

CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATOR CREDENTIALING IN CANADA: A WORK IN PROGRESS

by

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CHILD CARE CONNECTION-NS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction: The Child Care Administrator.....	1
Section II: Model for Child Care Administrator Credentialing	4
A.Child Care Core of Knowledge.....	4
1.Practice Standards.....	4
Certification / evaluation of practice standards for child care administrators.....	5
Work Descriptions	7
Model as it relates to Practice.	10
2. Education / Theory Standards.....	10
A Sample of Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Programs offering a Child Care Administrator Credential.	12
Model as it relates to ECE Programs..	13
3. Collaboration of Theory and Practice.....	13
B.Licensing	15
1. Licensing of Practitioners	16
Model as it relates to the Child Care Professional Licensing Body	18
2.Licensing of Child Care Programs.....	18
Minimum Licensing Credentials for the Child Care Administrator in Canada	18
Model as it relates to Facilities Licensing	20
3. Shared Authority for Licensing.....	20
Section III	
Possibilities and Realities for Standardization of Child Care Administrator Credentialing.....	22
Bibliography.....	31
Appendices	(attached in pdf format)
Appendix A: Child Care Administrator Work Description.	
Appendix B: A Sample of Post Secondary Child Care Administrator Programs Compared with the Child Care Administrator Work Description.	
Appendix C: Minimum Facilities Licensing and Regulation Credentials for Child Care Administrators In Canada.	

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This paper is the result of collaboration between the author and many child care colleagues found in provincial child care organizations, post secondary early childhood education programs, licensing agencies, child care research, and community development organizations.

The process included :

- distribution of a background paper and questionnaire to provincial/territorial child care organizations, post secondary early childhood education programs, and government licensers;
- incorporating their responses into the first draft of chapters on the model for standardization and standards;
- circulating this draft for review to individuals from a mixture of child care areas;
- incorporating reviewers feedback into the paper , and in particular the section on "Possibilities and Realities for Standardization of Child Care Administrator Credentialing".

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Respondents and Reviewers

Child Care Organizations

Association of Early Childhood Educators
of Newfoundland and Labrador
Association of Early Childhood Educators,
Ontario
Certification Council of Early Childhood
Educators of Nova Scotia
Early Childhood Educators of British
Columbia
Manitoba Child Care Association
Saskatchewan Child Care Association

Child Care Licensers

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Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Programs

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Brock University, Ontario
College of the North Atlantic, Newfoundland
George Brown College, Ontario
Grant MacEawn Community College, Alberta
Institute for Early Childhood Education and
Developmental Services, Nova Scotia
Mount Royal College, Alberta
Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia
Niagara College, Ontario
Nova Scotia Community College
Red River Community College, Manitoba
Sheridan College, Ontario
The Early Childhood Educators Institute and
Resource Centre, Nova Scotia
University of Calgary, Alberta
University of Manitoba, Continuing Education,
Manitoba
University of Regina, Saskatchewan
Vancouver Community College, British Columbia

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INTRODUCTION: THE CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATOR

The invisibility of child care has been an ongoing barrier for its recognition as a public service. There are a number of systemic barriers which contribute to its invisibility. Child care is affected by gender bias, being an occupation involved with working women and women's work.¹ Child care is affected by attitudes toward families and their sole responsibility for care of their children². Child care is affected by the consumers of child care, children, whose care is the decision of adults who act on their behalf.

Overall, child care administrators in Canada are the most invisible practitioners of the sector. There is little thought for the person who makes child care happen in the centre. There is little recognition of the complexity involved in the delivery of the service, and of the skills that are necessary to manage systems, policies, services, programs, legal and professional sanctions, planning and finances. In any group child care setting, the child care administrator must manage these areas, and if it is to be a quality child care service, she³ must manage these areas well.

This paper looks at this particularly invisible part of child care practice, the child care administrator of a licensed child care centre. It attempts to discover her status in Canada's provinces and territories relative to licensing, education, and child care practice. Some provinces and territories do not recognize nor regulate her role in a licensed child care centre. It is assumed that administrative tasks such as systems management, policy development, program/service design, implementation & evaluation, adherence to legal and professional sanctions, planning and financial management will take care of themselves. This is indicative of the systemic biases in which the delivery of child care services operate. It is considered women's work, so what needs to be done gets done without recognition, respect or acknowledgment of the complex set of skills required by the woman who must ensure that child care services are provided with integrity and honest best practices.

The role of the child care administrator is complex in its scope and in its application of collective early childhood education and care values. As the child care sector evolved, and as pre-service and in-service trained individuals advanced from teaching "on the floor" into

¹. Ferguson, Evelyne. *"The Child Care Crises: Realities of Women's Caring"*, in C.Bains, P.Evans, and S. Neysmith (Eds.), Women's Caring, Feminist Perspectives on Social Welfare, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991.

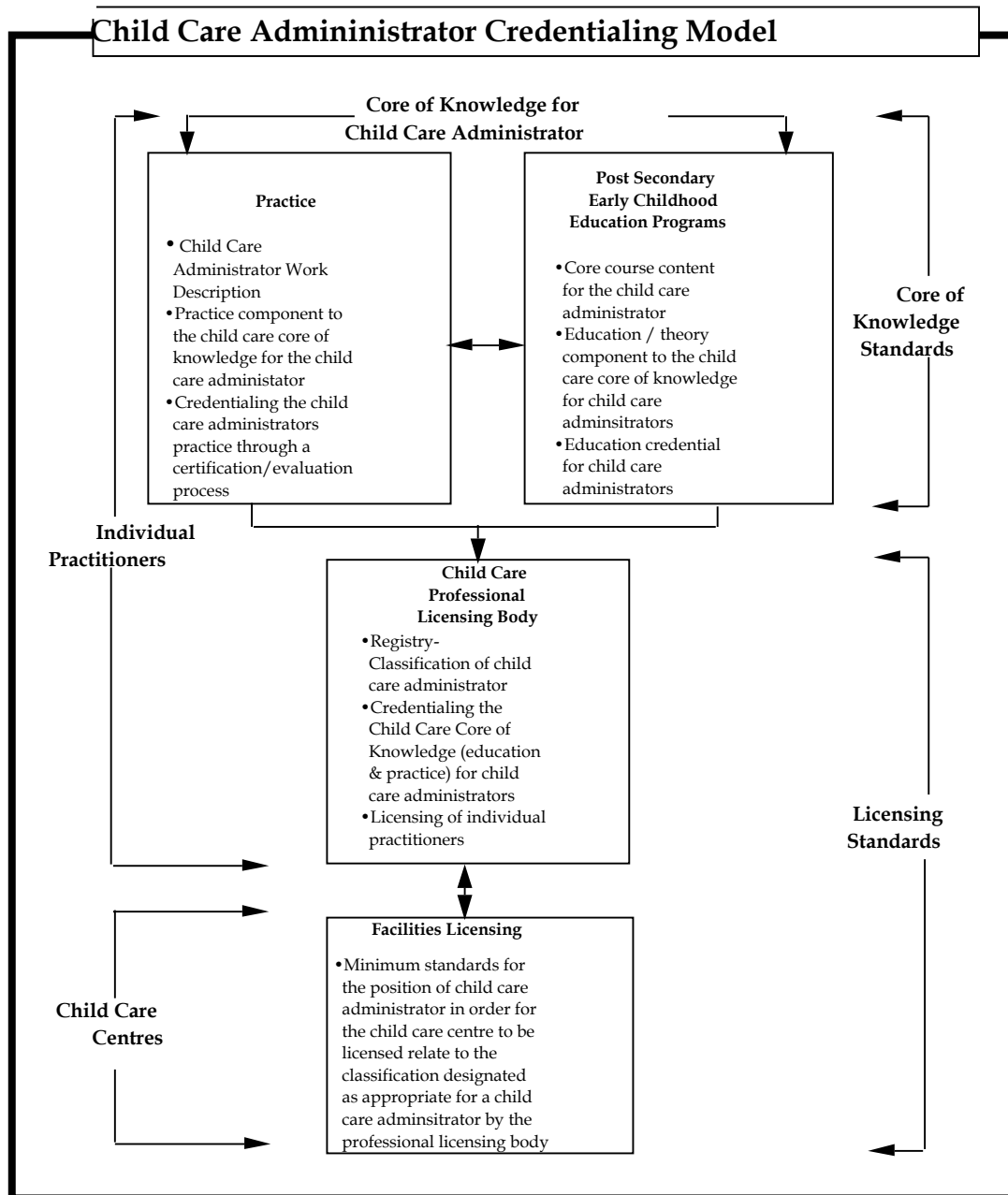
². Decima Research, *Report to Health Canada on Attitudes Toward Parenting and Children*, Toronto: Decima Research, 1994.

