Data and Research

Effective: February 2, 2026

INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides of Alberta (CLHA) has the authority under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and govern the practice of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)[*] in a manner that protects and serves the public interest.

The CLHA protects any data (including the personal data of LPNs and HCAs) that it holds and manages it in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and other applicable laws. Data managed by the CLHA includes information collected through an LPN's or HCA's application for registration or annual renewal of their practice permit, non-registrant application information, departmental activities (e.g., conduct processes), CLHA-led research activities, quality assurance activities, and engagement efforts such as focus groups. This can also include LPN and HCA personal data such as demographic information, employment setting and status, and years of practice.

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify when and how the CLHA may allow researchers to access and use the data managed by the CLHA for a research study. It also sets guidelines for collecting data from LPNs or HCAs for research purposes. CLHA will never share the identifying personal information of LPNs or HCAs with researchers.

This policy does not apply to cases where non-identifying data are shared with stakeholders and external organizations in reports (such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information, the Government of Alberta, etc.) and public inquiries for **aggregate information** that is readily available (for example, the number of active LPNs).

POLICY

Process

Researchers who want to access and use data managed by the CLHA or collect LPN or HCA data directly must submit a request to the Director of Performance Measurement and Research (PMR) or designate.

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[*] In this document, "registrant(s)" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*.

The PMR Director or designate evaluates the initial request (see process below) and may ask for additional information before making a final decision. Decisions are made at the discretion of the PMR Director or designate.

Research Criteria

All requests are reviewed based on the CLHA's research criteria. For example, the research must align with provincial and federal privacy legislation and relate to the CLHA's regulatory duties or registrant professional duties. These could include:

- standards and guidance;
- education and training;
- registration requirements and/or processes; and/or
- fitness to practice.

All requests are also assessed to identify the type and level of risk, along with the potential benefits of the research. Any risks found should be reasonable compared to the value of the knowledge gained and the expected benefits, such as improved and safer public care. These and other criteria are considered to determine if the request will be granted.

Types of Research Requests

Requests for data access, use, and collection by researchers fall into the following categories: non-partnered, partnered, and other.

Non-partnered Research

Non-partnered research means the CLHA has no direct involvement in the research activities and projects. For example, the CLHA does not directly collect data from LPNs or HCAs on behalf of non-partnered researchers (such as a survey) and does not provide any LPN or HCA data to the researcher. Instead, the CLHA plays a support role, such as informing LPNs and HCAs of the research using CLHA communication channels (e.g., social media, newsletter, etc.).

To do this, the researcher may be required to provide a summary of the research project for review by the PMR Director or designate. The summary will include the purpose, objectives, methodology, ethics approval, and other details as required.

If approved, the researcher will be required to provide a short description to be used in CLHA communications to notify LPNs or HCAs of the opportunity to participate in the study or other appropriate communications. An LPN or HCA may contact the non-partnered researcher directly if they are interested in participating.

Partnered Research

Partnered research means the CLHA becomes involved as a partner by providing **in-kind** and/or money to support the research activities and projects. If appropriate, the CLHA may perform different roles in partnered research, including funder, co-investigator, or advisor as defined in this policy. The CLHA may also play a different role in a research project that is not listed above. The exact role and involvement of the CLHA will be determined in collaboration with the researcher.

The researcher will be required to submit a research proposal and, if approved, sign a research agreement. The CLHA may then establish a communication channel between the LPNs/HCAs and the researcher, enabling the LPNs to contact the researcher directly for participation if they agree to do so. This then provides the researcher access to LPNs and HCAs through CLHA communication channels to collect information from these groups directly. The researcher may also access non-identifying LPN or HCA information managed by the CLHA (such as demographic data) that applies to their research.

Other Requests

CLHA staff members enrolled in an education program may request access to, use of, and/or collection of LPN or HCA data. Staff requests will be evaluated using the CLHA research criteria described above. For eligible requests, a **Memorandum of Understanding** would be signed, detailing the purposes of the request, the process for data collection if applicable, and the intended use of the data. The CLHA will not provide any LPN or HCA identifying data to a staff member for their education program request.

CONCLUSION

This policy outlines when the CLHA may permit researchers to access or use LPN or HCA data managed by the CLHA and facilitate the collection of these data for research purposes.

Documents are updated frequently. For the most current version and access to related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on clha.com.

If after reading this document you have questions, please contact the CLHA's Performance Measurement and Research Team via pmr@clha.com or 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).

DEFINITIONS

Aggregate information: information collected from many individuals that is combined and summarized to identify patterns or make comparisons without identifying the specific individuals whose information was collected. An example can be the number of LPNs currently registered with the CLHA.

In-kind: a payment or gesture provided in the form of goods or services and not money.

Memorandum of understanding (MOU): an agreement between two or more people, groups, or institutions. MOUs do not usually have legal authority but are used to document each party's expectations or intentions.[1]

REFERENCES

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[1] Harvard University. (2025). *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).* *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) | Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Research Administration*