



COLLEGE OF
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES
OF ALBERTA

CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) is mandated through the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to regulate Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. As a part of this process, the HPA identifies the requirement for regulators to develop a Continuing Competence Program. The CLPNA Continuing Competence Program is a process of ensuring that LPNs maintain their competence as defined by the HPA. Section 1(1)(f) of the HPA states that competence is, “the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional services.”¹

As part of registration with the CLPNA, LPNs must maintain and enhance their competence in nursing practice and be aware of their strengths and areas in need of improvement. Continuing competence is essential in meeting the demands of evolving practice environments and patient needs.

The Continuing Competence Program provides LPNs with a framework for assessing competence. It also supports LPNs to achieve and demonstrate continuing competence through ongoing learning and remaining current in practice.

In accordance with Standard 1.4 of the Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on the Continuing Competence Program, the program consists of the following requirements:

- (a) Section 1.4.1 a self-assessment based on standards of practice indicating continuing competence activities to be undertaken for the next registration year;
- (b) Section 1.4.2 a learning plan that states the continuing competence goals for the next registration year; and;
- (c) Section 1.4.3 evidence of continuing competence activities, including:
 - 1) a list of self-directed learning undertaken during the past registration year;
 - 2) completion of any mandatory education directed by Council; and
 - 3) a minimum of 1,000 practice hours during the previous four registration years or other equivalent practice experience.²

LPNs must meet the continuing competence requirements to renew their practice permit on an annual basis.

This guide will provide information specific to the Continuing Competence Program requirements.

¹ Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, s. (1)(1)(f).

² College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta, *Standard of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on the Continuing Competence Program* (2023).

NOTE

Practice hours are a part of the Continuing Competence Program. LPNs must practice a minimum of 1,000 hours in the preceding four-year period. LPNs who do not meet the minimum practice hours may not be eligible for registration or to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year.

FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM



SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment is the process where an LPN reflects on the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgments they currently demonstrate. Using the *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* to guide this process, an LPN can identify areas of practice that require an increase in skill or knowledge; areas of interest where practice can expand; and the areas in which further education is needed to maintain competence. The process of self-assessment is based on individual reflection. The process and the outcome may differ between individual LPNs. LPNs are encouraged to complete their self-assessment every year prior to completing their registration renewal application to best identify the learning plan for the upcoming year.

Sample Self-Assessment Process

When reflecting on nursing goals, the following rating scale may be used to identify specific competency areas that require improvement or further development.

1	2	3	4	5
Expert	Competent	Requires Improvement	Novice	Not Applicable
I confidently demonstrate excellence in the expectations and/or requirements of the 2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada.	I satisfactorily meet the expectations and/or requirements of the 2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada.	I have identified learning required in areas of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or clinical judgments.	I recognize that I require education and/or orientation to meet the expectations and/or requirement of the 2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada.	This competency is currently not part of my role and responsibility in nursing practice.

Example Self-Assessment

Utilizing the rating scale, an LPN may determine that they require learning in how to administer blood and blood products for the new unit they will be working in. The LPN then reviews the *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* to determine their level of competence.

An LPN may structure their self-assessment as follows:

Standard 1, Indicator 1.4: Practice within LPN scope of practice and individual level of competence and consult and collaborate when necessary.³

Rating Assessment: Determined 4 – Novice

As part of the self-assessment process, an LPN may ask themselves a series of questions to determine if they have the required knowledge and skills in a specific area or require further learning.

³ Canadian Council of Practical Nursing Regulators. *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* (2020).

What? So what? Now what?

In other words: What? What do I need to learn? What do I need to do to learn it?