³. Canadian Child Care Federation, *Caring for a Living*, Ottawa: CCCF, 1993, reported that 95% of child care practitioners in Canada are female. Female gender will be applied throughout the paper.

administrative roles in child care centres, it became apparent that both the teacher's and administrator's role shared the importance of a foundation in early childhood education and care and the practice skills necessary to integrate the theory into developmentally appropriate practice. However, the administrator's role also necessitated the addition of a number of competencies in the area of organizational management and the application of the early childhood education and care skills within an organizational environment. Rather than a primarily subjective application of developmentally appropriate practice in the pursuit of quality child care practice, the administrator must translate these subjective skills into a collective application in the pursuit of a quality child care service. In addition, as the chief executive officer of the child care centre, the child care administrator is the bridge between the licensed operator (owners & boards), those who provide the infrastructure which supports daily practice, and the child care practitioners, those who deliver daily practice. She is a bridge between families and daily practice; and a bridge between the community and daily practice. The challenge of the administrator in her transition from a child care teacher to a child care administrator is to develop the skills, knowledge and abilities to transform her subjective practice into a collective practice.

The model (Figure 1) which emerged from the investigation of child care administrator credentialing in Canada is a collegial model. It recognizes that licensing authority is shared amongst the governmental body which licenses child care facilities and the child care professional licensing body which licenses individual practitioners. It recognizes that the authority for credentialing the child care core of knowledge is shared between post secondary early childhood education programs (ECE Programs) and child care practice. Credentialing of the education/theoretical components of child care administrator's practice rests with the ECE Programs; the credentialing of the practice components rests with the practice. The model recognizes that authority to determine the child care core of knowledge is shared between ECE Programs and practice, and recognizes that the child care core of knowledge cannot be complete without continual interaction between education and practice. The model makes the practice of the child care administrator visible in the application of standards.

FIGURE 1: CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATOR CREDENTIALING MODEL



"Child Care Administrator Credentialing Model" developed by E. Elaine Ferguson,
 CHILD CARE CONNECTION-NS (Project funded by Child Care Visions of
 Human Resources Development Canada)

The components of the model for Standardization of Child Care Administrator Credentialing (Figure 1) are explored in the next section of the paper, "Model for Child Care Administrator Credentialing In Canada". This section will discuss each component and give some current and in process examples of each component. The possibility of implementing the model in Canada is discussed in the third section, "Possibilities and Realities for Standardization of Child Care Administrator Credentialing" .

Section II: Model for Child Care Administrator Credentialing In Canada

There are two levels for standardization in the model- the child care core of knowledge and licensing. Each of these levels has two dimensions. The child care core of knowledge has the dimensions of practice and of educational theory. Licensing standards⁴ have the dimensions of licensing the individual child care administrator and licensing the child care program in which she practices. These two levels of standardization work together in the credentialing of the child care administrator in her effort to provide a professional standard of child care and service delivery. This section of the paper will discuss what is currently in place, what is in process and how it relates to the model for the standardization of child care administrator credentialing.

A. Child Care Core of Knowledge

The child care core of knowledge contains application (practice) components and theoretical (education) components. Practitioners and training institutions are partners in constructing the child care core of knowledge through consultation, collaboration and interaction.

1. Practice Standards

There is very little information regarding standards for the child care administrator's practice. Yeates et al⁵ in *Administering Early Childhood Settings, The Canadian Perspective, 2nd Edition*, approach administering early childhood settings within the context of providing a quality child care program, and address the roles the administrator plays in delivering quality child care services. Included in the discussion of quality indicators are: the child's environment (ratios, group size, curriculum, physical environment and interactions); contextual factors (funding, licensing standards & auspice, relationships with the external environment, and parent involvement); and caregiver characteristics (education and experience, stability and job satisfaction). The child care administrator herself as an indicator of quality is not discussed, although since the book focuses on what the child care administrator should do to ensure quality, it is implied. Paula Jorde-Bloom, in her examination of the child care administrator role in Illinois found that there was little research done on the influence that the child care administrator has on the contextual factors that have been identified as quality indicators.⁶ Her study found that

⁴ Funk and Wagnalls, *Standard Desk Dictionary*, define licensing as, "Permission to engage in a specific activity."

⁵ Yeates, McKenna, Warberg and Chandler, *Administering Early Childhood Settings, The Canadian Perspective, 2nd Edition* Don Mills, ON: Maxwell MacMillian Canada, 1994.

