



COLLEGE OF
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES
OF ALBERTA

COMPETENCY PROFILE

for Licensed Practical Nurses

3rd Edition - June 2015

Competency Profile for Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta

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Introduction

This Competency Profile includes the knowledge, skills, behaviors, judgments and attitudes required by a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) in Alberta as outlined in the Health Professions Act LPN Regulation 2003, and The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) Standards of Practice.

The competencies defined in the Profile may be attained by LPNs in many different ways. Entry to practice/**Basic** competencies are acquired through formal practical nurse education.

Additional competencies may be gained through informal and formal learning, experience, on-the-job training, post-basic education or certification. **Specialty** competencies are acquired through completion of approved programs and advanced certification.

Shaded areas in the Profile indicate **Additional** or **Specialty** competencies.

Competency

The competencies outlined in this document reflect the Legislated scope of practice for LPNs in Alberta. Each LPN has a set of competencies specific to their individual knowledge, experience, practice, and workplace setting. No one LPN is required to possess all competencies described in this document and the degree of proficiency in each competency will vary on an individual basis.

LPNs have the responsibility and accountability for autonomous nursing practice. However, mastery of any competency listed in this Profile does not automatically enable LPN practice of the competency.

It's important to consider a number of factors in full utilization of LPN competencies:

- Client needs – complexity, predictability, acuity of individuals and groups of clients
- Nurse Competency – individual competence and team competencies
- Environment – supports within an area to facilitate autonomous practice.

Evolution of Competencies

The Alberta Competency Profile for LPNs was initially released in 1998 with adaptations in the 2004 2nd Edition following initial proclamation of the profession under the Health Professions Act. The 2005 2nd Edition version was released with slight edits following a pan-Canadian project that involved the review and validation of competencies for LPNs in several other jurisdictions (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland/Labrador, and Prince Edward Island).

Living Document

This Competency Profile is meant to be a “living document;” it will evolve and change as nursing practice evolves and changes. This 3rd Edition reflects LPN education, role and scope of practice occurring in 2015. Professional competencies are inter-related, therefore, no individual section in the Profile can be considered in isolation of another.

Purpose of the Profile

This Profile broadly defines the scope of practice of LPNs in Alberta and provides a foundation for the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta's Continuing Competency Program (CCP) by providing a reference for LPN ongoing assessment of individual competence.

The Profile also:

- identifies base competencies of a typical entry to practice LPN
- serves as a tool for LPNs interested in changing or advancing their area of practice or scope of practice
- provides direction to Practical Nurse Educators regarding essential curriculum components
- guides employers in understanding full scope of practice for role optimization of LPNs across all care settings
- provides a benchmark for performance management and review

The Profile is not intended to:

- be inclusive of all potential competencies required of LPNs. Some competencies may have been inadvertently omitted
- represent the competencies that all LPNs must achieve
- specify obligations and/or requirements of LPNs for third party agencies or any other outside party; and
- be permanent, but must be updated on a regular basis as requirements and technologies change

Language in the Competencies

For the purpose of this Competency Profile:

- “client” may refer to an individual, family, group or community
- “critical inquiry” refers to the expansion of critical thinking to include reflective and logical reasoning, purposive thinking, discernment, and application of standards; all of which enhance clinical judgment (See CCPNR Standards of Practice for LPNs available at www.clpna.com)
- “client, family and others” refers to the individual receiving care, the people they refer to as family and other people of importance (i.e., caregivers).

Acknowledgement

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta would like to acknowledge the many individuals who participated in the revisions of the 2015 Competency Profile for LPNs. The process of revision involved consultation with over a thousand individuals, including LPNs (face to face focus groups/consultations, webinars, surveys, interviews), practical nurse educators, employers of LPNs, practice experts and other stakeholders.

Thank you to everyone involved for the time, expertise, attention to detail and commitment to improving and updating this document. The result of this inclusive process is a Competency Profile that will continue to guide LPN practice well into the future.

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