



The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) is mandated by government to regulate the profession of Practical Nurses in a manner that serves and protects the public.

Accordingly the College develops specific practice statements relevant to the Practical Nursing profession.

The purpose of a Practice Statement is:

- ❖ To provide LPNs, employers and the public with information and clarity regarding the scope of practice for LPNs.
- ❖ To help eliminate misconceptions regarding the scope of practice for LPNs.
- ❖ To assist employers with utilizing LPNs more effectively in the health care system.

CONFIDENTIALITY

PRACTICE STATEMENT 9

Approved by Council: 11-Feb-05

Licensed Practical Nurses have an ethical and legal responsibility to maintain confidentiality of information that is obtained in the course of providing professional services.

Definition

Confidentiality - The act of keeping, in confidence, all information related to a client's physical, psychological and social health, as well as any personal information collected during the time they receive nursing services.

Guidelines

- Clients have a right to access information regarding their treatment and care.
- Relevant information may be shared with members of the health care team within the parameters of applicable Legislation.
- Confidentiality is not restricted to health information, but any information provided by the client during the relationship with the nurse.
- Confidentiality does not cease once the client is discharged, but carries on indefinitely.
- Confidentiality may not apply to information that has been made public, but nurses are advised against speaking, commenting or speculating on information concerning a client, even if this information has been released to the public.
- Exceptions apply in circumstances governed by specific Legislation. (i.e., communicable disease, child abuse).

Awareness

Nurses are often involved in situations where third parties are requesting health information, or where harm may come to others if information is or is not shared.

LPNs must be aware:

- All personal and health information must be confidential within provincial and federal laws, and the CLPNA Standards of Practice. This includes all information stored electronically.
- Clients must consent to any information given to persons outside of the appropriate health team member.
- Discussion of client information with appropriate health care team members should only take place in areas where confidentiality can be





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maintained.

- Accessing information of clients not assigned to the nurse is not appropriate.
- Accessing information that has no relevancy to the care and treatment of the client crosses the boundary of confidentiality.
- Precautions must be taken when using electronic technology to maintain confidentiality and adherence to agency policy.
- Disclosure of information indicating risk to self or others must be carried out in accordance with agency policy and applicable Legislation.

REFERENCES

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