⁶ Jorde-Bloom. *The Illinois Director's Study*, Evanston Ill: Ill Dept. of Children & Family Services, 1989. p.2. One reference Jorde Bloom referred to was that Bedekamp, in her examination of the accreditation process of National Association for the Education of Young Children, observed that the child care administrators early childhood education credential was the strongest predictor of quality in a child care program. As quoted in Jorde-Bloom. *The Illinois Director's Study*, Evanston Ill: Ill Dept. of Children & Family Services, 1989 p.17, Bedekamp, S. (1989, March) "Measuring quality through a national accreditation system for early childhood programs." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

the director's level of formal education was the strongest prediction of program quality.⁷ The study looked at program quality not the overall quality of the delivery of the child care service, of which program is one part. *Status of Child Care Training in British Columbia, 1995*, is an examination of existing programs and as such does mention the education and training needs of child care administrators.⁸ Minimal comments about the managerial and supervisory roles of the child care administrator are made in the *National Statement on Quality Child Care*.⁹

Certification / evaluation of practice standards for child care administrators

Current:

The Association of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario (AECE,O), the Early Childhood Professional Association of Alberta (ECPAA) and the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia (CCECENS) certify their members. AECE,O and ECPAA base their certification on the candidate's early childhood education credentials and years of experience. Their certification is not specific to the position which a child care practitioner may hold, is related to the general early childhood education credential for "on-the-floor" positions, and does not consider the practice component to the child care core of knowledge, other than years of experience, in their certification. The CCECENS bases their certification credential on education and experience, plus a self, peer and validator's evaluation of the candidate's application of the practice component of the child care core of knowledge. This certification is specific to the early childhood educator, an "on-the-floor " position. In these provinces, an administrator may be certified, however, her certification is not based on any practice or education credential specific to the child care administrator. Other provinces and territories do not have certification of practice.

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In process- Nova Scotia:

The Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia (CCECENS) certifies early childhood educators (teaching staff) through a self, peer and validator evaluation of her practice utilizing fifteen criteria based on developmentally appropriate practice.

In recognition of the important role the child care administrator plays in establishing standards of practice in her program, the CCECENS began developing a certification process for the child care administrator's practice. Through needs assessment, focus

7. Jorde-Bloom. " *The Child Care Centre Director: Policy Perspectives on Increasing the Requisite Qualifications,*" *Early Childhood Education & Development*, Winter, 1989

8. Unit for Child Care Research, University of Victoria, *Status of Child Care Training in British Columbia, 1995*, Vancouver: ECEBC, 1995.

9. Canadian Child Care Federation, *National Statement on Quality Child Care*, Ottawa: CCCF, 1994.

groups and research of the literature, the criteria have been identified, sorted and classified, yielding a Child Care Administrator Work Description. These criteria were reviewed and refined, and will form the basis for the evaluation of the child care administrators practice.¹⁰ The project is in the fine tuning stages of the process and is exploring avenues for funding a pilot.

Process:

The process for evaluating the candidates is inclusive; reflects a developmental process in the candidates, the complexity of the administrator's role and the shared values of inclusiveness, continuous learning and collegiality. It is sensitive to the ethical issues around confidentiality that would present themselves in a peer evaluation process of a child care administrator. Candidates can move in and out of the process in response to their needs. They evaluate themselves and peers on preparation of and response to case studies which are based on the relationship and practice criteria of the management grid in the Child Care Administrator's Work Description. Validators evaluate candidates through case studies, guided journals and site visits. To implement the project, evaluation tools, training modules and process evaluation methods have to be developed, the data collection process designed,¹¹ and the pilot implemented.

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Current- United States:

National Administrator Credential

The National Administrator Credential is awarded by the National Child Care Association. It is based on a 40hour professional development course covering the competencies of:

- The ability to maintain an effective organization;
- The ability to plan and implement administrative systems that effectively carry out the program's mission, goals and objectives;
- The ability to market the program to parents and the community;
- The ability to administer effectively a program of personnel management and staff development;
- The ability to maintain and develop the facility;
- The legal knowledge necessary for effective management;
- The ability to foster good community relations and influence child care policy that affects the program;

¹⁰. With the valuable feedback of respondents to the background paper, the process of writing this paper has led to additional refinement of the criteria.

¹¹. When enough data is collected for a reliable and valid sample, it will be analysed for significance in determining quality indicators for the child care administrators practice.

- Financial management ability;
- Ensure director self development.

To maintain the credential, evidence of the administrator's participation in 20 hours of job related training is required every two years.

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Work Descriptions

The Child Care Administrator Work Description (Appendix A) forms the basis for defining the child care administrators practice component to the core of knowledge in the model. This description identifies the criteria to be measured when evaluating practice, and provides a starting point to the development of standards of practice. Standards can be identified by building in a data collection component to the certification/evaluation process, and by analysing these data when a valid and reliable sample is obtained.¹²

Current:

Manitoba has a standardized work description for the child care administrator. The Manitoba Child Care Association¹³ has published a job description, performance appraisal, interview questions and contracts for the position of Director (child care administrator). Other provinces reported that they did not have a standardized job description for the child care administrator, and that the development of job descriptions were in the realm of the licensed operator (boards and owners).

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In Process- Nova Scotia:

A challenge in the standardization of child care administrator practice is to design a work description which recognizes the unique character of each child care program and the administrator's role in the delivery of child care services. These unique and diverse combinations make each child care administrator's job different yet similar to every other child care administrator.

In Nova Scotia, as part of the development of a child care administrator certification process, the *Child Care Administrator's Work Description*¹⁴ was developed through review of the literature, focus groups and examination of work descriptions. It views the child care administrator as director/manager/chief executive officer of the daily

¹². Initially, quality audit techniques can be used to facilitate this process to build up the data set.

¹³. Manitoba Child Care Association, 364 McGregor St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2X 4X3, (204) 586-8587, (204) 589-5613 (fax)

¹⁴. E. Elaine Ferguson, "*Child Care Administrator Certification* ", A report to the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia, regarding a model for Child Care Administrator Certification, 1995.

operations of the child care centre. It includes job specifications and a table of specifications called the management areas grid for the child care administrator. The practice management areas for which the administrator is responsible are systems, policy, services /programs /practice, legal /professional standards, planning and finances. She is responsible for these practice areas in the relationship management areas of: people- staff, families and the licensed operator (boards/owners); and places -facility and community.

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In Process- Vancouver Child Care Regional Delivery Model Pilot Project¹⁵:

The Regional Umbrella Group (RUG) oversees the Vancouver Child Care Regional Delivery Model Pilot Project. This group includes representatives of multiservice child care providers, City of Vancouver, and the Child Care Branch of the Ministry of Children and Families, Province of British Columbia. The goals of the project are for efficient, effective, pro-active strategies to improve and coordinate administration and financial strategies for child care. The project recognizes the key role of the child care administrator and is addressing ways and means to respond to her training and resource needs, within child care and the larger context beyond child care.

A consultant's report¹⁶ of focus groups held with administrators in the Vancouver area prepared for RUG reported on the characteristics, skills and desired learning approaches of participants. Some of the barriers to continued training identified were related to costs in terms of money, time and energy and relevancy. Deeper issues that were discussed related to the absence of a career structure not giving a clear sense of advancement from "on the floor" to a managerial role, and not knowing of other career options or transfer-ability of skills to other occupations. The report concludes with recommendations around consciousness raising, modeling and organizational support, accessibility to information, mentoring and the role of Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Programs in addressing the needs of the administrator.

