

Interprofessional Collaboration

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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 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)* in a manner that protects and serves the public interest.

The healthcare environment is becoming increasingly complex, and healthcare professionals are responsible for delivering safe, ethical, and high-quality care. They do this by understanding their roles, recognizing shared responsibilities, participating in effective communication, and working in alignment to meet client needs.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to highlight the importance of teamwork among LPNs and other health professionals. Sharing knowledge, skills, and expertise among healthcare professionals enhances client care, improves communication, reduces errors, supports client safety, and fosters strong workplace relationships.

DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCE

According to the World Health Organization, interprofessional collaboration involves health professionals working with clients, families, caregivers, and communities to provide optimal care across settings. Interprofessional collaboration strengthens the healthcare system and contributes to the delivery of high-quality, safe, person-centered care.ⁱ

Teamwork is a collaborative approach that enables healthcare professionals to communicate effectively and make informed decisions. It supports an environment where everyone's knowledge and skills come together to enhance results and ensure client safety.

LPNs collaborate with clients and healthcare team members, guided by shared goals, values, ethics, accountability, mutual respect, collaboration, and effective communication. Integrating collaboration into healthcare settings strengthens client safety and outcomes and improves the work environment.

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

INFORMED PRACTICE

LPNs are expected to understand their roles and collaborate effectively with other healthcare professionals to provide safe, high-quality care. This collaboration fosters mutual respect, strengthens communication, and supports a positive team environment.ⁱⁱ Research shows that effective teamwork improves the quality of care and client safety, strengthens health systems, and leads to better outcomes for clients.ⁱⁱⁱ

Interprofessional Collaboration Framework

The interprofessional collaboration framework below shows four core foundational competencies supported by six enabling competencies that promote collaborative practice. Together, these competencies support effective teamwork and recognize clients and families as essential partners in delivering high-quality, person-centered care.^{iv}

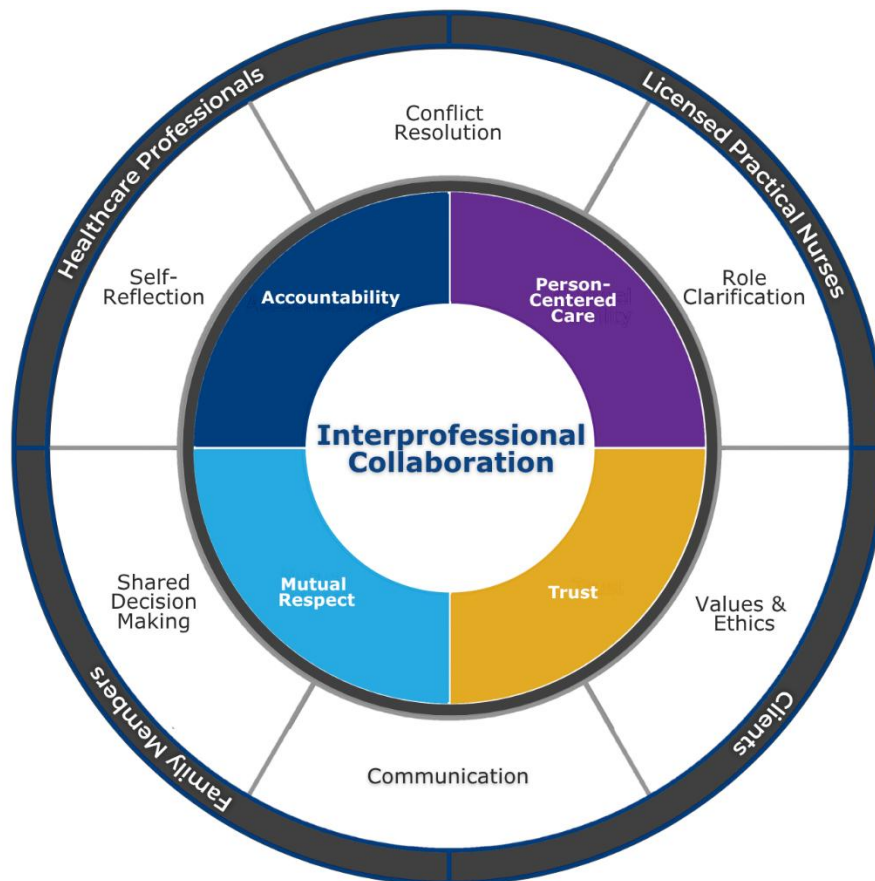


Fig. 1. Interprofessional collaboration framework



Accountability

- Take responsibility for actions taken while assessing, creating a nursing diagnosis, planning, implementing, and evaluating client care.
- Identify and address any errors or changes in the care plan.