What? *What learning do I need to demonstrate excellence in the expectations and/or requirements to provide safe, competent care for the patient receiving blood and blood products through transfusion. This includes obtaining consent, preparing and administering blood and blood products by transfusion, and identifying and managing a reaction.*

- *Anatomy and physiology of the circulatory system*
- *Components of blood and blood products used in transfusion therapy*
- *Normal and abnormal lab values pertaining to blood transfusion*
- *Prepare, administer, and monitor blood and blood products by transfusion*
- *Identify and manage a reaction to blood and blood products*

So what? *Why does it matter? What are the consequences if I do not have knowledge and competence in this area of nursing practice?*

- *Miss opportunities to perform the restricted activity of administering blood and blood products by transfusion in my nursing career*
- *Not able to manage any patient that requires blood and blood products by transfusion*

Now what? *What are you going to do as a result of your self-assessment? What will you do to enhance your nursing knowledge? How will you apply what you have learned?*

- *Study and review the Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses on Restricted Activities, Advanced Practice and Supervision*
- *Complete the learning module: Administering Blood and Blood Products: Transfusion as one of my learning goals on my upcoming learning plan*
- *Look for opportunities to administer a blood or blood product by transfusion or infusion in your practice area*
- *Find a mentor to support my newly acquired skill*

LEARNING PLAN

Through the self-assessment process, an LPN develops a learning plan. The learning plan guides the learning to be implemented by the LPN over the upcoming registration year. By answering the questions asked on the registration renewal application, an LPN can identify a learning plan including at least two continuing competence goals using the *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*.

The learning plan includes four components:

- **Continuing Competence Goal(s):** The LPN will identify the Standard and Indicator as listed in the *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada* to determine the learning goal.
- **Resources and Strategies:** The LPN will identify how the continuing competence goal will be achieved. Various sources can be used to meet the goal including books, videos, articles, workshops, in-services, conferences, courses, etc.
- **Target Date:** The LPN will identify a timeline for completing the continuing competence goal.
- **Evaluation:** The LPN will identify how knowledge, abilities and critical thinking skills may change as a result of meeting the stated learning.

NOTE

Meeting the mandatory requirements of the Continuing Competence Program learning plan includes:

- identify a learning plan for the upcoming registration year
- choosing two continuing competence goals using the *2020 Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses in Canada*
- declaring compliance with the learning plan for the previous registration year

CONTINUING COMPETENCE ACTIVITIES

Two requirements are needed to fulfill the continuing competence activity expectation to maintain registration:

- Learning
- Practice Hours

Learning

When continuing competence activities in the learning plan are completed, it is important to document the learning. This includes keeping evidence that the LPN participated in the activity. The CLPNA's member web page offers a structured format to manage supporting documentation of learning activities through the *My Learning* tab. Alternatively, an LPN may choose to document their learning using other organized formats.

Evidence of a learning activity may include but is not limited to the following:

- Transcripts
- Certificates
- AHS Learning Link records
- Workshop or conference programs
- Pictures or screen shots of books, web pages, journal articles

Practice Hours

Practice hours worked during the registration year are declared on the registration renewal application. This declaration includes the hours an LPN expects to work until the end of the registration year. These hours are utilized as a way for ensuring LPNs meet actively engaged requirements to maintain ongoing competence as a nurse or to renew a practice permit for the upcoming year. An LPN is required to practice a minimum of 1000 hours in the preceding four-year period. The hours reported may be validated through the Continuing Competence Program Audit process.

NOTE

LPNs are required to retain Continuing Competence Program information including their self-assessment, learning plan, and evidence of continuing competence activities for a minimum of four years.

AUDIT

The Continuing Competence Program audit process verifies that LPNs have met the requirements of the program. Each year, LPNs are selected to participate in the audit process.

The audit validates compliance with the declaration made on the registration renewal application that the learning plan(s) have been completed. Verification includes the submission of documentation and a response to questions posed on the audit form. Documentation can be uploaded directly to the audit form.

Proof of practice hours may also be required as part of the annual Continuing Competence Program audit.