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The original Child Care Administrator Work Description developed in Nova Scotia was circulated for review as part of the process of developing this paper. Appendix A is a result of that review. There are two components to the refined work description, Job Specifications and the Management Areas Grid. Job Specifications covers the skills, knowledge and abilities for the position of child care administrator and the Management

¹⁵. Funded through Canada/British Columbia Strategic Initiatives Program

¹⁶. Gavin Perryman & Associates. *Management and Leadership in the Child Care field: Reflections of Training Needs and Issues*, report for the Vancouver Childcare Regional Delivery Models Pilot Project, March 1996.

Areas Grid covers the management responsibilities of the child care administrator. The latter identifies the practice areas for which the administrator is responsible as systems, policy, services /programs /practice, legal /professional sanctions, planning and finances. She is responsible for these practice areas in the relationship areas of: people- staff, families and the licensed operator (owners/boards); and places -facility and community. The grid format visually emphasizes the reality of the cc administrator's role and the interrelationship amongst the practice areas and the people and places it addresses. It illustrates the multifaceted aspect of the child care administrator's role.

Practice

- Child Care Administrator Work Description
- Practice component to the child care core of knowledge for the child care administrator
- Credentialing the child care administrators practice through a certification/evaluation process.

Model:

In the model, the child care administrators practice is credentialed through a certification /evaluation process. The Child Care Administrator Work Description forms the basis for defining the practice component to the child care administrator core of knowledge. This Work Description forms the basis for evaluation of the child care administrator's practice by the child care profession through a certification of practice process.

2. Education / Theory Standards:

The multi disciplinary aspect of the role of the child care administrator presents challenges to post secondary Early Childhood Programs in their provision of a child care administrator program. Other than facilitating curriculum and staff development, the theory or education which addresses the "why" of the child care administrator's practice is not always related to early childhood education. In addition to ECE foundations, this requires theoretical foundations in management areas such as organizational behaviour, human resources, finances, marketing, information systems, quality assurance, physical plant, and strategic planning. It requires theoretical foundations and skills in such areas as social work, communications, group process, change, and community development.

The background paper and questionnaire which provided information for this paper was sent to thirty post secondary early childhood education programs indicated as having an

administrator credential program¹⁷. Responses were received from seventeen programs, four did not offer a child care administrator credential, one was a pilot and one was proposed. The responses may or may not be representative of child care administrator post secondary education credentialing. In addition to the ambiguity regarding representative-ness, the information regarding course content varied, and the analysis of perceived gaps is affected by the descriptions or lack of same. Within these limitations, Table 1 summarizes the results of an examination of the programs offered as compared to the Child Care Administrator Work Description (Appendix A).

Table 1: The course content of a sample of post secondary child care administrator programs compared with the child care administrator work description (Appendix A)

	Systems	Policy	Services/ Programs	Legal/Pro- fessional Sanctions	Planning	Finances	Overall
Staff	11/11 (100%)	11/11 (100%)	11/11 (100%)	10/11 (91%)	10/11 (91%)	11/11 (100%)	97%
Families	10/11 (91%)	9/11 (82%)	9/11 (82%)	8/11 (73%)	9/11 (82%)	11/11 (100%)	85%
Licensed Operator (Owners/ Boards)	8/11 (73%)	8/11 (73%)	8/11 (73%)	8/11 (73%)	9/11 (82%)	11/11 (100%)	79%
Facility	7/11 (64%)	6/11 (55%)	7/11 (64%)	6/11 (55%)	7/11 (64%)	11/11 (100%)	67%
Community	10/11 (91%)	9/11 (82%)	10/11 (91%)	10/11 (91%)	10/11 (91%)	11/11 (100%)	91%
Overall	84%	78%	82%	76%	82%	100%	

Current:

A Sample of Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Programs offering a Child Care Administrator Credential

Overall, the management areas grid is well covered by the programs in the sample. The weakest area seems to be facilities, and that is not really weak since it seems to be covered in 67% of the programs.

- Relationships areas covered: staff in 97% of the ECE programs; community in 91%;

¹⁷. Canadian Child Care Federation. *Directory*, Ottawa: CCCF, 1995.

families in 85%; licensed operator (owners /boards) in 79%; and facility in 67%.

- Practice areas covered: finances in 100% of the ECE programs; systems in 84%; planning in 82%; services/programs in 82%; policy in 78%; and legal/professional sanctions in 76%.

Appendix B is a review of each of the responding programs that had a child care administrator credential proposed or as part of their ECE program. It gives the name of the program, entry qualifications, courses offered and a comparison of the course to the Child Care Administrator Work Description.

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In Process:

***Quebec- Développement Professionnel et Gestion Éducative
(Professional Development and Educational Management)***

Camille Garièpy and Natalie Lamarche of CÉGEP of Saint-Jérôme have developed a self study program for child care administrators which uses a video, training manual and educational diary. Child care administrators are able to incorporate their learning into their work, adapting the materials to their work and learning style. She can proceed at her own pace within the context of her work and personal life. To address the isolation administrator's express, plans are being made to develop child care administrator study groups made up of directors involved in the self study process. Steps are being taken to have the program accredited.

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Current- United States:

Professional Credential for Child Care Administrators

The Professional Credential for Child Care Administrators is awarded by The Registry, Wisconsin's early childhood professional recognition system. The credential was developed in collaboration with the Wisconsin Professional Development Initiative, the Wheelock College Partners In Change Program and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. It is an 18-credit certification with courses in Organizing and Operating a Child Care Centre, Financial Management and Planning Operations Management and other topics.

Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Programs

- Core course content for the child care
- Administrator
- Education / theory component to the child care core of knowledge for child care administrators
- Education credential for child care administrators

MODEL:

In the Model, through their core course content for child care administrators, post secondary Early Childhood Education Programs credential the theoretical core of knowledge that a child care administrator must possess in order to receive a child care administrator education credential.

3. Collaboration of Theory and Practice

Practitioners and training institutions are partners in constructing the child care core of knowledge through consultation, collaboration and interaction. This interactive process between theory and practice is facilitated with formalized vehicles and structures in place to promote collaboration. This kind of collaboration demonstrates Vander Ven's point of :

*" Knowledge generated in practice needs to be recorded and processed; theory needs to be tested in the direct setting of service ."*¹⁸

The formalized collaboration provides a means to identify the practitioner's needs, competencies required for practice, and priorities for research. Training institutions then combine these needs and priorities with theory and apply them to their programs and research.¹⁹ Child care practice provides sites and expertise in research into the application of theory, insight to areas for research, and validation of course content for child care administrator programs. The benefits to this interface are recognition, appreciation and collegiality for ECE instructors and for practitioners.

