



COLLEGE OF  
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES  
OF ALBERTA

# LPN SNAPSHOT

Focus on  
Licensed Practical Nurses  
in Alberta



## | What is a Licensed Practical Nurse?

The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) is a professional nurse involved in the assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation of nursing care. LPNs work in direct nursing care, with some pursuing opportunities in education, research, leadership and administration.

LPNs have been practicing in Alberta since 1947, with the LPN role changing over the years from assistant to professional nurse. The LPN profession has experienced many changes over the last few decades. These changes have occurred in education, scope of practice, and roles. The LPN knowledge and skill has grown, with diploma as entry-to-practice and increased education prospects available after graduation. Opportunities for LPNs have emerged in clinical and non-clinical environments, with new roles in non-traditional areas.

## | LPN Role & Responsibilities

LPNs in Alberta are responsible and accountable to work within the scope of practice of the LPN profession as defined by the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta. LPNs serve individuals, families, and groups, assessing their needs and providing care and treatment as appropriate. With well-developed assessment and critical thinking skills, LPNs formulate nursing diagnoses, plan interventions, provide health education, and evaluate response to treatment in collaboration with clients and other health professionals. There are many roles within Alberta for LPNs in areas such as: acute care, long term care, community, primary care clinics, education, occupational health and safety, public health, and leadership.

LPNs assume independent, interdependent, and often overlapping roles on the health care team. The level of independence for a LPN in practice may differ depending upon the needs and complexity of the client, skills of the LPN and the team around them, and supports available in the setting.

Although most LPNs work in teams, Alberta LPNs do not work 'under-the-direction' of another care

provider. LPNs are expected to be autonomous and make decisions and take action while providing nursing care for clients, with responsibility and accountability for the decisions they make.

## | Education

LPNs in Alberta graduate from a two-year diploma program, and the education is available on a full-time or part-time basis and in a variety of formats including evening courses, regular classroom study, on-line learning and a blended approach combining classroom study with on-line learning.

Alberta practical nurse programs are usually 68 weeks in length and provide a minimum of 750 hours of theoretical instruction and 900 hours of laboratory/clinical practice. Options for program completion range from 18-36 months. Most commonly, the practical nurse program is completed over four semesters within two years.

## | Continuing Education

LPNs are committed to life-long learning and participate annually in the CLPNA's Continuing Competency Program (CCP). LPNs may complete additional education in recognized specialties such as immunization, advanced foot care, dialysis, operating room, and orthopedics. Other education is available including wound care, mental health, occupational health and safety, and oncology. Increasingly LPNs pursue a variety of education at a Bachelor and Master's Degree level.

## | Regulated Professional Nurses

As a self-regulating profession, LPNs must meet registration requirements set out by the College of LPNs of Alberta under the Health Professions Act and the LPN Regulation. This includes initial registration upon completion of an approved practical nurse program or equivalency. It also includes annual renewal of registration, participation in continuing competence activities, and being actively engaged in the practice of the profession.

# Outline of Competency Profile for LPNs, 3rd Ed.

The following outlines the competencies of the Licensed Practical Nurse in Alberta, including basic, additional, and specialized. Competency is defined as the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes of a professional. No individual LPN is required to possess all competencies of the profession; each will possess a set specific to their own expertise, based on their work experience and practice setting. The Competency Profile for LPNs, 3rd Edition (2015), is a detailed account of these competencies and is available from the CLPNA or at [www.clpna.com](http://www.clpna.com) or by contacting [info@clpna.com](mailto:info@clpna.com) or 780.484.8886.

<b>A. Nursing Knowledge</b>	A-1 Anatomy and Physiology	A-2 Microbiology	A-3 Pathophysiology	A-4 Medical Terminology	A-5 Growth and Development	A-6 Nutrition
	A-7 Pharmacology	A-8 Social Science and Humanities	A-9 Best Practices and Research			
<b>B. Nursing Process</b>	B-1 Assessment	B-2 Nursing Diagnosis	B-3 Planning	B-4 Implementation	B-5 Evaluation	
<b>C. Safety</b>	C-1 Urgent and Emergent Situations	C-2 Protective Equipment	C-3 Infection Prevention and Control	C-4 Client Safety	C-5 Workplace Safety	
<b>D. Communication &amp; Interpersonal Skills</b>	D-1 Effective Communication	D-2 Collaborative Team Practice	D-3 Therapeutic Nurse-Client Relationship	D-4 Health Teaching and Coaching	D-5 Legal Protocols, Documenting and Reporting	D-6 Accept, Transcribe and Initiate Orders
	D-7 Conflict Management					
<b>E. Nursing Practice</b>	E-1 Critical Thinking and Critical Inquiry	E-2 Clinical Judgment and Decision Making	E-3 Time Management	E-4 Admission and Discharge	E-5 Activities of Daily Living	E-6 Nutrition/ Hydration
	E-7 Elimination	E-8 Peritoneal Dialysis	E-9 Basic Foot Care	E-10 Basic Wound Care	E-11 Advanced Wound Care	E-12 Phlebotomy
	E-13 Client Centered Care	E-14 Complementary and Alternative Therapies	E-15 Ear Syringing	E-16 Post Mortem Care		
<b>F. Respiratory Care</b>	F-1 Airway Management	F-2 Oxygen Therapy	F-3 Suctioning	F-4 Respiratory Interventions	F-5 Tracheostomy Care	F-6 Chest Tubes
<b>G. Surgical</b>	G-1 Surgical Nursing	G-2 Surgical Nursing Interventions	G-3 Endoscopy	G-4 Post Anesthetic Recovery		
<b>H. Orthopedics</b>	H-1 Orthopedic Nursing	H-2 Orthopedic Nursing Interventions	H-3 Traction and Immobilizers			

