

Artificial Intelligence Use in LPN Practice

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INTRODUCTION

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

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is impacting health professionals, their practices, and their clients. AI may be used as a tool to support decision-making during care, documentation, and other tasks. The use of AI may create ethical challenges regarding accountability, confidentiality, privacy, and client safety. LPNs are responsible for following legislation, regulations, standards of practice, the code of ethics, and employer requirements when using AI.

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

PURPOSE

This practice guideline provides LPNs with knowledge and guidance on using AI responsibly. It aims to support LPNs while maintaining client safety, privacy, and confidentiality.

DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCE

Generative Versus Predictive AI

Identifying the different types of AI allows the LPN to understand when it could be used. Two different kinds of AI need to be considered.

1. Generative AI: **algorithms** or **AI models** that use existing data to create new content, such as images, audio, video, text, or software code. Examples of generative AI include ChatGPT, CoPilot, Gemini, etc.ⁱ
2. Predictive AI: does not create new content but provides **statistical analysis** or predictions about outcomes or **trends** to aid decision-making. This type of AI is common and is being used in different technologies. An example of predictive AI is an electronic medical record that uses AI to “flag when client information is accessed in ways that appear to be inappropriate.”ⁱⁱ

* In this document, “LPN(s)” has the same meaning as “regulated member(s)” in the *Health Professions Act*.

Many software applications and programs do not inform users when AI is being applied, or what factors are considered when creating the results. This lack of transparency can lead to confusion about how AI technology may influence how decisions are made. Regardless of the technology used, LPNs are expected to continue protecting a client's right to confidentiality, privacy, and safety.

INFORMED PRACTICE

The *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* outline several responsibilities that are directly applicable to the use of AI in practice.

Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada

LPNs:

- 1.1 Practice within applicable legislation, regulations, by-laws, and employer policies.
- 1.8 Are accountable and responsible for their own practice, conduct, and ethical decision-making.
- 2.2 Integrate knowledge of trends and issues in healthcare and society into evidence-informed practice.
- 2.8 Apply the nursing process (assess, diagnose, plan, implement, and evaluate).
- 3.3 Lead and contribute to a practice culture that promotes safe, inclusive, and ethical care.
- 4.3. Advocate for the protection and promotion of clients' right to autonomy, confidentiality, dignity, privacy, respect, and access to care and personal health information.

LPNs are required to follow their standards of practice. To learn more about professional responsibility, please see the *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* and the LPN *Professional Responsibility and Accountability* policy.

Nurse-Client Relationship

AI use in healthcare is transforming patient care rapidly. This technological shift raises concerns about the depersonalization of healthcare and how the emphasis on data-driven decisions has the potential to overshadow the importance of connection, empathy, trust, and personalized care traditionally provided by humans.ⁱⁱⁱ

AI tools do not replace human decision-making or the connection between the nurse and client. LPNs make a connection with their client based on trust, respect, and empathy, and have the option of using AI to enhance the delivery of care when it is needed.

Client Safety

AI has many practical applications, including gathering information from a source, answering a question, and documenting client interactions. LPNs must follow their code of ethics, standards of practice, and employer requirements at all times, including when using AI.

LPNs are advised to inform the client of the program, device, or tool that integrates AI. It is best practice to answer any concerns the client might have about the potential impact of using AI. This will enhance transparency, collaboration, and promote the safety of their privacy and information.

If AI can't find information on a topic, it may create an incorrect response, leading to inconsistencies or errors that could harm the client.^{iv} LPNs must still interpret the results provided by AI and discard them if they are not accurate or representative of the client's condition. Healthcare decisions and the care offered or provided should always be in the client's best interests and safety.

Regardless of the technology an LPN uses, they are ultimately responsible and accountable for their decisions made while practicing, their use of AI tools, and the client's well-being.

Privacy and Confidentiality

LPNs are responsible for keeping client information private and confidential. They need to confirm if an AI tool has been approved for use by their employer, follow their employer's requirements, and report any potential privacy breaches as soon as possible.

Please see the *Confidentiality* practice guideline and the *Privacy Legislation in Alberta* interpretive document to learn more about how LPNs are to maintain client privacy and confidentiality.

Ethics

Clients have the right to be informed and make decisions about their healthcare. This includes understanding how AI may affect their care, including how their data or information is used. LPNs should strive to learn more about AI, to better explain and educate clients about the AI tools they are using.^v

Biases are an example of ethical issues that LPNs might encounter. LPNs should be aware of their own biases and the potential biases of the AI tool they are using when interpreting the results.^{vi}

Please see the *Code of Ethics for Licensed Practical Nurses* to read more about an LPN's professional values to which they are accountable.

Accountability For Use of AI

LPNs are accountable for knowing when they are using AI and being able to identify inaccurate information. LPNs should take appropriate measures to confirm AI results, how any confidential data is being stored or used, if the AI is secure, and to notify the most responsible health provider or their employer of any concerns.

LPNs “are accountable and responsible for their own practice, conduct, and ethical decision-making.”^{vii} LPNs need to use critical thinking to assess the validity and accuracy of the results.

LPNs are also accountable for getting the appropriate education and training to understand AI’s intended purpose, benefits, limitations, and risks before using it.

Clinical Notes

Accurate clinical notes help inform the client’s healthcare team of potential changes to the client’s condition and aid in decision making, which promotes client safety.

LPNs are accountable for accurate documentation and should review clinical notes or documentation that is created or assisted by AI for accuracy, while also following their employer’s requirements. Errors or mistakes in recorded information can lead to potential unprofessional conduct.

CONCLUSION

LPNs are responsible and accountable for their decisions made during practice, their use of AI, and their impact on the client’s well-being and safety. They should also be aware of their AI tools and protect client information while following applicable legislation, regulations, and employer requirements.

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 Professional Practice Team via practice@clha.com or 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).

REFERENCES

ⁱ IBM, *Generative AI vs. predictive AI: What's the difference?*, 2024, [Generative AI vs. predictive AI: What's the difference? - IBM Blog](#).

ⁱⁱ Alberta Health Services, *Frequently Asked Questions – Client*, 2024, [Connect Care Client Frequently Asked Questions | Alberta Health Services](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health, *Artificial Intelligence and the Dehumanization of Client Care*, 2024, [Artificial Intelligence and the Dehumanization of Client Care](#).

^{iv} Canadian Nurse Association, *Beyond the hype: it's time for nursing to take a close look at artificial intelligence*, Oct 2024, [Beyond the hype: it's time for nursing to take a close look at artificial intelligence](#).

^v The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Manitoba, *Advice to the profession on the responsible use of artificial intelligence in the practice of medicine*, July 2024, [Advice to the Profession on the Responsible use of Artificial Intelligence in the Practice of Medicine - The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Manitoba](#).

^{vi} College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta, *Artificial Intelligence in Generated Client Record Content*, Sept 2023, [AP Artificial-Intelligence.pdf](#).

^{vii} College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta, *Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*, 2020, [Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada - CLHA](#).