



COLLEGE OF  
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES  
OF ALBERTA

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# STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES ON THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

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College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta  
13163 146 Street NW Edmonton, Alberta T5L 4S8 CANADA  
Phone: 780-484-8886  
Toll Free: 800-661-5877  
Fax: 780-484-9069  
[info@clpna.com](mailto:info@clpna.com)  
[www.clpna.com](http://www.clpna.com)



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## INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) has the authority under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and govern its regulated members (**registrants**)\* in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. This underpins the CLPNA's commitment to outline key expectations of the profession and provide guidance to **licensed practical nurses (LPNs)** to meet these expectations in all areas of practical nursing.

Schedule 10 of the HPA defines the practice of practical nursing. It encompasses both direct clinical care and roles that are linked to administration, management, education, and research.

Section 3 of Schedule 10 to the *Health Professions Act* states:

**Practice**

3 In their practice, licensed practical nurses do one or more of the following:

- (a) apply nursing knowledge, skills and judgment to assess patients' needs,
- (b) provide nursing care for patients and families,
- (b.1) teach, manage and conduct research in the science, techniques and practice of nursing, and
- (c) provide restricted activities authorized by the regulations.

LPNs provide a wide range of **professional nursing services** to individuals, families, and groups.

Part 3 of the HPA outlines the requirements for regulatory colleges to establish a continuing competence program (CCP) for registrants. Section 50(2)(a) of the HPA outlines that the purpose of a CCP is to maintain **competence** of registrants and to enhance the provision of professional services.

Standards of practice are part of the overall regulatory framework that governs the LPN profession in Alberta. Standards of practice provide the minimum standard of behaviour that LPNs are expected to meet in their nursing practice and are enforceable under the HPA. Performance below the minimum standard and failure to comply with the requirements for the CCP could be determined as unprofessional conduct and result in disciplinary action and an application for renewal of the practice permit may be denied or a practice permit may be suspended.

This Standards of Practice outlines the broad structure and requirements for the CCP. For guidance on complying with this Standard, registrants should consult the *CLPNA Continuing Competence Program Guide* (CCP Guide) that details specific program requirements.

\* "Registrant" in this standard of practice has the same meaning as "regulated member" in the *Health Professions Act*.



All registrants registered on the general register must participate in the CCP established under this Standard of Practice.

Terms found in the glossary are **bolded** where they appear for the first time in this document.

## STANDARD 1: CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

An LPN is required under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* to demonstrate a commitment to continuing competence by participating in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) established by their regulatory college.

- 1.1 For the purposes of section 50 of the HPA, a continuing competence program of the CLPNA is established.
  - 1.1.1 The requirements of the CCP are those set out in this standard.
  - 1.1.2 Standard 1.1.1 does not limit the power of the Registrar to issue guidance to registrants detailing specific program requirements.
  - 1.1.3 The Registrar's powers may be delegated to the Competence Committee.
- 1.2 A registrant on the general register must complete the CCP on an annual basis.
- 1.3 If requested by the Registrar, a registrant must submit the documents outlined in standard 1.4 in a manner and form satisfactory to the Registrar.
- 1.4 To complete the CCP, a registrant must annually prepare the following documents:
  - 1.4.1 a self assessment based on standards of practice indicating continuing competence activities to be undertaken for the next registration year;
  - 1.4.2 a learning plan that states the continuing competence goals for the next registration year; and
  - 1.4.3 evidence of continuing competence activities, including:
    - (a) a list of self-directed learning undertaken during the past registration year;
    - (b) completion of any mandatory education directed by Council; and
    - (c) a minimum of 1000 practice hours during the previous 4 registration years or other equivalent practice experience.
- 1.5 For the purpose of standard 1.4.3(c), "other equivalent practice experience" means any of the following completed during the previous 4 registration years:
  - 1.5.1 graduation from a practical nurse diploma program or refresher program approved by Council;



- 1.5.2 graduation from a program deemed substantially equivalent by the Registrar to a program in standard 1.5.1; or
- 1.5.3 passing a **clinical examination** approved by Council.

1.6 A registrant must retain copies of the evidence of their compliance with the CCP, including copies of any self assessment or learning plan, for at least the 4 registration years prior to the current registration year.

## **STANDARD 2: COMPLIANCE TO CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM AUDIT**

**Registrants will be periodically selected for a program audit of the registrant's compliance with the CCP.**

- 2.1 The Registrar may select registrants for a program audit.
  - 2.1.1 A program audit evaluates and reviews a registrant's compliance with the CCP.
  - 2.1.2 The Registrar's powers to conduct an audit may be delegated to the Competence Committee.
- 2.2 If requested by the Registrar, a registrant selected for a program audit must:
  - 2.2.1 submit evidence respecting the registrant's compliance with the CCP; and
  - 2.2.2 answer questions from the Registrar respecting the registrant's compliance with the CCP.
- 2.3 Following the completion of a program audit, a registrant must comply with any remedial requirements directed by the Registrar, including submitting evidence of having undertaken additional continuing competence activities.
  - 2.3.1 Remedial requirements must be completed within a period of time specified by the Registrar and at the registrant's own cost.
  - 2.3.2 Remedial requirements may include:
    - (a) completing specific CCP requirements;
    - (b) completing additional learning activities;
    - (c) providing evidence of continued learning and competence;
    - (d) answering questions respecting continued learning and competence;
    - (e) submitting to a periodic review and evaluation by the Registrar;
    - (f) reporting to the Registrar on specified matters related to the CCP; and
    - (g) any other remedial requirements the Registrar considers appropriate.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary explains some of the terms used in the *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on the Continuing Competence Program*:

**Clinical examination:** An evaluation of a registrant's competence to perform the skills of an LPN in a simulated clinical setting.

**Competence:** The ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, behaviours, judgments, and personal attributes required to practise safely and ethically in a designated role and setting. Personal attributes include, but are not limited to, attitudes, values, and beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

**Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN):** A person registered, as a registrant, on one of the register categories at the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta outlined in the *Licensed Practical Nurses Profession Regulation*.<sup>2</sup>

**Professional Nursing Services:** A professional service as defined in the HPA means a service that comes within the practice of a regulated profession and for LPNs includes the application of nursing knowledge, skills, and judgment to assess patients' needs and the provision of nursing care for patients and families.<sup>3</sup>

**Registrant or Regulated Member:** A person who is registered as a regulated member under section 33(1)(a) of the HPA is a registrant of the CLPNA. An LPN is considered a registrant with the CLPNA.<sup>4</sup>

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Council for Practical Nurse Regulators (CCPNR), *Entry-Level Competencies for Licensed Practical Nurses* (2019), [Practice & Policy - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta \(clpna.com\).](http://Practice & Policy - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (clpna.com).)

<sup>2</sup> College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA), *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on Restricted Activities, Advanced Practice, and Supervision* (2023), [Standards & Code - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta \(clpna.com\).](http://Standards & Code - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (clpna.com).)

<sup>3</sup> *Health Professions Act*, s 1(1)(ff); CLPNA, *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on Boundary Violations* (2023), [Standards & Code - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta \(clpna.com\).](http://Standards & Code - College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (clpna.com).)

<sup>4</sup> *Health Professions Act*, s 1(1)(ll),