<b>I. Neurological/Neurosurgical</b>	I-1 Neurological Nursing	I-2 Neurological Nursing Interventions	I-3 Managing C-Spine	I-4 Advanced Neurological Nursing Interventions			
<b>J. Cardiovascular</b>	J-1 Cardiovascular Nursing	J-2 Cardiovascular Interventions	J-3 Advanced Cardiovascular Interventions				
<b>K. Maternal/Newborn Care</b>	K-1 Maternal/Newborn Nursing	K-2 Prenatal Care	K-3 Knowledge and Assessment of Labor	K-4 Assist with Managing Labor	K-5 Assist with Delivery	K-6 Neonatal Resuscitation	
	K-7 Labor and Delivery of Non-Viable Fetus	K-8 Post-Partum Care	K-9 Newborn Care	K-10 Care of Critically Ill or Premature Newborn			
<b>L. Pediatrics</b>	L-1 Pediatric Nursing	L-2 Pediatric Care and Interventions	L-3 Pediatric Pain Management				
<b>M. Mental Health and Addiction</b>	M-1 Mental Health and Addiction Nursing	M-2 Mental Health and Addiction Assessment and Intervention	M-3 Aggressive Behavior				
<b>N. Emergency Care</b>	N-1 Emergency Nursing	N-2 Triage					
<b>O. Gerontology</b>	O-1 Gerontology Nursing	O-2 Gerontology Care and Interventions	O-3 Cognitive Care	O-4 Dementia Care	O-5 Assessment and Planning in Continuing Care		
<b>P. Palliative Care</b>	P-1 Palliative Principles and Values	P-2 Physical Changes	P-3 Physical and Psychosocial Care	P-4 Post Mortem Care			
<b>Q. Rehabilitation</b>	Q-1 Rehabilitation Nursing						
<b>R. Community Health</b>	R-1 Community Health Nursing	R-2 Nursing Process and Community Health	R-3 Health Promotion	R-4 Client Services	R-5 Community Health Teaching and Coaching	R-6 Public Health Nursing	
	R-7 Clinic Nursing	R-8 Case Management					
<b>S. Oncology</b>	S-1 Oncology Nursing	S-2 Oncology Interventions					
<b>T. Occupational Health and Safety</b>	T-1 Occupational Health and Safety Nursing						
<b>U. Medication Administration</b>	U-1 Principles of Pharmacology	U-2 Medication Preparation and Administration	U-3 Nitrous Oxide	U-4 Contrast Agents			

<b>V. Infusion Therapy</b>	V-1 Principles of Infusion Therapy	V-2 Peripheral Intravenous Therapy	V-3 Hypodermoclysis (HDC)	V-4 Central Line Care	V-5 Blood and Blood Products	V-6 Epidural and Spinal Infusions
	V-7 Total Parenteral Nutrition					
<b>W. Professionalism</b>	W-1 Legislation and Regulation	W-2 Licensed Practical Nurse Scope of Practice	W-3 Professional Standards of Practice	W-4 Professional Ethics	W-5 Accountability and Responsibility	W-6 Professional Boundaries
	W-7 Fitness to Practice	W-8 Professional Development				
<b>X. Leadership</b>	X-1 Informal Leadership	X-2 Formal Leadership	X-3 Manager/Administrator			
<b>Y. Orthopedic Specialty</b>	Y-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	Y-2 Specialized Orthopedic Knowledge and Application	Y-3 Treatments and Interventions			
<b>Z. Perioperative Specialty</b>	Z-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	Z-2 Specialized Perioperative Knowledge	Z-3 Pre-Operative Role	Z-4 Perioperative Circulating Role	Z-5 Assist Anesthesia Provider	Z-6 Perioperative Scrub Role
	Z-7 Post Anesthetic Recovery Role					
<b>AA. Dialysis Specialty</b>	AA-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	AA-2 Specialized Hemodialysis Knowledge				
<b>BB. Independent Practice</b>	BB-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	BB-2 Independent Practice Services				
<b>CC. Advanced Foot Care</b>	CC-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	CC-2 Advanced Foot Care Practice				
<b>DD. Dermatology</b>	DD-1 Dermatology Nursing	DD-2 Dermatology Interventions				
<b>EE. Educator</b>	EE-1 Adult Learning Principles	EE-2 Design and Delivery of Education				
<b>FF. Ophthalmology</b>	FF-1 Ophthalmic Nursing	FF-2 Ophthalmic Interventions				
<b>GG. Immunization Specialty</b>	GG-1 Self-Regulation and Accountability	GG-2 Immunity and Communicable Disease Control	GG-3 Principles of Immunizing/Biological Agents	GG-4 Assessment of Client Prior to Immunization	GG-5 Informed Consent and Client Teaching	GG-6 Prepare Immunizing/Biological Agents
	GG-7 Administer Immunizing/Biological Agents					



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## | CLPNA Mandate

To lead and regulate the profession in a manner that protects and serves the public through excellence in Practical Nursing.

## | CLPNA's Vision

Transforming the licensed practical nurse profession and influencing a quality person-centred system.

## | Mission for the Profession

Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) of Alberta are progressive nursing professionals who provide quality, safe, competent, and ethical care in collaboration with clients, families and other providers.

- LPNs provide holistic person-centred care including physical, psychosocial and spiritual health.
- LPNs advocate for and respect client choice and dignity.
- LPNs are accountable for the care they provide.

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