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Current- Alberta:

Alberta's Grant MacEwan Community College is a competency based program. As part of the evaluation process for their Early Childhood Administrator program, an

¹⁸. Vander Ven, K., " *Professional Development: a Contextual Model*" in Johnson, J. & McCracken J.B., editors, The Early Childhood Career Lattice, Perspectives on Professional Development, Washington: NAEYC, 1994.

¹⁹. Costley, J. B., *Career Development Systems in Early Childhood Education: A Planning Approach*, Boston: Centre for Career Development in Early Care and Education, 1991.

Occupational Analysis Validation Survey ²⁰involving child care administrators was conducted resulting in the identification and verification of the competencies addressed in their Early Childhood Administrator Program.

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Current- Manitoba :

The Child Care Education Program Approval Committee is the body which approves post secondary Early Childhood Education Programs in Manitoba. Members of the committee include representatives of the Manitoba Child Care Association, the post secondary Early Childhood Education Program community and licensers from Manitoba Day Care. The committee has drafted the " Manitoba Child Care Competency Standards for Directors in Centre Based Programs".

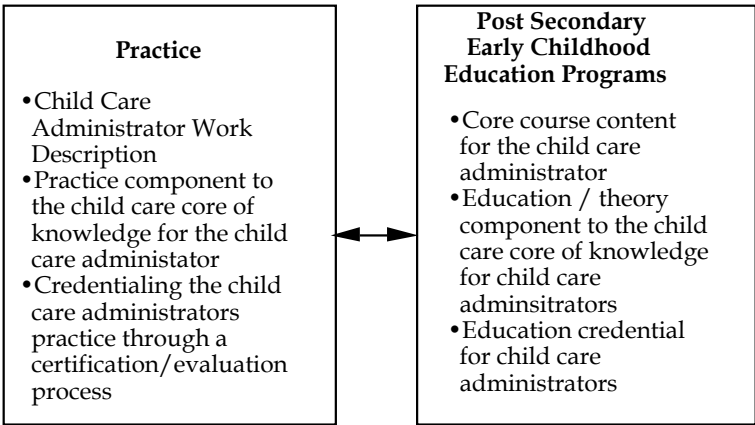
.....

Current- Ontario

ECE Program Coordinators of Ontario Community Colleges collaborated on the a post diploma program for child care supervision and administration. Consultations with child care practitioners was a part of that process. In addition, for the program to be implemented at a college, it would have to go through the Program Advisory Committee of that college. Members of the Program Advisory Committees are representative of the community.

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²⁰. Grant MacEwan Community College, *Early Childhood Administrator: Occupational Analysis Survey Results, 1992*, Edmonton: EMCC, 1992



MODEL:
 In the model, ECE Programs collaborate with the practice to determine what education is relevant for the role of the child care administrator. Practice collaborates with ECE Programs to identify and test theory and research for its application to the context of the child care administrator's role.

B. LICENSING

The regulated minimum credentialing requirements for staff in licensed child care centres are contained in a child care facilities act in the provinces/territories. Regulated certification/classification is a vehicle exercised by the government through a facilities act to ensure that the minimum staff credentials are being met by the centres in order for that centre to have a license to operate a child care program (facility).

Four provinces (Ontario, British Columbia, Newfoundland & Labrador and Nova Scotia) are taking steps toward legislative recognition of child care as a profession. This recognition would establish a second act, overseen by a child care professional licensing body. This body would credential and regulate the practice. This second act would put the authority to license individual practitioners in the hands of the practitioners themselves through their professional licensing body. With this authority would come the responsibility for the child care professional licensing body to ensure integrity and honest best practices on the part of all child care professionals.

1. Licensing of Practitioners

A key action toward professional recognition of child care is the establishment of a Child Care Practitioners Act and Regulations overseen by a child care profession licensing body. This Act licenses the individual child care practitioner, and in doing so ensures that her practice is ethical, honest, and has integrity. This Act establishes authority for child care practice. With that authority comes responsibility and accountability to society and to all members of the child care profession for the enforcement of practice standards.

To be licensed, education and practice credentials of individual child care practitioners are assessed. That assessment is compared to a career structure and the requirements for classifications within that career structure. A classification is assigned and the child care practitioners name and classification is recorded in a registry.

Current:

Child care is not recognized as a profession in any province or territory in Canada. Four provinces, Ontario, British Columbia, Newfoundland & Labrador and Nova Scotia are working toward legislative recognition of child care as a profession.

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In Process:

British Columbia:

Historically, child care programs in British Columbia tended to be small operations, with some larger operations developed after 1980. Administration tasks in child care centres were primarily managed by the licensed operator. As a result, the position of child care administrator is not recognized in the Facilities Act.

Currently in British Columbia, child care practitioners are certified in terms of meeting the minimum requirements for licensing a child care program under the Community Care Facility Act, Child Care Regulation (1995). Certification can be as an early childhood educator, special needs early childhood educator and infant and toddler educator, but not as a child care administrator.

British Columbia child care is taking steps to establish professional recognition of child care with a regulatory college under the Health Professions Act. At this point, the classifications that are designated in the facilities act will be transferred to this licensing body (college) and a child care administrator classification may also be included.

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In Process:

Ontario:

The Association of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario began investigating possible models for professional recognition.²¹ The model²² which came out of that investigation creates a regulatory body that would:

- Set entry standards for the profession,(levels of knowledge, experience and qualifications for all Early Childhood Educators), established requirements to be

²¹. Funding for this investigation was through the Child Care Initiatives Fund of Human Resources Development Canada.

²². Sterns, K. *Legislative Recognition for Early Childhood Educators: What Does It Mean ?*, Toronto: AECE,O, 1996.

fulfilled by graduates and could take the form of additional field practice, a personal profile, an exam or a combination of these;

- Establish registering procedures for all Early Childhood Educators;
- Create standards of practice (principles that describe day-to-day conduct to practice safely and effectively) and a code of ethics for the profession (already in place), outlines ethical practice;
- Establish an accountability process to deal with "unprofessional" conduct;
- Set continuing competence requirements or professional development necessary to maintain registered status.

In this model, there is not a classification for child care administrator.

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In Process: Nova Scotia:

In 1995, the Child Care Professional Association Development Society of Nova Scotia was formed with the primary goal to obtain professional recognition for child care. An ambitious work plan was set out which included, among other vehicles and structures necessary for professional recognition, the development of a career structure, the basis for a classification system and registry. The career structure will continue to develop with ongoing input and feedback from the members of the association.

Included in the career structure are two classifications related to the child care administrator: Child Care Supervisor and Child Care Administrator. These two classifications are still in draft form, with the core content of the appropriate education being determined.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Child Care Professional Licensing Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Registry- Classification of child care administrator•Credentialing the Child Care Core of Knowledge (education & practice)•Licensing of individual practitioners

MODEL:

In the model, the authority to certify/classify the child care administrator rests with the child care professional licensing body. A registry includes a classification system based on a career structure. One classification within that structure is the child care administrator. Based on the certification of education and practice components to the core of knowledge, the child care administrator is credentialed by the child care professional licensing body, ensuring that she demonstrates integrity and honest best practices in her role as a child care administrator. Child care professional licensing bodies²³ license child care practitioners through the administration of a child care practitioners act.

