis

### **Welcome to our new member**

- Stephen Gillis, Inverary Manor

### **Thank you to our outgoing members**

- Susan Corkum, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Sandra Hatch, Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Tammy MacKenzie, Shiretown Nursing Home
- Cheryl Richard, ParaMed Home Health Care

## CCA Program Administration

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- Vanda Newton, Administrative Assistant
- Barb Salkin, Administrative Assistant
- Cailleagh Sharples, Certification Coordinator
- Pam Shipley, Manager











Copies of the 2015-2016 Annual Report are available from:

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Bedford, Nova Scotia  
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(902) 832-8500 | 1-866-265-9900

Or online at: [www.novascotiacca.ca](http://www.novascotiacca.ca)