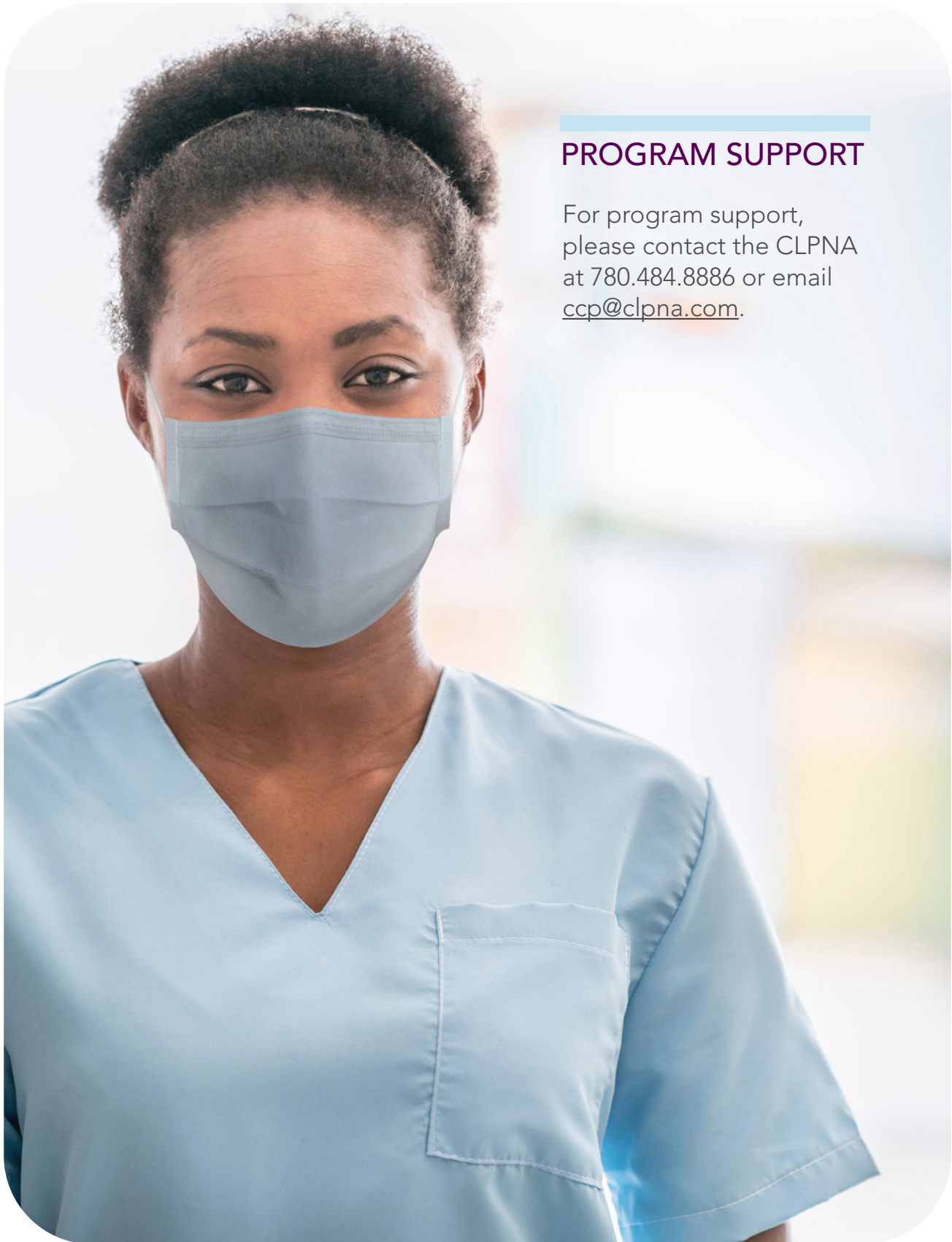
NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

An LPN who does not meet the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program at the time of registration renewal may be refused renewal of their practice permit for the upcoming registration year. The submission of the registration renewal application's requirement of learning and practice hours is considered a declaration of compliance.

If it is determined through the audit process that an LPN provided false or misleading information, the LPN may be referred to the Complaints Director.

NOTE

The audit will occur in the spring with approximately 10% of LPNs selected to participate. The audit requires evidence of participation in the Continuing Competence Program for the previous practice year.



PROGRAM SUPPORT

For program support, please contact the CLPNA at 780.484.8886 or email ccp@clpna.com.



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