2.Licensing of Child Care Programs

²³. This body may be a college (proposed in British Columbia) , a professional association (proposed in Ontario & Nova Scotia) or another structure.

Facilities Acts²⁴ license and regulate child care programs and hold the licensed operator accountable that the minimum standards found in the act and regulations are met. The licensing process may include health, fire and safety inspections by relevant government departments. These inspections apply minimal standards, considered adequate by the licensing body to legally operate a child care centre. The act and regulations apply to the facility and the program. It includes sections relevant to the minimum required training of practitioners. Licensing provides the general public or "the state" and families using the licensed centre, assurance that these minimum standards are being met. Relative to the child care administrator, the child care facilities act of a province stipulates the minimum standards that must be met for the individual in the position of child care administrator of the centre, in order for that centre to be licensed.²⁵

Current :

Summary of Appendix C: Minimum Licensing Credentials for the Child Care Administrator in Canada:

Following is a summary of the minimum standards necessary for a child care administrator of a group child care program in order for that centre to be licensed according to the facilities acts of each of the provinces and territories. It should be noted, that in those provinces which do not separate the child care administrator position from other staff positions, the minimum requirements for all staff are given.

- Five out of the twelve provinces/territories, gave no distinction between teaching and administration staff positions (North West Territories, Yukon, British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Quebec).
- Minimum age to work in a child care centre was not specified in five provinces/territories (Yukon, New Brunswick, Ontario, Newfoundland & Labrador, and Quebec), in those remaining the minimum age ranged from 18 in Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, and Alberta, to 19 in North West Territories, British Columbia and Nova Scotia.
- A First Aid Certificate was required in all provinces and territories except Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.
- A medical was required by all provinces / territories except Prince Edward Island, Alberta, Manitoba, and Quebec.
- Licensing certification exists in Prince Edward Island (Supervisor's Certificate), Alberta (program director, level 3), Manitoba (CCVIII). Of these, only Prince Edward Island has a classification for the administrator. Administrator qualifications are primarily related to a

²⁴. This act goes by various names depending on what province or territory is being discussed.

²⁵. Ferguson, E. Elaine, *Child Care... Becoming Visible...* Halifax: CHILD CARE CONNECTION-NS, 1995

designation which is for the teacher. In Manitoba for instance, while an administrator must hold a CCWIII certification, that person could have been certified as a CCWIII when their post diploma education has been in infant care and not necessarily in administration of programs.

- An Early Childhood Education credential is required of staff to meet the definition of "trained" in the Act of all provinces except Yukon, New Brunswick and the North West Territories.
- Administration courses were not required in any province or territory. Experience was required in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador and Ontario.
- Personal characteristics were stated by Yukon and New Brunswick, related to all staff in the centre and in Newfoundland and Labrador, the position of child care administrator requires references.
- Criminal Checks are required by all staff in Yukon, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador and British Columbia, and in Nova Scotia a child abuse registry check is required.

FACILITIES LICENSING

Minimum standards for the position of child care administrator in order for the child care centre to be licensed relate to the classification designated as appropriate for a child care administrator by the professional licensing body.

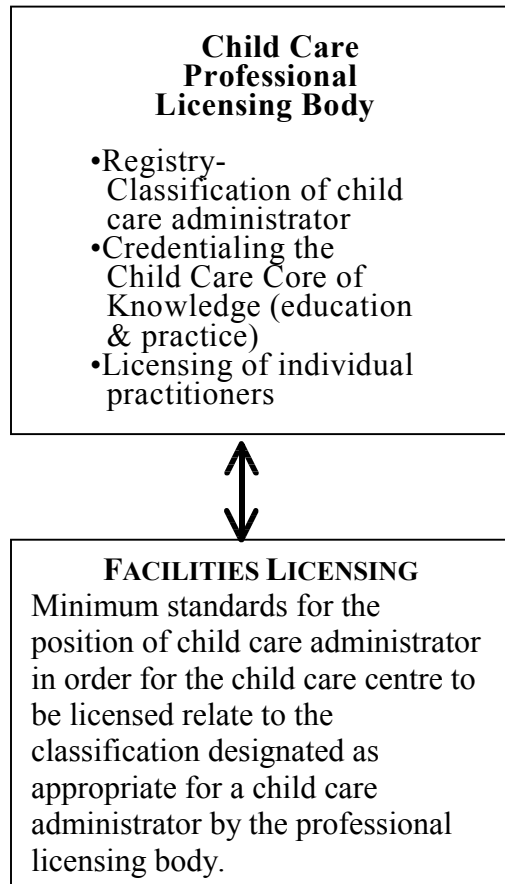
MODEL:

In the model, minimum standards for the position of child care administrator in a facilities act relate to the classification required for the position, not the standards within that classification as determined by the child care profession licensing body. For example, the Facilities Act and regulations might state that in a child care program where there twelve teaching staff, there should be one person classified at a child care administrator level who is responsible for managing the areas of systems, policies, services/programs, standards, planning and finances as they relate to the staff, families, community, facility and licensed operator (owners & boards).

3. Shared Authority For Licensing;:

Child care professional licensing bodies and facilities licensing bodies share authority in ensuring that minimum requirements are met in the delivery of a child care service. A child care professional licensing body ensures that in order for her to practice, each individual licensed child care administrator meets a set of education and practice standards for her classification. A facilities licensing body ensures that amongst other minimum requirements to deliver a child care service, the child care administrator meets minimum requirements to practice as a child care administrator. The child care professional licensing body is not a replacement for facilities regulation. Within each classification, through licensing, the professional licensing body ensures integrity and honest best practices amongst its individual licensed members, while in facilities

licensing the minimum requirements for the staff of a centre is only one of many other minimum requirements that have to be met in order to operate a child care facility and service. The child care professional licensing body licenses the individual, and the facilities licensing body licenses the facility and service.



MODEL:

In the model, licensing authority is shared, with the child care professional licensing body licensing the individual child care administrator, and the facilities licensing body licensing the child care service.

SECTION III: "POSSIBILITIES AND REALITIES FOR STANDARDIZATION OF CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATOR CREDENTIALING"

Visibility is key to gaining recognition, respect and equitable compensation for the child care administrator, and for all other positions in child care practice. By implementing the child care administrator credentialing model, the child care administrator's practice can become visible, accountable, recognized, respected and supported.

To make child care administrator credentialing a reality, there are key considerations that must be addressed in implementing the model. These are:

Professional Infrastructure

- The child care administrator credentialing model will only be effective when it operates within a child care professional infrastructure;

Consensus:

- The implementation of the child care administrator credentialing model on a national level, and in some cases, on a provincial/territorial level, is dependent on the consensus of a diverse number of stakeholders in child care.