Person-centered care

- Understand and respect each client's needs, preferences, and choices.
- Advocate for and inform the larger healthcare team of the client's wishes.
- Learn from other healthcare professionals to improve teamwork and client outcomes.



Trust

- Follow through on commitments and shared responsibilities.
- Communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully.
- Ask for help and offer support when needed.
- Respect the knowledge, skills, and contributions of other team members.



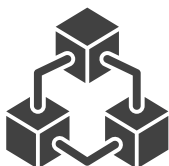
Mutual Respect

- Appreciate and respect each team member's knowledge, training, scope of practice, and experience.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated.
- Listen actively and consider the opinions of clients, family members, and health professionals.



Conflict Resolution

- Address concerns early using non-accusatory statements like "I feel" rather than "you" in a private, safe space. This helps keep conversations open and positive.
- Respect everyone's ideas and contributions.
- Work together to find solutions.



Role Clarification

- Clearly communicate your role and responsibilities and educate others where necessary.
- Maintain accountability to your professional standards, regulatory requirements, and employer practices.
- Recognize and respect the different roles, competencies, and contributions of other healthcare professionals.
- Acknowledge limits; seek help when needed.



Values & Ethics

- Respect and trust each other's roles, training, and professions.
- Create a safe space where all voices are heard.
- Consider organizational, regulatory, and personal values in discussions.



Communication

- Share clear and honest information in a timely manner.
- Identify and notify the appropriate team member who needs to receive or provide information.
- Use respectful, simple language, and avoid using medical terms when speaking with clients or families.



Shared Decision Making

- Create and follow person-centered care plans and work together on shared goals as a team of healthcare professionals.
- Contribute to shared tasks based on the team's role and scope, making decisions that benefit clients.
- Plan and make decisions together to achieve the best outcomes for clients.



Self-Reflection

- Participate in team discussions about what's going well and what can be improved.
- Reflect on your work together, share feedback, and look for ways to improve teamwork with other team members.
- Celebrate successes and give credit where it is due.
- Assess team dynamics and improve collaboration.

Benefits of Interprofessional Collaboration

- **Client satisfaction:** when health professionals collaborate effectively, clients benefit from coordinated care, clearer communication, and a more personalized experience. This leads to higher satisfaction, trust, and engagement in their own care.^v
- **Family satisfaction:** families often observe how well the care team communicates and works together. High collaboration reassures families that their loved ones are receiving safe, well-managed care, improving their overall satisfaction.^{vi}
- **Staff engagement:** when staff feel part of a cohesive and respectful team, their morale improves, and they experience higher job satisfaction. Effective collaboration helps

reduce stress, strengthen workplace relationships, and foster a positive work environment.^{vii}

- Client safety: effective collaboration among health professionals supports clear communication, timely care, fewer errors, and improves client safety.
- Quality assurance: tracking teamwork-related incidents helps identify gaps and strengthens the team dynamics to prevent future risks. This focus on safety supports the goal of improving client outcomes through continuous quality improvement.
- Efficiency: improved coordinated planning among health providers and professionals increases efficiency. Effective collaboration streamlines workflows, reduces delays, and improves client flow.
- Trust and accountability: building trust within the team is essential for shared responsibility and overall success.
- Enhance communication: teamwork promotes timely and accurate information-sharing, contributing to safer client care.^{viii}
- Promote professional development: collaborating with other healthcare professionals helps career growth, skill-building, and increases knowledge by learning from experienced team members.^{ix}

CONCLUSION

Effective teamwork among LPNs and other healthcare team members is essential for delivering safe, high-quality client care. Through collaboration, shared expertise, open communication, and mutual respect, teams improve decision-making, reduce errors, strengthen workplace relationships, and enhance client outcomes.

Continuous reflection and a commitment to learning foster trust, accountability, and professional growth, creating a safer, more responsive care environment and a stronger healthcare system.

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

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