Standards:

- Standards within the child care administrator credentialing model have to reflect the values and context of the child care sector in each province/ territory;

Prerequisite and Requisite Qualifications for the Child Care Administrator :

- The broad range of skills, knowledge and abilities required to be an effective child care administrator presents a challenge: in determining pre-requisite qualifications and curricula for child care administrator ECE programs; and in identifying the requisite qualifications for a child care administrator to practice.

Self Monitoring of the Profession:

- Proceeding with the implementation of the child care administrator credentialing model must be prudent so as to not imply that the responsibility for regulation of child care services by government through a facilities act is diminished by instituting a self monitoring vehicle by the profession.

Professional Infrastructure:

- *The model will only be effective when it operates within a child care professional infrastructure.*

For the model to be effective, it requires that it must operate within the context of a child care profession. Figure 2, a "Model for a Professional Child Care Delivery System In Nova Scotia"²⁶, outlines the functions of a profession and gives examples of vehicles and structures for professional recognition and accountability. The vehicles and structures that are in place, in process and to be developed for Nova Scotia are indicated.

FIGURE 2: MODEL FOR A PROFESSIONAL CHILD CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM IN NOVA SCOTIA

	FUNCTIONS OF A PROFESSION	OF DAILY PRACTICE	OF INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT TO PRACTICE
Credentialing	MANAGERS •Responsibility to guide the operation	•Child Care Professionals (teachers, supervisors, specialist, administrators, trainers & consultants)	•Licensed child care centre operators, (owners & boards of directors)
	LICENSURE •Granting of licenses	• <i>Nova Scotia Child Care Professional Act and Regulations</i>	•Nova Scotia Day Care Act & Regulations (1989)
	CLASSIFICATION •Core of knowledge •Career structure	•Registry of child care professionals	•Post Secondary Early Childhood Education Training Institutions
	EVALUATION •Self-monitoring •Continuous learning	•Early Childhood Certification	• <i>Child Care Centre Accreditation</i>
	DISCIPLINE •Self-monitoring •Honest best practices	• Code of Ethics for Child Care Professionals • Ethics Committee • Application of Ethics Training	• <i>Code of Ethics for Licensed Child Care Centre Operators</i>
	SUPPORT/ADVOCACY •public education promotion of the profession •advocate on behalf of children & families •impact social and political policy •advocate on behalf of child care professionals •supports & services to child care professionals	•Regional/special Interest Child Care Support Groups/ Associations/ Societies/Unions	• Federal and Provincial Child Care Organizations

Key: Cells that are in italic are in process or to be developed in Nova Scotia (1994).

²⁶. Ferguson, E. E., *Child Care... Becoming Visible...* Halifax: CCC-NS, 1995. This model was developed as part of CCCNS' three year professional project funded through Child Care Programs of Human Resources Development Canada, Halifax: CCC-NS, 1995

Credentialing the child care administrator, the subject of this paper, includes the profession's functions of licensing, evaluation and classification. These three functions as they relate to the child care administrator are discussed at length in previous sections of this paper. There are other vehicles and structures that also have to be in place for the delivery system model (Figure 2) to be implemented.

These are:

- A vehicle for discipline within the practice:

There have to be tools, processes and training to ensure that child care practice is ethical, honest and has integrity. They include:

- processes to address breaches in ethical practice with decision making guidelines;
- processes to assist members in making ethical decisions;
- a code of ethics and an ethical decision making model to provide consistency in the application of ethics; and
- accessible and affordable training in the application of ethics for members.

- A means to support and advocate on behalf of members of the profession and its clients:

This means has to include a vehicle that coordinates the infrastructure that performs the functions of the profession - licensing, classification, promotion, communication amongst members and with society, discipline and evaluation. It may be one organization or collaborating organizations, however, all these functions have to be coordinated for the profession.

A child care profession infrastructure does not exist in any province or territory in Canada. The child care delivery model (Figure 2) provides a framework for such an infrastructure that can be customized to reflect each province/territory's unique context. The child care administrator credentialing model (Figure 1) is a key component of the child care delivery system model (Figure 2).

Recommendation:

- It is recommended that the child care administrator credentialing model (Figure 1) be tested. Because of the relatively undeveloped aspect of the child care administrator position in child care practice, there is an opportunity to test the child care administrator credentialing model on a provincial/territorial level. Upon testing the model, the opportunity to generalize the model to other positions in child care is possible. As part of this testing, the profession's infrastructure can be assessed, gaps identified, and strategic plans made for addressing those gaps within each provincial/territorial context.

Consensus:

- *The implementation of the child care administrator credentialing model on a national level, and in some cases, on a provincial/territorial level, is dependent on the consensus of a diverse number of stakeholders in child care.*

Child care in Canada is just now being identified as a sector.²⁷ Historically, the practitioners and where they practice have not been separated when discussions regarding standards and quality have taken place. The individual is credentialed wherever she practices and even if she does not practice at all. It is inappropriate to consider place issues such as auspice and regulated child care when professional standards are discussed. Where the child care administrator works will affect her practice, but will not determine whether or not she is qualified as a child care administrator. Nevertheless, the reality of these diverse issues is that they will affect the implementation of the child care administrator credentialing model both at the national and provincial/territorial levels.

In some provinces, as a result of these issues and others, more than one child care organization has been established.²⁸ Many of these organizations represent regional and special child care interests, and such diversity will be a challenge for implementing a model for child care administrator credentialing on a provincial/territorial level. As well, in some provinces/territories collaboration between post secondary ECE programs and between ECE programs and practice will be equally challenging in determining standards for education and practice.

Within each province/territory, priorities for child care organization(s) and child care will vary, and the implementation of a child care administrator credentialing model may/ may not be a high priority. As it is, it is a model that has not been tested, and testing is important prior to implementation. Interest and importance will increase when there is an actual working application of the model in place.

Recommendation:

- It is recommended that a pilot of the child care administrator credentialing model be conducted, to refine the model, develop systems, and explore its application within provincial/territorial contexts.

²⁷. The Sector Study of Canadian Child Care will be reporting its findings this year (1997).

²⁸. In Nova Scotia, there are seventeen child care organizations and four post secondary ECE Programs.

Standards:

- *Standards within the model have to reflect the values and context of the child care sector in each province/ territory.*

The child care administrator credentialing model (Figure 1) is a model of the process for credentialing, with some elements currently in existence in some provinces/territories, some in process and some to be developed. It is a model for standardization.

The standards are in process. It would not be possible nor desirable to have mass national standardization at this point in time. Defining child care as a sector is in the embryonic stage and research regarding standards is minimal. Without being established as a profession in the provinces/territories, it will be impossible to develop national standards.

The model provides a starting point to develop standards of practice within provincial/territorial contexts. The establishment of a certification of practice vehicle with a built in data collection component can provide data to be analyzed when a valid and reliable sample is obtained. The child care administrator work description provides the criteria to collect data regarding the quality of standards. The criteria (child care administrator work description) allows for comparison amongst the provinces/territories, while not dictating provincial and territorial priorities.

Recommendations:

- Build a model for the *certification of child care administrator practice* that includes a data collection component used to establish a sample for identifying valid and reliable standards.
- Pilot this child care administrator certification of practice model to test its application to provincial/territorial contexts.

Prerequisite and Requisite Qualifications for the Child Care Administrator:

- *The broad range of skills, knowledge and abilities required to be an effective child care administrator presents a challenge: in determining pre-requisite qualifications and curricula for child care administrator ECE programs; and in identifying the requisite qualifications for a child care administrator to practice.*

How does a child care administrator become a child care administrator? Are the skills, knowledge, and abilities exclusive to early childhood? Should she have "on-the-floor" practice experience? Should she be evaluated by peers and certified as a child care teacher before she moves into a child care administrator role?

What precedes the Child Care Administrator credential? If ECE, what should they have, if not, what should they have? Is Early Childhood Education a pre-requisite? What child care administrator curricula belong in pre certificate/diploma/degree ECE programs? What curricula belong in post certificate/diploma/degree programs for the child care administrator?

This paper describes a model to standardize child care administrator credentialing in Canada. In the development of the paper, respondents and reviewers raised questions similar to those in the previous paragraph. The Child Care Administrator Work Description, (Appendix A) in its Job Specifications section²⁹ proposes requisite qualifications, however, consultation on those proposed will have to be made within each province/territory to establish what requisite qualifications are necessary for a child care administrator in their province/territory. Prerequisite qualifications for entering a post secondary child care administrator ECE program are not within the scope of this paper. In implementing the model, child care practice and ECE programs have to address these questions within their provincial and territorial contexts.

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For example:

- When there is a demand for child care administrators, and the supply is limited, licensed operators wonder whether it is easier for an individual who is qualified as an administrator to learn the ECE part, or is it easier for someone with ECE to learn the administration part.

Looking at the management areas grid, "services/programs" is the area which requires specialized knowledge in child care, and the other areas are public administration areas, with a multidisciplinary skills set also found within the larger social services

²⁹. Appendix A, p.i.

sectors with practitioner and management layers. There are advantages to cross discipline qualifications. They provide child care practitioners with mobility to enter related disciplines. They place the child care in the community both at the education and practice level and would spread the instruction over more faculties. On the other hand, there is a danger that the authority that ECE programs have could be eroded. Having ECE and CC Practice is necessary, the question is when and where would a child care administrator receive this? The scope of this paper will not address these questions, but propose them for further study, collaboration and consultation.

- In some provinces the functions identified in the work description may be performed by more than one person. In Alberta there are two positions, the administrative director and the program director. In other provinces, the licensed operator (Owner or Board) may perform many of the functions. There is agreement that all these functions have to be performed within a child care centre, variation is related to "who" performs what functions. This would affect how the child care professional licensing body would classify the individuals. The career structure of each province/territory would reflect the common practice, and accommodate this variation.

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Recommendations:

- Provide increased professional development and education related to the Child Care Administrator Work Description, and make that training widely available to child care administrators in a variety of models including cross discipline, non credit and credit.
- That a study of related community services occupations be conducted to identify similarities and differences in the administration role in these occupations and child care. The study would also identify relevant cross discipline training opportunities for child care administrators, and pre requisite qualifications.
- Identify provincial/ territorial pre-requisite qualifications for child care administrator ECE programs and provincial/territorial learning outcomes for ECE child care administrator programs.
- Identify provincial/territorial requisite qualifications for a child care administrator to practice.

Self Monitoring:

- *Proceeding with the implementation of the model must be prudent so as to not imply that the responsibility for regulation of child care services by the government through a facilities act is diminished by instituting a self monitoring vehicle by the profession.*

Within the broad context of professional recognition, it is important that it is always clear that the licensing of individual child care practitioners is not a replacement for the licensing and regulation of child care services through a facilities act. Self monitoring through a child care practitioners act ensures society that the individual practitioner meets a set of standards determined by the profession. The responsibility to ensure to society that child care services (facilities and programs) meet a set of minimum standards rests with government licensing and regulation. Quality assurance is incomplete without the two, (practice and government) sharing authority to ensure that the program and those who deliver the program meet a set of standards.

Reviewers of the draft paper expressed concern regarding deregulation, and the downloading of responsibility for quality assurance in the delivery of child care to child care practice alone. The child care administrator credentialing model emphasizes that licensing authority and responsibility is shared: the child care profession licenses the individual practitioner; and provincial/territorial governments license the facilities and services. With the authority shared, families and the community can be assured that the people who care for and about their child(ren) are credentialed, and the facility is safe and stimulating. Licensing the individual child care practitioner is in no way a replacement for facilities licensing and regulation, it is shared authority between government and child care practice.

Recommendation:

- In actions toward legislative recognition of child care, it is crucial that prudence is practiced in establishing authority. Authority is shared amongst practice and government for quality assurance standards in both practice and services.
- It is crucial that legislative recognition not proceed in isolation of the development of a complete system with vehicles and structures to address the necessary functions of a profession and a child care profession body to co-ordinate that system.

Conclusion:

In her multifaceted role, the child care administrator performs a complex task in the provision of a quality child care service. By implementing a national child care administrator credentialing model, she will be recognized, respected and supported by her practice peers, her ECE program colleagues and her service's government licensing body.

- Her expertise is recognized, respected and supported in the identification of the skills, knowledge and abilities within the child care administrator core of knowledge, a task shared between child care practice and ECE Programs.
- She is recognized, respected and supported by her child care peers and colleagues in the classification and licensing of the individual child care administrator.
- Her requisite qualifications are recognized, respected and supported in the regulation and licensing of the child care facility by the government licensing body.

Child Care Administrator credentialing in Canada is a work in progress. That work can contribute significantly to the establishment of standards for quality child care services throughout Canada. Carl Jung said that collective change comes from individual change. Each person in the child care sector working in their own context can affect the standardization of child care administrator credentialing. This model for standardization of child care administrator credentialing outlines a system that allows for the development of standards within unique provincial/territorial contexts. It is transferable to other child care work positions. It shares authority for credentialing the child care administrator amongst practice, ECE programs and government facilities licensing. It identifies key actions that must be considered for the model to be implemented successfully. The model is a starting point in making the child care administrator visible, recognized and respected for the work she does in her provision of child care services.

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APPENDICES
(ATTACHED IN SEPARATE PDF DOCUMENTS)

Appendix A:
Child Care Administrator Work Description.

Appendix B:
A Sample of Post Secondary Child Care Administrator Programs Compare with
the Child Care Administrator Work Description.

Appendix C:
Minimum Facilities Licensing and Regulation Credentials
for Child Care Administrators In Canada.